

University of Pardubice

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Gender Roles in Classical and Contemporary Fairy-Tale

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Master Thesis

2021

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Akademický rok: 2018/2019

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

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Osobní číslo: **H18421**
Studijní program: **N7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglická filologie**
Téma práce: **Genderové role v tradiční a moderní pohádce**
Zadávací katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování

V úvodu práce studentka definuje žánr pohádky, zasadí jej do širšího literárního kontextu literatury pro děti a mládež a uvede významnější teorie pohádky. Zdůvodní svou volbu primárních textů a zasadí je do literárního kontextu. Dále vysvětlí pojem gender (gender role, gender stereotype), jak je používán v literární teorii a kritice a uvede teorii/e, o nichž své analýzy opíře. Jádrem práce pak bude analýza zvolených pohádek z hlediska toho, jak zobrazují ženské a/či mužské postavy, jaké role jim přisuzují a jak se v jednotlivých verzích tyto role proměňují. Diplomantka své komparace shrne a pokusí se vyslovit obecnější závěr o proměně obrazu genderových rolí ve zvolených variacích tradiční pohádky.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Rozsah grafických prací:
Forma zpracování diplomové práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Andersen, Hans Christian. *Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen*. The Project Gutenberg eBook. 2008. Bacchilega, Cristina. *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999. Booker, M. Keith. *Disney, Pixar, and the Hidden Messages of Children's Films*. California: Greenwood, 2010. Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. Cosslett, Tess, Alison Easton, and Penny Summerfield. *Women, Power and Resistance: An Introduction to Women Studies*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996. Franz, Marie-Louise von. *The Feminine in Fairy Tales*. Boston: Shambhala, 1993. Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm. *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Translated by Edgar Taylor and Marian Edwardes. The Project Gutenberg eBook. 2008. Haase, Donald, ed. *Fairy Tales and Feminism: New Approaches*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004. Kerchy, Anna. *Postmodern Reinterpretations of Fairy Tales: How Applying New Methods Generates New Meanings*. 1st U.S. ed. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2011. Lukens, Rebecca J. *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature*. Seventh edition. Boston, Mass.: Pearson Education, Inc., 2003. Perrault, Charles. *Perrault's Fairy Tales*. Translated by Robert Samber and J. E. Mansion. The Project Gutenberg eBook. 2009. Russel, David L. *Literature for Children: A Short Introduction*. Eighth edition. Boston: Pearson Education, 2015. Zipes, Jack ed. *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Zipes, Jack. *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion*. Routledge, 2011.

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Datum zadání diplomové práce: **30. dubna 2019**
Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: **31. března 2020**

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V Pardubicích dne 29. listopadu 2019

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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

V Pardubicích dne 31.3. 2021

Barbora Steklá

Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Doc. Mgr. Šárka Bubíková, PhD, for providing guidance and feedback throughout this thesis. I also wish to thank Professor Giovanna Covi at the University of Trento. Her overall insights in the field of gender studies were vital in inspiring me. Further, I am extremely grateful to my family, especially to my mom, for the unceasing encouragement, and unconditional support throughout my study. To conclude, I cannot forget to thank my boyfriend and friends for being so supportive while I was working on my thesis. They encouraged me to do the right thing even when the road got tough.

Annotation

This work deals with gender stereotypes expressed through female and male characters in children's books. The first chapter outlines the development of the genre, explaining how it established itself as the normalised canon of children's literature. Furthermore, two approaches to the critical theory of literature are discussed, namely structuralism and feminism, as both play an important role in the research. Last but not least, a large part focuses on the introduction to the field of gender studies, the importance of this problem in literature and particularly in fairy tales. In order to find out how this depiction changed during the evolution of fairy tales, four tales from different periods are analysed here, from the oldest to the modern.

Key words

fairy tale, gender, gender stereotype, male and female characters

Název

Genderové role v tradiční a moderní pohádce

Anotace

Práce je věnována genderovým stereotypům vyobrazených na ženských a mužských postavách, a to v knihách pro děti. První kapitola se zabývá vývojem daného žánru z hlediska toho, jak se ustálil v normalizovaný kánon dětské literatury. Dále jsou zde rozebírány dva přístupy kritické teorie literatury, konkrétně strukturalismus a feminismus, jelikož oba hrají v daném zkoumání významnou roli. V neposlední řadě se značná část soustředí na uvedení do oblasti genderových studií, důležitost tohoto problému v literatuře a zejména pak v pohádkách. Za účelem zjištění, jak se toto vyobrazování v průběhu vývoje pohádek měnilo, jsou zde zanalyzována čtyři díla z různých období vývoje, od těch nejstarších až po moderní.

Klíčová slova

pohádka, gender, genderový stereotyp, mužské a ženské postavy

Table of Contents

Introduction	8
1. Fairy Tales	9
1.1 Children’s Literature and Its Development	10
1.2 Critical Literary Theories in Fairy Tales.....	17
1.2.1 Structuralist Approach.....	17
1.2.2 Feminist Approach.....	22
2. Gender Studies	24
2.1 The Concept of Gender.....	25
2.2 The Importance of Gender in Contemporary Literature.....	28
2.2.1 Gender in Fairy Tales.....	30
2.2.1.1. Stereotypes of Female Characters in Traditional Fairy Tale.....	34
2.2.1.2 Stereotypes of Male Characters in Traditional Fairy Tale.....	35
3. Analysis	36
3.1 <i>Belle-Belle, ou Le Chevalier Fortuné</i> by Madame d’Aulnoy.....	37
3.1.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters.....	37
3.1.2 Structure of the Work	42
3.2 <i>Cinderella</i> by Charles Perrault.....	43
3.2.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters.....	43
3.2.2 Structure of the Work	47
3.3 <i>The Paper Bag Princess</i> by Robert Munsch.....	48
3.3.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters.....	48
3.3.2 Structure of the Work	51
3.4 <i>Beast</i> by Donna Jo Napoli.....	51
3.4.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters.....	52
3.4.2 Structure of the Work	55
4. Conclusion	56
Resumé	58
Bibliography	61
Appendices	66

Introduction

Fairy tales are an integral part of our lives today from an early age, but this has not always been the case. This genre of children's literature underwent a long and complex development before establishing itself in the modern form. The main reason that influenced this development was the opinion about the importance of childhood as a period of life different from adulthood, which requires a special approach, as discussed in more detail in the introductory chapter. With this idea, a genre began to emerge with its own rules, motifs, schemes, characters and plots largely based on oral folk tradition, the form of which is adapted to appeal exactly to these readers or listeners. In addition to being the source of entertainment, fairy tales also became a source of education, and so emphasis began to be placed on the impact and influence of fairy tale stories. Because fairy tales are usually the first literary work with which one comes into contact, they are considered to be the driving force of child socialisation, which is extremely important. In his book, Bruno Bettelheim highlights the importance of the moral value of these texts, which influence the development of each individual's personality.¹ Not only is the principle of good and evil clearly outlined, but children also encounter other foundations of the moral existence of the respective culture.² And due to the fact that a child's mind believes what the fairy tale tells, it is no wonder that there are increasingly many authors who want to rewrite fairy tales in a way that corresponds to the events of the time and is not outdated. One of the problems that many writers are currently trying to remedy is the issue of gender, specifically the stereotypical portrayal of female and male characters. This is illustrated in the vast majority of fairy tales, and therefore have become the target of criticism of feminism. What this wave has brought in society and thus in literature and fairy tales is discussed in detail in several parts of the theoretical section. These focus on explaining important concepts needed to understand the researched area, but also social events leading to the emergence of follow-up gender studies. In this spirit, the text thus provides space to the literary approach of the mentioned feminism, which is closely related to the topic, as it is closest to gender issues. It deals with how female characters are portrayed in the literature. This works with the so-called variable elements of fairy tales. To rephrase it, what is changed in individual versions, *i.e.* what can be compared with each other. This is possible because the form of these components is not fixed, and they are completely dependent on the author's preferences. However, since the aim of this work is not to analyse the depiction of only one gender, in addition to androcentric literary writing

¹ Bruno Bettelheim, *Za tajemství pohádek* (Praha: PORTÁL, s.r.o., 2017), 17.

² Bettelheim, *Za tajemství pohádek*, 25–26.

criticized by the feminists, the “other side of the coin” is also presented. This is gynocentrism to which the feminist theory contributed. Both of these approaches provide guidance for the analysis of primary texts, as each of them presents a certain belief in the superiority of the male or female gender and thus forms a fundamental contradiction of the gender-based portrayal of characters in the literature. Besides, it is important to mention another literary theory, which is structuralism. Unlike the previous one, it deals with the constant elements that fairy tales further form. In terms of introduction to the complex issues, three approaches from different authors are discussed, however, the subsequent analysis of primary texts is based on one selected theory, which is considered crucial. These authors present the idea that, although there are different versions of fairy tales emerging at different times, all these stories share the same fixed rules that characterise them as a genre. To put it another way, there is a component that connects all these creations across their different origins and diverse versions. For this reason, it is possible to compare them in order to assess the differences in the variable elements between them. A wide range of authors and the time of creation of individual works were selected for this, however, this selection was made with the intention of comparing how individual versions of the same genre differ during its development, in terms of the current topic, which is gender controversy. This is approached on the basis of the aforementioned belief. Specifically, there are four works that serve as primary literature. Ordered chronologically, these works are *Belle-Belle, ou Le Chevalier Fortuné* from the 17th century interpreted by Madame d'Aulnoy, the story of *Cinderella* by Charles Perrault, Robert Munsch's *The Paper Bag Princess*, and the most modern interpretation of the fairy tale *Beast* written by Donna Jo Napoli.

1. Fairy Tales

The following part of the work describes the development of fairy tales from the perspective of how the concept of childhood has been perceived throughout history, and what subsequent impact the respective view had on the development of the studied genre. The chronological development is presented in the same order in which the classical principles of children's literature were established. Female authors are not included intentionally, that is, until the current creation. This does not imply that women did not create fairy-tale-ish texts from the very beginning of this genre; quite the opposite. The fact that women were at the birth of the fairy-tale category is not surprising. After all, they were the ones who took the most care of children to whom they dedicated the stories, they were also meeting and sharing their narrations

with each other. Nevertheless, women were sidelined due to the persisting patriarchal reasons of contemporary society. That is why women got into awareness of readers as late as in modern times, and therefore also this work includes women only later.

1.1 Children's Literature and Its Development

Children's literature is undeniably closely connected with the concept of childhood, which has not remained the same in the course of history, as its meaning has been the subject of many changes. More specifically, some people in history assumed that children are born evil and parents should watch after them. On the other hand, others believed that kids are innocent and should be protected so that society does not corrupt them. Therefore, children's literature reflects what was associated with this early period of human life at the time. Because these texts have a social as well as educational significance, their content also depended on what the respective society wanted to teach children. This is the case till today. How this was changing during the development of fairy tales is described in the following section, focused on the traditional conception of Western European and North American literature. It shares common literary traditions and gave rise to the classic format of children's literature which we now consider the norm.

The history of this literature is often dated back to the middle of the 18th century, thanks to John Newbery, who is known as "The Father of Children's Literature." This English publisher was the first to create books exclusively for children. Based on this information, it can be concluded that a literary fairy tale is a relatively young genre, however, it cannot be omitted what many authors, including Professor Jack Zipes, point out. According to Zipes, there is a large amount of historical evidence confirming that stories containing types of folklore motifs with magical elements were produced thousand of years ago in the territory of India and Egypt. Similarly, David L. Russell in his book *Literature for Children: A Short Introduction* writes that "children, just like adults, have always enjoyed good stories, and the true origins of children's literature can be traced back thousands of years."³ The development of fairy tales is approached with the ideas shared by the two above-mentioned authors because it cannot be overlooked what preceded the very establishment of the genre of literary fairy tales. It was formed in Europe and later in North America only at a time when new material and socio-cultural conditions helped to shape it. Initially, therefore this was a folk narrative, i.e. creation that was produced without

³ David L. Russel, *Literature for Children: A Short Introduction* (New York: Pearson Education, 2017), 1.

written fixation and transmitted orally. In reality, however, the distinction between oral and literary traditions is so confusing, and therefore often interchangeable, that most literary critics, according to *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*, no longer make a distinction between the two concepts⁴. Due to the insignificance of such a distinction for contemporary readers, as well as for the purposes of this paper, these terms can be described as synonyms, the difference of which is considered to be essential here only from the point of view of development. These oral narratives were spread indiscriminately among young as well as old audience. These were mainly fables that were to teach correct morals, or also myths and legends. It can therefore be stated that texts in ancient times were shared by, rather than produced for, children. French historian Philippe Ariès states that the specific period of human life known as childhood did not exist in the Middle Ages. He also says that the medieval society had no relation to childhood and did not respect the specific features of this early state.⁵ Therefore, children did not have a status in the medieval society and took part in the life of adults as soon as they could live without their mother or nanny (at about the age of seven). The created fairy-tales were “often a story about miraculous encounters, changes, and initiations illustrating a particular didactic point that the writer wished to express in an entertaining manner.”⁶ Due to the habitual practice at the respective times, it can be deduced that such creations were not intended for children. At the same time, it cannot be said that they were intended for adults either, because most people were not literate at the time, and the texts were dedicated only to a certain social class of readers. During this period were published books that helped develop the discussed genre, such as *The Canterbury Tales* by one of the greatest poets of the Middle Ages, Geoffrey Chaucer, mainly due to his short stories. However, due to the described approach to childhood, there was no intention to create books for this audience. The idea of childhood did not really exist before the 15th century and the new concept of childhood gradually started to form. Modern times brought the idea that children are beings that are different from adults, and it is their parents’ responsibility to try to turn them into thinking men and good Christians. Kids were seen as creatures of God who need to be both protected and reformed. According to Ariès’ *Centuries of Childhood*, as a result, people recognized the importance of education. He states: “their teaching was no longer addressed to adults like in the Middle Ages, but was essentially meant

⁴ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xv.

⁵ Šárka Bubíková, “Lecture no. 1,” Children Literature (class lecture, University of Pardubice, the Czech Republic, winter semester, 2018).

⁶ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxi.

for children and young people,”⁷ despite the predominantly oral transmission of stories in the medieval period. Thus, literature written specifically for children was gradually born, first mostly in Latin, and sometimes translated into the respective national languages. Among the first, originally written English texts is the heroic epic poem about Beowulf. The adventurous story of King Arthur was also very popular. A big milestone is, of course, a more literate culture of the Renaissance, which is not by accident called the heyday of Europe. This concept also includes the development of book printing, which enabled a significantly faster and cheaper distribution of books, and literature thus developed in national languages instead of in Latin. Despite this progress, little literature was produced for children; many stories have only been adapted in a way that is suitable for young listeners and readers. One of the first books which were created specifically for children was titled *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (Visible World in Pictures), by the Czech philosopher and pedagogue Jan Amos Comenius. However, this was not something that children would like to read for their own pleasure, but rather a textbook written for the study of Latin. If boys and girls wanted to escape everyday reality, they often found refuge in adult books, such are referred to as secondary children’s literature. This was a set of texts that the children themselves selected to read, in other words, they were not primarily written for children. These include the story of Robinson Crusoe. Daniel Defoe did not intend this book for children, but since it is a book full of adventures, it is no wonder that children loved it. Later, in the 17th century, the Puritan view of the world dominated, and thus also the doctrine of the original sin. People believed that each child is doomed to Hell unless some action prevented it. From this arose the emphasis on reading the Bible, which represented the best way to educate the society of the time, and with it also the children. Due to the fact that at this time great emphasis was placed on the useful handling of time, and children’s play was perceived as a waste of it, mainly didactic texts were created. In 1690, *The New England Primer* was founded, which provided simple reading materials for kids. John Cotton’s *Milk for Babes* also became part of it, which, as can be assumed, was not really a text for entertainment but for religious education. When the aforementioned John Newbury came up with the idea of books intended only for children and their enjoyment, there was a change. As Russel comments, his *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* is “considered a landmark in children’s book publishing,”⁸ even though it was not the most successful achievement. It is worth mentioning that thanks to Newbury, fairy tales that do no longer preach morality, entered children’s world. And so,

⁷ Philippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 412.

⁸ Russel, *Literature for Children*, 8.

especially the stories that were gradually disappearing with the declining folk narrative, came to life again, in a way, on paper. Because they had been transmitted orally for a long time, their original author was unknown, and so writing led to a certain form of appropriation. Pertti Anttonen describes in his book the process of their writing up, textualisation and its significance, in the following way:

The ways in which oral performances and orally expressed utterances are transformed into literary representations of orality. When we textualise oral expressions, we do not merely document them by writing down words that were sung or uttered. We create artefacts that function as representations of the original oral utterances. In addition, these artefacts by their very existence as written documents enter literary culture in the accomplishment of their representation of orality. In this respect, to textualise also means to 'literalise', that is, to transform oral utterances into literary representations that are to be read, interpreted and analysed through reading, and by extension, to be preserved as textual documents that call for further reading as well as cultivation as specimens of cultural history and heritage.⁹

This source was central to the emergence of written literature, but it was not the only one. Jack Zipes in his *The Oxford Companion of Fairy Tales* adds that "the early authors of fairy tales were generally extremely well educated and well-read and drew upon both oral and literary materials when they created their fairy tales."¹⁰ Another important point was the first translation and publication in English of the famous collection *Tales of Mother Goose* by Charles Perrault who was inspired by his Italian colleague, poet and collector of fairy tales, Giambattista Basile. Basile's writing, along with that by his colleague Giovanni Francesco Straparola, "can be considered crucial for understanding the rise of the genre."¹¹ Perrault's collection contained fairy tales that are the most famous today, such as *Cinderella*, *Snow White* and *Little Red Riding Hood*. They became popular in France as early as at the end of the 17th century, hence their indication, 'contes de fées', which can be translated as "a tale about fairies", as defined also in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.¹² Nevertheless, if for example two out of three fairy tales mentioned above are taken into account, no magical fairies appear in them. This was also pointed out by the author of *Twice Upon a Time* who created a new definition of this genre. She refers to fairy tales as the "tales that include elements of folk tradition and magical or supernatural elements, tales that have a certain, predictable structure."¹³ This definition is

⁹ Pertti Anttonen, "Oral Traditions and the Making of the Finnish Nation," in *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe during the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin (Leiden: Brill: 2012), 325.

¹⁰ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xx.

¹¹ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxi.

¹² Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, s.v. "fairy tale," accessed March 14, 2021, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/fairy-tale_1?q=fairy+tales.

¹³ Elizabeth Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 6.

further used because it seems like the most fitting specification of the examined phenomenon, and its content is in compliance with the critical literary theory used later.

Moving on in the development, at the end of the 18th century, creation for children began to take a new direction, which considered how to properly display the norms of the behaviour, values and interpersonal relationships, customs, traditions and ideas about the world that are essential for inclusion and successful functioning of an individual in society. And so many previously published works began to be seen as unsuitable for the child audience. Therefore, the “cleansing of the narratives of erotic and bawdy passages”¹⁴ followed, while magical elements were preserved. Rewriting traditional folk narrative and formulation of fairy tales in the right direction continued also in the German territory. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm assumed this task. They too were forced to revise their original version of *Children’s and Household Tales*, which became fateful to them. In the opinion of Jack Zipes, “the Grimms’ work was consciously designed to address two audiences at the same time.”¹⁵ They succeeded in creating such versions of stories that managed to engage both adults and children. These brothers thus influenced the form of fairy tales which has remained more or less the same to this day, as the Grimms have inspired many other authors, and are therefore considered as giants in their field. They constructed their works thoughtfully and purposefully in a way that corresponded to the requirements of their time. The moral code of the 19th century is thus reflected here. Although Grimm versions of fairy tales were published in many English translations and editions, there had not been known any native author to create an English-written fairy tale designed for the entertainment and enjoyment of children. Joseph Jacobs claims that this condition “only underlined the absence of a comparable collection of indigenous English tales”¹⁶ in other European countries. This was the case until 1865 when *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carol came to the world. Hand in hand with technology, increasingly accessible education and expansion of middle class, this story started the rise of children’s literature called “the first Golden Age of children’s literature”, which took place at a historic stage of development of the United Kingdom under the reign of Queen Victoria. People had enough time to get an education and therefore enjoy reading, moreover, they did not lack the financial means to indulge in this form of entertainment. In addition to fantasy stories, which include the work mentioned above, also adventure and animal stories were created in this period. It is worth

¹⁴ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxv.

¹⁵ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxvi.

¹⁶ Joseph Jacobs, *English Fairy Tales and More English Fairy Tales (Classic Folk and Fairy Tales)* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2002), ix – x.

mentioning, for example, *The Jungle Books* by Rudyard Kipling. In 1890, Joseph Jacobs published *English Fairy Tales* and four years later the subsequent *More English Fairy Tales*. These books, which together consist of 87 texts, were created as a reaction to other European cultures that managed to create very important fairy-tale traditions and that had an impact also beyond their borders. Joseph Jacobs thus tried to rebut the above-hinted assertion, specifically that “English folk have no fairy tales of their own.”¹⁷ He cites the socio-economic and cultural conditions in the country as the reason for this absence. Although this author lived in the 19th century, his ideas and opinions appear to be quite modern. Particularly in the way he viewed the relationship of the text in social, historical and cultural contexts. He preferred its importance for the specific place and time over the origin itself and refused strict difference between folklore and literature. The mentioned author believed that every storyteller creates a version that reflects the time and place, even though all its interpretations share the same roots and strictly given structure. Therefore, this author not only forms another link in the chain of fairy-tale narrators, but his theory of diffusion at the same time provides some kind of guidance for the main analysis within this work. The analysis is approached on the basis of the very idea mentioned above. Jacobs advocated a logical process where the initial version, through oral folklore, gets commonly used, subsequently is shared by a limited group of people, and finally is known in some form to the whole society, which it reflects and spreads through mechanisms such as radio and television. Although fairy tales have been seen on the screen since the 1890s, the greatest development came in the following, 20th century. With the development of printing technologies were produced cheaper books, with better design and illustrations. In addition to expanding school and public libraries, in 1922 BBC Radio also launched a program intended for children, called *Children’s Hour*. Completely new genres of children’s literature were born, such as picture books which made famous an author using the pseudonym Dr. Seuss, as well as young adult fiction, the most important author of which is J. R. R. Tolkien. Another name, which is now at the forefront of regional family entertainment, became increasingly popular. A small cartoon studio, Disney, was born. According to Jordan Baize, at the very beginning, there were two brothers, Walter Elias and Roy, who were equal partners of *Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio*, which was later renamed, at Roy’s suggestion, to *The Walt Disney Studio*. After several years of success, Walt created the immortal Mickey Mouse and was the first to use technicolour. Thanks to the process of colour cinematography using synchronized monochrome films, each of a different colour, cartoons and movies in colour were created. The first of them was released

¹⁷Jacobs, *English Fairy Tales and More English Fairy Tales*, ix.

at the Colony Theatre in New York, on 18th November 1928.¹⁸ As reported by Zipes, “the most significant ‘revolution’ in the institution of the fairy tale took place in 1937, when Walt Disney produced the first animated feature fairy-tale film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.”¹⁹ In the course of time, the company became public and began broadcasting successful films based on written stories, including *Sleeping Beauty* and *Pinocchio*. Just as World War II affected and changed the whole world, it influenced children’s literature too. The end of the war also meant the end of old class systems and “education was seen as the means of overcoming the ignorance and prejudice that had contributed to the war,”²⁰ as is stated in *Literature for Children: A Short Introduction*. Emphasis began to be placed on the study of child psychology, and the personal needs of children were given priority over the demands of society. In such an environment, children’s literature flourished. The above-cited publication also points out that at the time were created works that remained popular among children for another fifty years, such as the fantasy novel series *The Chronicles of Narnia*.²¹ The following period, from 1960 to the present, can be described as the blossom of various experiments in the field of fairy tales, which reflected, and still reflect, the time of their origin, as it has been since the beginnings of this genre. This approach to fairy tales, which Joseph Jacobs tried to promote at the end of the 19th century, was also introduced in the studied area by the American professor Jack David Zipes, who has been quoted several times. Also he is concerned with the sociohistorical context of fairy tales and believes that fairy tales develop a desire for revolution. And just one of the addressed problems, which requires change both in society and subsequently in literature, has become the area of gender. Many writers began to notice a rather patriarchal depiction, which gradually began to change under the feminist movement in society. Of course, they were not the first to start criticizing the stereotypical portrayal of characters. As early as in the second half of the 19th century, one of the most famous fairy tale writers, Hans Christian Andersen, wrote a story with which he attempted to disrupt this stabilized and monotonous process of narration. In his fairytale *The Little Sea Maid* he breathed life to a new, apparently modern heroine. Although the mermaid thinks and acts independently, in other respects she represents rather a step backwards in the development of the princess characters. This is proved by the following example from the above-mentioned story, which describes the situation when the youngest daughter of the king of the sea literally loses her voice. “‘But if you take away my voice,’ said

¹⁸ Jordan Baize, *The Walt Disney Company: A Strategic Business Analysis* (New York: Solutions, LLC, 2012), 3.

¹⁹ Jack Zipes, *The Evolution of Folk and Fairy Tales in Europe and North America*, ResearchGate, May 17, 2016, 28.

²⁰ Russel, *Literature for Children*, 12.

²¹ Russel, *Literature for Children*, 12.

the little sea-maid, ‘what will I be left with?’ ‘Your beautiful form,’ replied the witch, ‘your graceful walk, and your eloquent eyes: with those you can take captive a human heart.’”²² This clearly evidences why this fairy tale cannot be classified as one that would disrupt the stereotypes associated with female characters. This is different in stories created after a certain lapse of time. This category includes, for example, the provocative story *The Bloody Chamber* written by the English writer Angela Carter, who challenges the canon. In the opinion of the above-mentioned professor, feminist fairy-tale production is the second major change in the genre, breathing a new life to it, right after the revolution caused by the Disney factory.²³ Thanks to this new direction, texts began to emerge that tried to break the stereotypes about men and women. Elizabeth Wanning Harries likens the creation of different versions of fairy tales to pouring new wine into the old bottle.²⁴ According to her, all of them share basic plot elements and similar construction patterns.²⁵ These thus form the basis of traditional fairy tale features, which is stable and usually does not succumb to changes.

1.2 Critical Literary Theories in Fairy Tales

Here, attention is focused on selected important critical analyses of literary texts, specifically structuralism and feminism. The first of these was chosen on the basis of the belief that all the analysed fairy tales contain a certain part that is unchangeable, regardless of who their author is, in other words, they share the same structure. And the other analysis best matches the analysed theme discussed in the primary literature.

1.2.1 Structuralist Approach

Although, as has already been said, the studied genre was not intended directly for children in its very beginnings, today we consider such literature dedicated to this specific group of our society. Its structure gradually changed to appeal to an ever-new audience, and eventually became embedded in the identifying elements of these texts, the introductory phrase of which became ‘once upon a time.’ This chapter deals with the established structure, mentions its main representatives and compares their views on the respective issues.

Already in 1910, the Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne made a basic division of these texts, according to the motifs that appear in them. In consonance with what he said, these are “the

²² Hans Christian Andersen, “The Little Sea Maid,” in *The Complete Fairy Tales*, (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2006), 92 – 93.

²³ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxxi.

²⁴ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 8.

²⁵ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 10.

smallest firm units within narrative folklore, the details out of which full-fledged narratives are composed.”²⁶ This gave rise to a system that established a certain order for international folklore. His *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen* became the most famous overview in this area. This classification catalogue was later expanded by the American representative of what is known as Finnish School in Folk narrative, Stith Thompson, who specified the narrative elements. Thus, not only a revised extended edition was created, but the above-mentioned author also translated it into English under the title *The Types of the Folktale*. This overview was expanded in 2004 again, by the German literary scholar Hans-Jörg Uther. Thanks to all three mentioned authors, the internationally recognized Aarne-Thompson-Uther System (ATU System) exists now. Within this system, it is possible to find all types of fairy tales sorted by code designations. In total, the authors defined five basic categories: Animal Tales, Ordinary Folk-Tales, Jokes and Anecdotes, Formula Tales, Unclassified Tales.²⁷ A detailed overview can be seen in the summarizing table, which is provided in the supplement. The fairy tale genre, as we know it in its current form, belongs to the ATU System category of “Tales of Magic”. This connection is synonymous with the German “Märchen” by the Brothers Grimm, that is, “fairy tales” which has become an established term in English-speaking countries. The authors made a more specific classification according to the supernatural orientation of individual stories. According to Richard M. Dorson, the subheadings of Tales of Magic bring attention to the fact that these stories focus on the fascination of man with supernatural adventures.²⁸ One of the authors, who is most often associated with the definition of the general structure of fairy tales, worked with fairy tale types 300-749, namely the Russian folklorist Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp. According to him, it is the structural properties, not the content, that is able to characterise specific types of fairy tales, and then determine what the magical fairy tale actually is. He presented this internal order of the respective stories in his work entitled *Morphology of the Tale*, and translated it into English thirty years after its creation, at the end of the 1950s. Just as morphology in linguistics deals with words, their morphemes and mutual relations, also the above-mentioned publication deals with partial sections of fairy tales and their reciprocal relations, as well as their relation to the whole. In his exploration of fairy tales, Propp applies a logical sequential progression from general to individual, and thus uses the method of deduction. He defines the characteristics of acting persons as the fundamental part of these

²⁶ Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Folklife* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 60.

²⁷ “Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folk Tales,” Multilingual Folk Tale Database, accessed February 20, 2021. <http://www.mftd.org/index.php?action=atu>.

²⁸ Dorson, *Folklore and Folklife*, 62.

texts, because actions of fairy-tale characters are unchangeable, in contrast to their features and characteristics. “Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action.”²⁹ According to the author, at the same time three statements apply. These are, firstly: these functions are independent of who and how performs them, secondly: the number of these functions in each fairy tale is limited, and thirdly: the sequence of functions is unchangeable, that is, it remains the same all the time.³⁰ Propp further develops his concept that all fairy tales have very similar properties and are therefore almost identical in their essence, and he also describes the displayed functions. According to this Russian scientist, there are a total of 31 of them (see Appendix A), and each of these is preceded by another important morphological component. This initial situation further affects the mentioned functions, such as absentation, interdiction and complicity, villainy and lacking, struggle, victory, punishment or wedding.³¹ Two conclusions can be drawn from an examination of individual functions. A more general conclusion is that one function results from another and is not excluded mutually, and a specific conclusion states that many functions are grouped into pairs, where their relationship is interdependent, in other words, the first function of the pair cannot do without the other. On the other hand, some are absolutely unique.³² In the words of the creator himself, “[this theme] fulfils the function of a criterion on the basis of which fairy tales can be further classified.”³³ According to the division of individual functions, seven types of characters are identified in *Morphology* (known as actants, or *dramatis personae*) appearing in fairy-tale texts. These are called: villain, donor, helper, Tsar’s daughter and her father, dispatcher, hero and false hero. Obviously, the author worked with Russian texts, which he is often accused of, and in order to apply these characters to fairy tales created by non-Russian writers, some renaming is necessary. However, it is not difficult to estimate that, for example, Tsar’s daughter and her father correspond to the figure of the princess and the king. There are three types of how the functions described above can be divided between the individual characters. The first variant is that the sphere of actions corresponds exactly to the character, the second is defined that one character includes several actions and the third that one sphere of actions is divided between several characters.³⁴ Propp and his work are mainly associated with two other names; the prominent French structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss and

²⁹ Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 21.

³⁰ Propp, *Morphology*, 21 – 22.

³¹ Propp, *Morphology*, 33 – 63.

³² Propp, *Morphology*, 64 – 65.

³³ Alice Jedličková, *Průvodce po světové literární teorii 20. století* (Brno: Host, 2012), 577, my translation.

³⁴ Propp, *Morphology*, 80 – 81.

the American folklorist Alan Dundes. The first mentioned author reacted to Propp's work in a negative way and it can be said that he influenced and subsequently in a way established how Propp was perceived throughout Europe. Although Lévi-Strauss criticised him, paradoxically, his review entitled *Structure and Form: Reflection on a Work by Vladimir Propp*, put the Russian folklorist to a leading position in the field. Lévi-Strauss himself was also engaged in structuralism, although not in magical fairy tales, but myths. He wrote a work on this topic called *The Structural Study of Myth*, which was published in 1955³⁵, that is, three years before the work by the Russian linguist was translated into English. The main primary reason why the French philosopher became interested in the work of his colleague was their similar approach to research. In consequence, it was assumed that Lévi-Strauss was inspired by *Morphology*, which he denied. To give an example: while Propp worked with functions, Lévi-Strauss called the smallest units mythemes. However, despite the mentioned similarities in their methods, their views differed in other areas. According to Serge Shishkoff, "Propp, while analysing the arrangement of functions within each fairy tale, largely ignored the precise semantic content of each function, that Lévi-Strauss sought to explore the semantic relationships between various mythemes within each myth and from myth to myth."³⁶ Thus, Propp's approach was syntagmatic, while Lévi-Strauss's paradigmatic. This refers to the theory of binary oppositions, which he considers to be a fundamental feature of human opinion. In literature, this means that all the stories are driven forward by a certain conflict, which was caused by the influence of opposing forces. A classic example of opposing forces is a hero and a villain. In the field of gender research, a man and a woman are considered such a pair. In that case, the binary opposition helps to perpetuate negative stereotypes and poses a problem. The above-mentioned review of Propp's work by Lévi-Strauss is based primarily on the opposing relationship between structuralism and formalism, where the French author claims that Propp accepted Russian formalism at the expense of structuralist analysis, which provides an opportunity for a more careful elaboration. An important point that Lévi-Strauss criticizes here is Propp's perception of content as less valuable than form. According to him, this difference does not fit into structuralism, but is a "kind of 'formalization' [which] destroys the research object."³⁷ As already indicated, Claude Lévi-Strauss was certainly not the only one who struggled in some

³⁵ Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 68, No. 270, Myth: A Symposium (October – December 1955): 1.

³⁶ Serge Shishkoff, "The Structure of Fairytales: Propp vs Lévi-Strauss," *Dispositio* 1, no. 3 (1976): 272.

³⁷ Maxim Aleksandrovich Monin, Vera Albertovna Terekhova and Elena Vladimirovna Ledeneva, "V.Y. Propp and C. Lévi-Strauss on the Myth and Folktale," *European Journal of Science and Theology*, Vol.15, No.3 (June 2019): 168.

way with Vladimir Propp and his work. This author was introduced to American folklore by Alan Dundes, who devoted two studies to him, specifically *From Etic to Emic Units in the Structural Study of Folktales* and *Structural Typology in North American Indian Folktales*. This American professor shares with Propp critical views against the ideas of the “Finnish School”, especially against the already mentioned representative Stith Thompson. He evaluates him negatively, in particular for his classification of motives, which he considers insufficient, and for the promotion of European centrism, because in his research he took into account “a European data corpus and hence may not be applicable to non-western material, e.g., African folk narrative.”³⁸ In the introduction to his work, Dundes defines two-time perspectives, on which he bases his approach to texts. The first of these, diachronic, in the words of Simon J. Bronner, approaches the development of materials from a historical point of view, while the second, synchronous, from the current point of view.³⁹ Although the diachronic approach persists in folklore, Dundes is a supporter of the synchronous approach, because an approach “without the social basis of the material”⁴⁰ is not correct. For this reason, in the polemic between Propp and Lévi-Strauss, he tends to side with the latter. Because Lévi-Strauss, as was said, applied a pragmatic approach, which was not limited to the analysis of a text without a cultural context, unlike Propp. On the other hand, according to Propp’s linear theory of predictable functions in fairy tales, Dundes presented his comparative unit of narrative – a motif “to which, in the model of linguistics, he adds the concept of allomotif, i.e. a specific implementation of one of the variants of the motifeme,”⁴¹ which became suitable elements for his preferred synchronous analysis. Dundes applied his theory mainly to Native American fairy tales, which he defines as a sequence of motifemes, adding that thanks to Propp and Kenneth L. Pike, from whom he borrowed his terminology, he was able to distinguish a number of clear patterns in these texts,⁴² which proves how fixed their structure is. One, and at the same time the simplest from the identified structural patterns, is the sequence of two motifemes, specifically from disequilibrium up to equilibrium. In other words, from the state of abundance or lack to their change. The author himself makes the following statement: “Folktales can consist simply of

³⁸ Alan Dundes, “The Motif-Index and the Tale Type Index,” *Journal of Folklore Research*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (September – December 1997): 196.

³⁹ Simon J. Bronner, ed., *Meaning of Folklore: The Analytical Essays of Alan Dundes*, (Utah: University Press of Colorado, 2007), 4.

⁴⁰ Bronner, *Meaning of Folklore*, 4.

⁴¹ Jan Luffer, “Současné katalogy lidových pověstí a pohádek (poznámky k typologickému a strukturálně-sémantickému přístupu),” *Etnologické rozpravy* 16 (January - February 2009): 86, my translation.

⁴² Alan Dundes, “Structural Typology in North American Indian Folktales,” *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* Vol. 19, No. 1 (Spring, 1963): 122.

relating how abundance was lost or how lack was liquidated.”⁴³ On this basis, he also named both motifemes, Lack and Lack Liquidated, which, in his opinion, are binding for every fairy tale. Additional sequences can then be joined to, or entered between, these paired motifemes. Although this American folklorist criticized Propp for inappropriately chosen study material, he himself substantiates his structural analysis on a corpus which, according to Stephen Stern, is not comprehensive⁴⁴ and his conclusions may lose value. As can be seen, all the mentioned structuralist theories have their pros and cons and are mentioned here because the chosen theme cannot be viewed simply by stating only one direction. However, due to the scope of the work and for a certain clarity of the analytical part, only one theory was chosen as the one on which the analysis will be based. Without suggesting that other views are inferior, the views are found in *Morphology*. Its structure of the text built on logical actions is seen here as more significant, which proves the undeniableness of a firm construction of fairy tales as their basic building block. Moreover, Propp’s work is understood as a certain turning point in the establishment of the structure of fairy tales, which is also a starting point for other folklorists.

As has already been said, in addition to the fixed “rules” that fairy tale writers must follow when writing them, there are other areas that, on the contrary, allow authors considerable diversity. For this reason, in his work Vladimir Propp defines also other elements of the fairy tale, which are not included among its functions, as they are variable. These allow the creation of versions which, although very similar in their essence, tell a completely different story, thanks to arbitrary criteria, such as age, status, appearance, peculiarities, but also the examined gender. This possibility of change is used by feminist fairy tales, whose task is to disrupt not only the mentioned stereotypes of gender roles but also the well-established narrative techniques.

1.2.2 Feminist Approach

Feminist critics, who urge to look at literature in a new light, are unsurprisingly one of the most numerous today, even though this concept did not appear until the second half of the last century. Their task is to draw attention to the male-dominant social view depicted in literary texts, and to correct this imbalance, as “fairy tales perpetuate the patriarchal status quo by making female subordination seem romantically desirable,”⁴⁵ as Karen E. Rowe puts it. The

⁴³ Dundes, “Structural Typology,” 122.

⁴⁴ Bronner, *Meaning of Folklore*, 181.

⁴⁵ Jack Zipes, “Feminism and Fairy Tales,” in *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, ed. Karen E. Rowe (New York: Routledge, 2012), 209.

following chapter outlines two fundamental phenomena in this area, where each of them reveals how the authors approached writing and what social arrangement they preferred. These approaches will be discussed in the practical part, during the analysis of individual works.

One of the ideas that can be observed from the first versions of fairy tales is androcentrism. In keeping with the definition found in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the meaning of the adjective *androcentric* is: “dominated by or emphasizing masculine interests or a masculine point of view.”⁴⁶ Accordingly, this theory can be understood as a fundamental thing in feminism, therefore in gender studies, which is also reflected in literature. Texts written in this way place men at the centre of events or reflect a man’s view of the world, thus pushing women to the margins of society. As has already been stated, countless books written in this way have been created and continue to exist, even in the field of children’s literature. In their research, Dr. David Anderson and Dr. Mykol Hamilton documented the under-representation of female characters in 200 top-selling children’s books in 2001.⁴⁷ Among them were undoubtedly especially texts from male authors who, whether consciously or not, created texts written in this way. This group also includes the Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault, whose versions of fairy tales are presented to children to this day and thus stimulate thinking about men, women and society where a patriarchal system is welcome. The basic elements of the literature written in this way include, for example, the existence of a culture where “men are considered the human type, while women are solely an accompaniment and subordinate assistant.”⁴⁸ In other words, women are needed only to preserve the family line. This approach, where women are treated as marginal characters whose purpose of being is defined only concerning the male character, can be observed in almost all the fairy tales by the above-mentioned authors. After all, the success of all princesses is considered to be the marriage and the subsequent life, as is paradoxically referred to, “happily ever after.” This situation can be observed, for example, in *Cinderella*, a fairy tale which serves as the primary literature of this work.

At the opposite end is the theory of gynocentrism, first introduced by the American literary critic Elaine Showalter in 1986. In her article “*Towards a Feminist Poetics*” she defined it as:

⁴⁶ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “androcentric,” accessed February 20, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/androcentric>.

⁴⁷ David A. Anderson, and Mykol Hamilton, “Gender Role Stereotyping of Parents in Children’s Picture Books,” *Sex Roles* 52, (February 2005): 145–151.

⁴⁸ Marina, D. Pérez, “*Anthropocentrism and Androcentrism: An ecofeminist connection*” (PhD diss., Södertörn University, 2009), 29.

The program of gynocritics is to construct a female frame work for the analysis of women's literature, to develop new models based on the study of female experience, rather than to adapt male models and theories. Gynocritics begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of male tradition, and focus instead on the new visible world of female culture.⁴⁹

In this context, children's literature began to emerge, which set itself the task of deviating from the standard depiction of princesses and creating fairy tales presenting the responsibilities and behaviours that we accept in certain situations, according to the female model. Thus, it opposes the above-mentioned theory and applies the method of reversing the values that have traditionally been attributed to women and therefore reflects in their works the shift of the second wave of feminism. According to Sian Melvill Hawthorne, "gynocentrism is perhaps best seen as a transitional phase in feminist theory."⁵⁰ Thus, by their efforts, these authors only showed a wave of resentment, but they failed to create gender-correct written literature. They rather contributed to the widening of the gap, thanks to the still applied binary thinking, as they simply interchanged the qualities and skills assigned to men and women. Among the examined books where this theory can be applied is *The Paper Bag Princess*, which will be compared with the previous one.

Both examined theories are based on the polarization of gender roles and within them, it is therefore inadmissible for female characters to show masculine behaviour or attitudes, and vice versa. This problem, occurring as the most serious, especially in society, has developed into a separate sector called gender studies.

2. Gender Studies

This chapter aims to put into context gender studies, the subject of which is the gender in question, and specifically to clarify the meaning of this concept, which is considered to be pivotal. The reason is the concept's striving for equality between men and women; therefore both of these subjects will be examined at the same level in the work. Furthermore, no less fundamental concepts will be outlined, such as gender role or gender stereotype, including their relation to society. The main effort of this section is to highlight the overall importance of the

⁴⁹ K.M. Newton, "Towards a Feminist Poetics," in *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory*, ed. Elaine Showalter (London: Palgrave, 1997), 217.

⁵⁰ Sian Melvill Hawthorne, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion, Second Edition* (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 2005), 3720.

research in this field, which shapes our society, while literature is an integral part of the necessary change.

2.1 The Concept of Gender

It can be stated that gender studies have evolved from feminism which, according to Joan Scott, “adopted the term ‘gender’ to refer to the social construction of sex differences.”⁵¹ This development is quite logical because change always comes from below, that is, from those who desire a reform the most – in this case, women. Their primary intention was to create awareness of women in various spheres, and thus correct knowledge concerning history and literature in particular. The feminist force was basically about re-writing the history that was taught till that time. This rectification of knowledge started due to the necessary need to conquer their social qualities. There was an urge to develop an idea where new thoughts were being produced. Thus began the fight for the production of knowledge that is different and represents humanity in the right way. It was only in the 1970s; until the second half of the 1960s, the focus of social studies was exclusively on men and the spheres they dominated. For such a ‘gender-blind’ society, the opposite sex was merely a representative of the traditional roles of wives and mothers, as *Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies* suggests.⁵² There was a rising need for society to think about what it means to be a woman. This new view was contributed by French intellectual Simone de Beauvoir in her work *The Second Sex*, where she claims: “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”,⁵³ which is a very important statement for liberating sexual difference from biological determinism. As feminism matured, the space for gender studies began to emerge as well. Judith Butler later built on Simone de Beauvoir, when she wrote in her essay that gender does not equal biological sex – something that one is born with – but is culturally shaped throughout one’s life as a “stylized repetition of acts”⁵⁴ that human beings choose to perform; from the way they dress to the way they move and speak thus creating their gender roles. Yet, sex and gender are inseparably connected; “it is mutually difficult to envision the one without the help of the other.”⁵⁵ According to Professor Giovanna Covi, if gender is to nature what sex is to culture, then it means that nature and culture cannot be set apart – the understanding of nature is cultural

⁵¹ Joanne Meyerowitz, “A History of 'Gender',” *The American Historical Review* (December 2008): 1346.

⁵² Jane Pilcher and Imelda Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2004), 56.

⁵³ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York: Vintage, 1997), 301.

⁵⁴ Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” *Theatre Journal*, vol. 40, no. 4 (December 1988): 519.

⁵⁵ Giovanna Covi, “Lecture no. 6,” Gender Studies 130182 (class lecture, University of Trento, Italy, October 2, 2019).

and the articulation of culture depends on the interpretation of nature. For this reason, it is important to think about ‘gendersex’ as one word. There is also a shared characteristic found in these two concepts. That is, not being dichotomous. Just as sex can be differentiated as chromosomal, hormonal, gonadal or genital, as is stated in *Women, Men and Society*, also gender includes a large number of attitudes, behaviours and social expectations.⁵⁶ Therefore there are many ways through which persons are constructing their identity and where gender differences manifest. While at the beginning it was about women, it needs to be stated that gender studies included in its body of knowledge also studies on men and masculinity, in addition to studies on women, femininity and sexuality. Authors Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran point out that although the term ‘male emancipation’ can seem as irony to many people, it is important not to forget that the traditional concept of masculinity is harmful in many ways. This is because gender norms and stereotypes dictate certain limitations for men too.⁵⁷ Thus they become subject to several constraints imposed on their performance of identity, only because their gender is male. Therefore, all sorts of differences of humanity can be put under the idea of gender nowadays. Moreover, there has also arisen a need to regard gender as ‘gender and its others’ because it became self-evident that gender never existed in isolation but quite the opposite: it’s accompanied by different aspects as well. This idea got its name, intersectionality, coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw and already in 2017 included in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, where it is defined as “the complex, cumulative manner in which the effects of different forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect.”⁵⁸ It means that gender interfaces with other categories of differences, such as ethnicity and race, age, religion, dis/ability, nationality, ideology, and citizenship. It follows that it is not possible to think about an identity that is only defined by gender and sex, but rather humanity must think about other categories of identity that combine with the category of ‘gendersex’ difference to define a person. Now, there is a need to engage the question: Who we are as humans, with our individual and collective diversities? However, this is not so simple in practice. The sad part about this is that gender remains conceptualized in the heterosexual concepts only because gender is forced to be indicated in polarity since there is a world with a binary gender system. Till today, many people still do not find the right words to address humans who do not fit into

⁵⁶ Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Women, Men, and Society* (Massachusetts: A Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1992), 21.

⁵⁷ Claire M. Renzetti and Daniel J. Curran, *Ženy, muži a společnost*, trans. Petr Pavlík (Praha: Nakladatelství Karolinum, 2003), 50.

⁵⁸ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “intersectionality,” accessed January 17, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intersectionality..>

the stereotypical category of 'feminine woman' or 'masculine man' and therefore are invisible to most of the societies of the world. For example, the colours, namely pink and blue, which are intended to represent certain characteristics of individual sexes, can be described as gender stereotypes. Interestingly, today we associate pink with girls and blue with boys, but it was not always the case. In fact, it used to be exactly the opposite. For example, even in pictures depicting religious motifs, it is possible to see that Virgin Mary is always dressed in blue in medieval and Renaissance art, because blue was associated with innocence, and therefore it was the 'right' colour for young girls. In contrast, "pink was seen as a lighter version of the masculine colour red, associated with blood and bravery"⁵⁹, and was therefore connected with boys. It might seem that World War II was behind this change, as it is well known that Adolf Hitler used pink colour to indicate homosexuals. But the truth is that the change came in the 1940s with the development of the children's clothing industry and the invention of new chemical dyes, which led to the massive production of different colours for boys and girls. Until then, children of both sexes wore white clothing for better sustainability of cleanness. It can be said that these and other stereotypes and issues have become one of the most addressed themes of our time. And it is so despite the above-mentioned fact that the history of gender studies does not go back very far. This comes as no surprise, as it is not only a summary of theories dealing with the cultural aspect of sex but also a real practice that applies to every human individual living on this planet. Thus, almost everyone has heard of the term 'gender studies' today. However, few realize that, although life on this planet rushes ahead at an unimaginable speed in many spheres, the development of gender studies (regardless of great efforts) can be considered rather obsolete at present time. So, there still exist gendered cultures and gendered languages that developed at times when men had the power, and no one denied it from them. But today can be seen as a time when, thanks to technology, male muscles are no longer needed, while women's flexibility and empathy are becoming much more desirable, and this requires change. Despite the fact that today there can be defined over 60 types of gender, the goal of feminist activities has not yet been achieved, because the highly patriarchal domination in the society still remains even many years later. As was already suggested, for this reason, the entire society can be described as 'gendered' because its "character is either masculine or feminine and [therefore] exhibits patterns of difference by gender."⁶⁰ A question is offered, who's blame it is. The whole society indeed is to blame. This simple reason was addressed in a TedTalk

⁵⁹ Anne Wagner and Richard K. Sherwin, *Law, Culture and Visual Studies* (New York: Springer, 2014), 254.

⁶⁰ Pilcher and Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies*, 59.

performance by the Nigerian writer and feminist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who can bring philosophical concepts into the real world, and thus spread gender into the awareness of ordinary people. She finds the cause in the way, how children are brought up. For instance, boys are brought up into men, believing that to perform masculinity is the only right way. Instead, boys need to be taught to be vulnerable because it is a part of humanity, as she says.⁶¹ And this is the task for the younger generations to come – not to forget that “culture is not there to make us – we need to make culture.”⁶² And to do it in a way to make sure that this culture allows us to live better.

There is no doubt that this current worrying situation requires change, that is why there are attempts to move forward in small steps by creating various ‘gender troubles’. This connection of words was used in the work of the same name, written by the already mentioned American gender theorist Judith Butler, which triggered a wave of a new understanding of this term, and not only in connection with gender. Thanks to her, the term ‘trouble’ no longer has only a negative meaning; as at the same time, it is a way of creating space for a solution to the problem, which leads to a change. The creation of this space is happening in various areas of human activity because gender is both *epistémé* and *techné* – both knowing, and knowing how to do; both theory and practice. And so also literature, which forms a significant part of human culture, belongs among these areas where the concept of gender is reflected.

2.2 The Importance of Gender in Contemporary Literature

Just like everything in the surrounding world is undergoing historical development, the same process is unfolding also in literature. Therefore, it is important to first shortly outline the context, within which contemporary Anglo-American literature exists, and thanks to which it is possible to better understand why ‘gender and its others’ should be accepted as an integral part of literature.

It was relatively simple until the 1970s because Anglo-American literature presented itself as linear and democratic. However, the canonical concept of this literature, which was established as the norm, began to disintegrate. In this development, two events taking place at that time turned out to be crucial. The first of these influences was the already-indicated social movement for the liberation of women, which strove for equal rights and opportunities, but also their

⁶¹ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “We should all be feminists,” filmed December 2012 at TEDxEuston, London, UK, video, 10:32–11:17, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists#t-598395.

⁶² Adichie, “We should all be feminists,” 27:18.

greater personal freedom. The second important milestone was the year 1964, which brought a change in the form of the Civil Rights Act in the United States of America. This affected the fundamental human rights, as all individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, religion, gender or origin. In this connection, also the development of other spheres has been influenced, as people of different races and genders began to be heard in addition to masculine males of white skin. Over time, the world has reached a situation in which life on the planet is connected into one immense web. In consequence, as soon as something happens at one end, it will often manifest itself at the other end very quickly. Although some problems may seem remote, they are affecting everyone due to the ever-increasing interconnectivity. This new cultural conception, of course, has been reflected in creative human activities, where literature definitely belongs. With this in mind, it is necessary to approach the problem of intersectionality, which is closely related to gender issues.

There is a need to remember that the Anglo-American literature of today is a part of a globalized world, as has been outlined previously. Such a complex connection is a result of a long-time process. Therefore, although the writers that will be mentioned may represent different times throughout history, they all address the gender issues and ways that interconnect and relate with each other. The existence of gender-correct written literature reveals its importance in the real life, demonstrating the desire for change in direction to equal-rights society regardless of people and their different identities. The world has shown in its past that there is no need to tie humankind to one race, culture or gender but that the richness is in its diversity. Therefore, there is a need to be open to dialogues across differences, for which literature creates space. Particularly literature for children, which functions as a form of education, instils important principles and values in the listener, later the reader, and its influence on children as a future generation is therefore irreplaceable. Fairy tales not only awaken the imagination but also teach children to behave and love appropriately. Fairy tales have always been one of the mechanisms of culture for instilling roles and models of behaviour. Their protagonists often enable children to witness gender identity for the first time and thus help them recognise the cultural norms accepted in society. As stated by Akeena Ann George “the prevalence of books and reading in their lives means that children will take in the information presented in these books and use it to shape how they perceive their own gender.”⁶³ For this reason, fairy tales should portray a world that corresponds to the best possible idea, and to educate the audience to create exactly

⁶³ “WAITING FOR HER KNIGHT: GENDER STEREOTYPES IN FAIRYTALES,” Jaipur Literature Festival, accessed February 4, 2021. <https://jaipurliteraturefestival.org/blog/waiting-for-her-knight-gender-stereotypes-in-fairytales>.

such culture, where being a man or a woman is not predestined based on well-established stereotypes. After all, this creation is associated with optimism and harmony where good triumphs over evil.

2.2.1 Gender in Fairy Tales

The following subchapter deals with the development of fairy tales from the perspective of gender. It lists often neglected authors who tried to promote their work from the very beginning of this genre and explains why their efforts were sidelined, to the benefit of other authors, whose names are much better known today. It also mentions selected authors and their attitudes who, during the historical development of fairy tales, tried to push for (more or less successful) change or return to the oppressed approach, depending on their view of the respective problem. This part, therefore, provides a cross-section of the gender perspective on children's literature from the first attempts in the 17th century to the most elaborate versions in the 21st century.

The desires and ideas of a better society were reflected in fairy tales long before the studies on gender equality have begun. Already in the 1690s in France, a tradition of fairy tales written by women was born. These are called *conteuses*, i.e. female tale-tellers.⁶⁴ In their stories, they depict a dream world with active heroines, as they would like reality to be, for here too “the fairy tale's magic fulfils multiple desires.”⁶⁵ These writers were well aware that they are contributing to the birth of a new genre and created texts that were long and playful, but especially self-referential and self-conscious. However, despite producing more than two-thirds of the fairy tales that were part of the first wave of their production in France, d'Aulnoy, Lhéritier, La Force and other female names are now much less known than Charles Perrault, who worked in the same era and was their rival. His work can be described as less sophisticated compared to *counteuses*, yet his narrative model won and became dominant. “Since [his stories] underlined a patriarchal notion of sex roles, [they were] bound to be a success.”⁶⁶ The Grimm brothers in their edition of the folk tales *Children's and Household Tales* even highlighted their French colleague, but labelled the female writers as ‘his imitators’, even though they actually started creating fairy tales earlier. Elizabeth Wanning Harries sees the overlooking of these writers as a neglected part of the fairy tale tradition, which, in her words, proves “how one-side and narrow our conception of the fairy tale has become.”⁶⁷ As can be correctly assumed, this

⁶⁴ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 5.

⁶⁵ Cristina Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 5.

⁶⁶ Zipes, *Oxford Companion*, xxvi.

⁶⁷ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 5.

happened for one simple reason, i.e., the gender imbalance of the social era. This created a collection of texts that we now call “a classical fairy-tale canon of the Western World that has been in existence ever since the 19th century, if not earlier,”⁶⁸ to borrow Jack Zipes’ words. The fairy tales from the giants of this stream, known as the ‘compact model’, where the “stories do not seem to depend on other stories”⁶⁹, used by the Grimm brothers, Charles Perrault and Hans Christian Andersen, clearly testify their view of the world from a position of influential men. In other words, fairy tales, as well as other literary works, are influenced by their creators and the time they were created. And therefore, in these versions, which are considered the classics, as they have been passed down from generation to generation for centuries, established patterns can be seen. For example, the feminine element is represented in traditional fairy tales in a way that can be described as blatantly gender-stereotyped. Ruth B. Bottigheimer in her book entitled *Grimms’ Bad Girls and Bold Boys: The Moral And Social Vision of the Tales* compares two versions of Grimms’ fairy tale collections. She points out that although there had been significant changes, due to the already mentioned new values promoted in the respective era, “while violence — no matter how brutal — generally made the cut, the physical truths of womanhood, including pregnancy and premarital sex, did not.”⁷⁰ In the worst case, the feminine element does not appear at all until the 1970s. Nevertheless, society and, consequently, the audience of readers and listeners began to change, and with this, there arose a need for literature reflecting the period changes that people were facing. It is, therefore, no wonder that this malleable genre has been influenced by the feminist movement too, offering variations of classical fairy tales that try to break free from the apparently patriarchal structure. During the 1980s, a creation that put women at the centre of the story began to emerge. These heroines completely refuted the established stereotypes, but at the same time emphasized the superiority over men, and therefore still did not offer the same opportunities for all genders to experience the story. A typical example is Robert Munsch’s *The Paper Bag Princess*, which proves that a gynocentric approach, when a fearless princess rescues a passive prince, does not lead to the creation of a gender-correct story. As a result, the change in society has brought a change for the better also in fairy tales, as can be read in the publication *Women, Men, and Society*.⁷¹ And although a few years later there was roughly the same number of male and female characters, the ways of portraying them did not differ significantly, and any changes did

⁶⁸ Jack Zipes, *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1.

⁶⁹ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 17.

⁷⁰ Maddie Crum, “Happily Ever After. How Women Became Seen But Not Heard In Our Favorite Fairy Tales,” The Huffington Post, March 2016, <https://testkitchen.huffingtonpost.com/grimm/#>.

⁷¹ Renzetti and Curran, *Women, Men, and Society*, 68.

not provide significant improvement in the development of gender-correct written literature, As for the representation of the male group of characters, the situation can be described as even worse. The reason for this is the low incidence of discussion regarding the gender stereotype of masculinity compared to the stereotype of femininity, which is discussed enormously. In the words of Judith Shapiro, “the social and cultural dimensions of maleness are often dealt with implicitly rather than explicitly.”⁷² Although these texts, that try to change the tradition of classic fairy tales full of conventional views of the gender category, are indicated as ‘feminist fairy tales’, “in speaking out for women [they] also speak out for the other oppressed groups. [They] are being used to elaborate social choices and alternatives for both females and males.”⁷³ According to *Don't Bet on the Prince*, it is no exception that the authors of these kinds of fairy tales are also men themselves who, like women, are dissatisfied with the development in society. This literature, whether written by a male or female writer, is aimed at society in such a way that it challenges the stereotyped expectations of social roles and relationships and seeks to remedy them.⁷⁴ This is the current attitude to fairy tales, which Jack Zipes calls ‘revisions’ that, according to some claims, use new techniques and not just retelling. This category includes, for example, the American writer Donna Jo Napoli and her creation, as well as *Forgotten Fairy Tales of Brave and Brilliant Girls* by the British writer Kate Pankhurst. Both authoresses thus challenge the canon. These texts of the third wave of feminism in stories for children still lag behind the evolving concept of society, but entail the right legacy, specifically, that women and men have their natural differences, but yet can be equal to each other. Christina Bacchilega refers to this creation and its authors as ‘postmodern’. In her opinion, such fairy tales “reactivate the wonder tale’s ‘magic’ or mythopoetic qualities by providing new readings of it.”⁷⁵ However, these techniques are very similar to those used by the aforementioned female predecessors in the second half of the 17th century, hence the term ‘postmodern’ in the meaning of new or never done or known before, is often highly criticized. To put it another way, throughout the history of the written form of fairy tales, from the very beginning, there were opposing views that questioned the patterns of mainstream male narrators. Scientists in the field, Shawn C. Jarvis and Jeannine Black, dealing with the production of female writers, have created a comprehensive edition of a selection of works, which is a ground-breaking work on

⁷² Aihwa Ong and Michael G. Peletz, *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia* (London: University of California Press, 1995), 79.

⁷³ Jack Zipes, “Feminism and Fairy Tales,” in *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, ed. Karen E. Rowe (New York: Routledge, 2012,) Preface, xi–xii.

⁷⁴ Zipes, *Don't Bet on the Prince*, xii.

⁷⁵ Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales*, 22.

these writers in English. They contain texts that are fundamentally different from their male colleagues. Based on an assessment by Hilary Brown, “many of the tales centre on female protagonists and their encounters with the magical. Here, young girls carry out their own feisty quests, princesses pursue, rescue and even murder princes, mothers rather than fathers have special bonds with their children, and old women are wise and good and use their magic for the benefit of their sex.”⁷⁶ The current literary movement initiated by the feminist movement therefore rather follows the above-mentioned, until recently neglected, creation, which is “complex in [its] reimaginings of well-known and more conventional fairy-tale patterns and motifs.”⁷⁷ *Twice Upon a Time* states that feminists have been criticizing these stereotyped approaches for nearly three decades.⁷⁸ Because this book was published at the beginning of the millennium, it means that today it is almost half a century during which the authors have been trying to correct the expectations about the social behaviour of women. And “the result has been a remarkable production of non-sexist fairy tales for children and adults, as well as theoretical works that explore the underlying implications of gender roles in fairy tales.”⁷⁹ Of course, the authors of these stories do not naively believe in transforming social behaviour through their work, nevertheless, their influence cannot be taken lightly. According to the research carried out by psychologists and educators, this creation really affects the way children perceive the world around them, thus creating part of their cultural heritage, as Jack Zipes, who calls fairy tales the key agents of socialisation, points out.⁸⁰ This is not a complete interchanging of the roles of individual sexes when a brave knight would be replaced by a female version. Gender-correct written fairy tales should be approached in such a way that “the personality traits and actions of heroes and heroines are not tied to their gender and do not entail a complex set of characteristics considered in society to be appropriate for a specific sex.”⁸¹ In such a case, female characters would not depend on male protagonists, and their power could be seen as directly proportional. To make this genre of “unconventional fairy tales” accepted, it is necessary to support the social change in the field of gender in other areas as well. The authoress researching non-traditionally conceived statements about gender, Bronwyn Davies, found out that only children whose parents did not instil in them polarizing and sexist ideas of

⁷⁶ Hilary Brown, “Review,” review of *The Queen's Mirror: Fairy Tales by German Women*, by Shawn C. Jarvis and Jeannine Blackwell, Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH Co. KG, 2001.

⁷⁷ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 16.

⁷⁸ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 13.

⁷⁹ Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Come True: Classical Fairy Tales and Their Tradition* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 25.

⁸⁰ Zipes, *Don't Bet on the Prince*, xii.

⁸¹ Igor Nosál, *Obrazy dětství v dnešní české společnosti. Studie ze sociologie dětství* (Brno: Barrister&Principal, 2004,) 63, my translation.

social inclusion responded positively to reading stories with feminist motives. On the contrary, most of the children, unfortunately, responded negatively and could not identify with non-traditionally portrayed roles. The reason was that “the previously inculcated structure of a traditional story [made it impossible for children] to hear a different type of story at all.”⁸² There are several kinds of gender stereotypes, i.e. simplified ideas on which specific character traits should be assigned to individual categories. To a large extent, these are found in traditional fairy tales, and which directly influence a child's understanding of society, based on both female and male characters.

2.2.1.1 Stereotypes of Female Characters in Traditional Fairy Tale

The work of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm became so famous, that it began to determine the general idea of what not only the construction of a fairy tale should look like, but also its protagonists. For women, a picture of female passivity as a role model was established, because the authors portray women in their limited roles, often imprisoned, waiting to be rescued by a man. An example of the stereotypical depiction of a female character is the well-known story of *Little Red Riding Hood* by Charles Perrault, whose altered version of the original narrative is strictly heterosexual in nature because the main protagonist is “‘naturally’ both victim and seducer.”⁸³ Her attractive appearance, which is a highly prized feature of female characters in general, contributes to this. Thanks to their beauty, not their skillfulness, female protagonists achieve success⁸⁴, and sometimes even earn the right to come to life again. The message in these stories to the young girls is thus clear: the only thing that really matters is a beautiful face; otherwise you have no chance of achieving happiness in your life. The aforementioned life happiness is depicted in fairy tales by marrying a prince and is thus the main objective in the lives of female characters. Other ways to happiness include “the ‘sleep’ of Sleeping Beauty or of Snow White in her glass coffin, the uncomplaining self-abnegation of Cinderella, the patience and silence of the sisters who work to save their seven or twelve brothers, the princess who must be rescued from towers or briar hedges or forests or servitude”⁸⁵, to borrow Harrie’s words. In contrast to beautiful and innocent princesses, there is a second basic category of female characters, as is written in a publication by Igor Nosál.⁸⁶ The category consists of witches and other negative female representatives associated with the supernatural abilities of

⁸² Renzetti and Curran, *Ženy, muži a společnost*, 119, my translation.

⁸³ Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales*, 57.

⁸⁴ Nosál, *Obrazy dětství*, 57.

⁸⁵ Wanning Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 13.

⁸⁶ Nosál, *Obrazy dětství*, 61.

evil, who lack good qualities such as intelligence, courage and moral respect. Because beauty is associated with good, these evil beings are also unattractive in appearance. If a positive and handsome counterpart of such a character appears in a fairy tale, it is most often in the form of magical fairies. However, even they do not achieve their objectives through their talents and qualities, but through supernatural magical power. According to authors Leslee Farish Kuykendall and Brian W. Sturm “these powerful women are still separated from traditional fairy tale women in that they are not truly human.”⁸⁷ Furthermore, such stories “foster an existential belief in eventual assistance, whatever the presenting problem may be,”⁸⁸ because fairies use their supernatural abilities exclusively for the benefit of passive princesses. The readers are thus attacked by gender-based roles that force them to adopt traditional femininity. The concept of a protagonist with a “quiet and mostly wordless demeanour is consistent with Grimm’s overall vision of good girls and women as silent.”⁸⁹ In their stories, female talking is associated with malice and cruelty, which must be punished or removed from the world. Last but not least, princesses and other representatives of female characters are the property of men – whether of father King or of the Prince whom they will marry. This mutual relationship also reinforces the idea of women’s social and economic dependence on men. Thus depicted ideology of femininity then dictates the above-mentioned qualities to girls, because they seem like perfect models of behaviour in the stories, and consequently create a hunt for male consent, instead of trying to gain self-sufficiency. When listening to or reading such fairy tales, children face outdated opinions on the role and position of women in society.

2.2.1.2 Stereotypes of Male Characters in Traditional Fairy Tale

Although the female stereotypes depicted in fairy tales are much more discussed, it does not mean that the depiction of male characters is in compliance with the gender-ideal society. The contrary is true. “For years the classical literary tales were mainly articulations and representations of a male viewpoint,”⁹⁰ and for this reason, in their texts, they described male heroes according to their ideals. Therefore, the protagonists do not lack more or less opposite characteristics of female characters, because “all ‘correct’ men must not manifest any of the

⁸⁷ Leslee Farish Kuykendall and Brian W. Sturm, “We Said Feminist Fairy Tales, Not Fractured Fairy Tales!,” *Children and Libraries* (Winter 2007): 39.

⁸⁸ Martine Hennard, and Duthell de la Rochère, *Cinderella across Cultures: New Directions and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2016), 28.

⁸⁹ Hennard and de la Rochère, *Cinderella Across Cultures*, 39.

⁹⁰ Zipes, *Don’t Bet on the Prince*, xii

female features”⁹¹. Masculine heroes are therefore active and always in the right place at the right time. They radiate courage, energy and dignity. They are entrusted with tasks that require intellect and physical strength, which are admirable and valued qualities. Last but not least, they are handsome and, especially, rich, which makes them a man whom every woman desires because thanks to him she would get her ‘happily ever after.’ Overall, therefore, male characters appear flawless, but they cannot be described as complex, because their character is not developed much and they lack various features and different aspects of their personality. Often, even their own name, which is an important identifying function, is not known and the reader only learns their designation, or the title, the Prince, although he is someone who solves the main problem of the story. For example, we meet the Prince in Snow White only at the very end, when he falls in love with her at first sight and decides to take her to his castle. It is interesting that while every traditional fairy tale contains this masculine element, personifying the mentioned abilities, the female element is less predictable. It seems that the creators of these texts considered the typical behaviour of the opposite sex to be less important. Female characters either appear in fairy tales about classic mixed couples, forcing the traditional concept of gender complementarity, i.e. that women and men complement each other naturally, such as Cinderella and the Prince, Beauty and the Beast, or the female character is even missing entirely. On the other hand, creation, where only female heroines would appear, is not frequent and originated much later than the above-mentioned stories, as was already indicated. Thus, it can be stated that the texts, which we consider to be traditional fairy tales, as they have been transmitted in their specific form for many years, have hidden patterns of male dominance and female subordination, and thus can be described as ‘male-centred’. These different approaches to male and female characters are discussed in the following section, which presents the main analysis of this work.

3. Analysis

In this section, four fairy tales will be analysed. The books were selected in such a way to make the analysis as diverse as possible, considering the described trends related to gender. Individual analyses are always divided into two separate parts corresponding to the literary approaches mentioned in the theoretical section of this thesis, in order to find out how the respective authors

⁹¹ Doležalová Lucie, “Gender Stereotypes in Educational Communication at Nursery Schools,” *Studia paedagogica* 14 no. 1 (2009): 168.

work with fixed but also variable factors of fairy tales. Due to the fact that the main topic of the work is to compare especially the depiction of gender situations embodied in female and male characters, the analysis of these variables will be intentionally more detailed than the structuralist one, which complements the overall picture of fairy tales, and is included here to confirm that all examined texts fall within the genre of a literary fairy tale, which is defined precisely by the fixed arrangement of its elements. The analyses of individual works then correspond to the scope of each examined book.

3.1 *Belle-Belle, ou Le Chavailer Fortuné* by Madame d'Aulnoy

The tales written by Countess Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy differ from the two following at first sight by length. "On average d'Aulnoy's tales run twenty-five pages of modern print,"⁹² as Jacques Barchilon states. This is not different in the case of the fairy tale titled *Belle-Belle, ou Le Chevalier Fortuné*. Because the stories by this authoress often combine the characteristics of the individual categories of the Aarne and Thomson's system, this fairy tale fits right into three of them. Specifically, these are Tale Types 531 "the clever horse," 513 "the supernatural helpers" and 514, which is defined as "woman disguised as man." Since it has already been mentioned at what time the story originated, it is not surprising that a topic, where a woman achieves a position comparable to a man, was perceived as a gender change. As Caroline T. Trost describes, "d'Aulnoy's tale presents a perceptive story of a woman fully capable of surpassing not only her male lover in all his typically masculine characteristics and exploits but also any woman, within her 17th-century French sociocultural context."⁹³ This authoress of a journal article on the discussed work further adds that such a theme can be found in many other d'Aulnoy's tales, nevertheless, this is a characteristic motif where gender questions dominate. For this reason, the story of *Belle-Belle* was chosen. Because the original of this fairy tale is written in French, the translation by the English writer James Robinson Planché is used for the analysis.

3.1.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters

As for the stereotypical portrayal, we do not encounter such characters in this story. Men and women often share their qualities. What's more, one character is not just a personification of good or bad character traits. Both female and male characters are depicted in all the complexity

⁹² Jacques Barchilon, "Marvels & Tales," *Wayne State University Press* Vol. 23, No. 2 (2009), 355.

⁹³ Caroline T. Trost, "BELLE-BELLE, OU LE CHEVALIER FORTUNÉ: A LIBERATED WOMAN IN A TALE BY MME D'AULNOY," *Merveilles & contes*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (May 1991): abstract.

of how people behave in the real world. Thus, the contrasts of good and evil are not represented in the characters here. This is proved in the introduction of the respective characters. The very first sentence, for example, introduces readers and listeners to the story. “Once upon a time, there was a very good, very mild, and very powerful King.”⁹⁴ The combination of qualities, such as “good” and “powerful”, proves that the authoress disrupts the later established form of male characters, who are often mentioned by other authors as those who have great power or strength, but not in combination with a courtesy, which on the contrary is often attributed more to women who are respectful and considerate of other people. Furthermore, it is possible to notice this disruption in the description of the King’s sister, which is described in the following way: “This Princess became a widow at a very early age; she was clever and beautiful; it is true she was proud, violent, and difficult of access.”⁹⁵ As has already been mentioned, in traditional fairy tales we do not encounter female characters who would have qualities such as cleverness and fury, and at the same be considered beautiful in appearance. On the contrary, anger is often associated with ugliness. Even more crucial is the combination of clever and beautiful, because it is customary for beautiful princesses not to be clever, or at least cleverness is not mentioned as their virtue. It is, therefore, possible to observe the authoress’s belief in the colourful depiction of the positive and negative aspects of her female and male protagonists. At the beginning of this story, the audience further encounters an old nobleman, about whom they learn that he has three daughters. Since the King gave the order to form an army and demanded that every household in his kingdom send their best representatives, the nobleman had no choice but to choose one of his daughters. This moment proves that the Countess considered women and men capable of the same actions, even in the case of physical fight, and therefore their position in society is presented as equal. Determined to fight for the local kingdom, all three mentioned daughters, from the oldest to the youngest named Belle-Belle, gradually set out disguised as men in order to be accepted into the army. The two older sisters return home without success, because they did not pass through the trapped test in the form of a shepherdess who is in fact a magical fairy, and they are exposed as women who deliberately altered their appearances in order to conceal their identities. This test consists of fulfilling the task of helping the old shepherd to get her sheep out of the deep ditch where they allegedly fell. The oldest daughter speaks to the old woman very politely but does not offer help. Such behaviour is usually regarded as too feminine, which is seen in the following extract.

⁹⁴ Madame d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy* (London: G. Routledge & Co., 1856): 470.

⁹⁵ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 470.

‘What are you about there, good shepherdess?’ said she. ‘Alas!’ replied the shepherdess, ‘I am trying to save my sheep, which is nearly drowned, and I am so weak that I have not the strength to drag it out.’ ‘I am sorry for you,’ said she, and without offering her any assistance rode off.⁹⁶

This sister thus reveals her gender, as well as the next one, who tries to be impolite, even rude, as such behaviour is attributed to men, but she does not pluck up the courage to help either.

‘Unfortunate creature that I am,’ cried the old woman, ‘half my flock perish in this manner; if any one would but help me, I could save this animal, but everybody flies from me.’ ‘How is it, shepherdess, that you take so little care of your sheep, that you let them fall into the water?’ said the fair cavalier, and without giving her any other consolation, she spurred her horse, and rode on.⁹⁷

Both older sisters fail because their actions can be interpreted as “a lack of confidence in their physical strength or as a lack of the grace and courtesy necessary for their success.”⁹⁸ Only the youngest of the daughters, due to her qualities and fearlessness, succeeds.

‘I am truly sorry for you,’ said Belle-Belle; ‘and to prove that I pity you, I will help you.’ She dismounted instantly from her horse, which was so quiet, that she did not take the trouble to fasten it to anything to prevent its running away; and jumping over the hedge, after receiving a few scratches, she plunged into the ditch, and worked so well, that she succeeded in recovering the favourite sheep. ‘Do not cry any more, my good mother,’ said she to the shepherdess: ‘there is your sheep; and considering the long time it has been in the water, I think it is very lively.’⁹⁹

The above-mentioned passages from the discussed fairy tale encourage boys and girls to be brave, and at the same time destroy the monotonous patterns of behaviour for the respective genders. Because the youngest daughter succeeds both thanks to her politeness and bravery, so the fairy believes she is a man, the passage above suggests to the audience that good manners are not only for girls, but both sexes share this quality. This is evidenced also by the following quote, which is a direct talk of the magical fairy. “[...] they appeared so heartless, and their conduct to me was so ungracious, that I took means to interrupt their journey.”¹⁰⁰ The fairy thus justifies the punishment of the two older daughters precisely for not showing affection which they must show even disguised as men. On the other hand, she rewards the youngest of the three sisters for her willingness by a new horse and also equips her with a magic chest. Considering the mission ahead, Belle-Belle begins to use the name Chevalier Fortuné, which accompanies her through her masculine identity. In this part of the fairy tale, another

⁹⁶ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 471.

⁹⁷ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 472.

⁹⁸ Trost, “BELLE-BELLE,” 59.

⁹⁹ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 474.

¹⁰⁰ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 474.

fundamental situation occurs, when female and male beauty is celebrated at the same level, and thus the writer again gives equality to both depicted genders, using the following words: “[...] she appeared so wonderfully beautiful, that she dazzled the eyes of Belle-Belle. [...] Was there ever seen a cavalier more handsome, better made, or more beautifully dressed? How gracefully he manages that superb horse?”¹⁰¹ In addition to a consistent physical appearance, this story also emphasizes the personal initiator of the story. Because as Fortuné goes into battle, she becomes the main protagonist in this fairy tale, which disrupts the stereotypical portrayal of women as victims passively waiting to be saved, and at the same time the authoress once again provides a clear answer to the question of women’s situation in society. The depicted relationship between gender and power is connected with this. To succeed in battle, Fortuné hires seven brave and devoted men whom she leads. In this way, she demonstrates her good commanding skills, which the reader would traditionally expect to be embodied rather in a male character. However, she prefers diplomatic agility at the expense of strength as an attribute of physical action. This is evidenced by the excerpt below, which shows the negotiating skills as well as the success of the chief protagonist in the form of authority in the event of disputes in her army. The combination of the described actions, therefore, does not form the basis of monotonous thinking attributed to either a male or a female character.

‘My friends,’ said Fortuné, ‘with a commanding air, you have all done wonders; but we ought to leave it to the King to acknowledge our services. I should be very sorry to be rewarded by any other hand than his. Believe me, let us leave all to his will; he sent us to recover his treasures, and not to steal them. The thought of it even is so shameful, that I am of opinion it should never be mentioned again; and I assure you, I myself will do so much for you, that you will have nothing to regret, if it be possible the King should neglect you.’

The seven gifted men, deeply penetrated by their master’s remonstrance, fell at his feet, and promised him that his will should be theirs; and with this determination they finished their journey.¹⁰²

On the other hand, there are these seven warriors who abound in physical strength and courage, and yet in this work, they allow be led by a woman, because they respect her and recognize her leadership abilities, regardless of gender. This again proves the authoress’s impartiality in depicting male and female characters.

Belle-Belle/Fortuné strengthens her power by winning all tournaments where she surpasses other soldiers. This situation culminates when the chief protagonist kills a dragon, which is a

¹⁰¹ d’Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d’Aulnoy*, 476.

¹⁰² d’Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d’Aulnoy*, 507.

task commonly attributed to princes as proof of their courage, as Caroline T. Trost points in her study.¹⁰³ Precisely for her manly qualities and values, the King's widowed sister falls in love with this character. The authoress's talent to combine various qualities and actions, which is usually attributed to specific genders, takes on a completely new dimension here. Harold Neemann highlights the Queen's courtship with the chevalier, in which she takes an active role, while the knight shyly gives in to her suggestions, violating the traditional conventions of royal courtships, to which the fairy-tale audience is accustomed. Nevertheless, there are presented negative qualities, commonly associated with feminine behaviour, which the King's sister exhibits, such as a fondness for manipulation and contempt. However, Belle-Belle/Chevalier Fortuné does not return her love. Even though the King does not manifest entirely masculine qualities, Belle-Belle falls in love just with him. Although this man was born a monarch, he has no ruling qualities. He is often manipulated by his sister and his most appreciated trait is his handsome appearance. In his kingdom, he waits idly for salvation, making him a passive male character, to whom readers are not traditionally accustomed. The information below about this couple of the King and the main female protagonist, presented at the International Conference of ISSEI, again underlines the reason for selecting this tale, specifically, that the creation of Madame d'Aulnoy and other 17th-century female tale-tellers surpassed its time in the field of gender balance.

Moreover, the juxtaposition of the strong heroine with the weak king reveals the androgyny of both protagonists. The female character, Belle-Belle, is androgynous not only with respect to her changing of name, clothing and role, but also on a more profound level in that her personality combines qualities typically considered feminine or masculine.¹⁰⁴

Some authors even see a female transvestite in disguise, with which the author would even surpass the traditional gender definition on the binary level.

Based on previously established concepts, Belle-Belle would be expected to be punished for her overconfident conduct at the end of the story, but Madame d'Aulnoy on the contrary rewarded her character for her actions with a happy ending and marriage to a King whom the protagonist choose herself. Belle-Belle thus became the Queen who had already demonstrated her ruling abilities throughout the story. Within her marriage to the King, Belle-Belle is the

¹⁰³ Trost, "BELLE-BELLE," 59.

¹⁰⁴ Harold Neemann, "Early Modern French Feminine Narratives: Subverting Gender Roles and Sexual Identity in Mme d'Aulnoy's *Beauty or the Fortunate Knight* (1698)," *Language and the Scientific Imagination*, Language Centre, University of Helsinki (Finland), 28 July – 2 August 2008, 6.

more dominant part which the weak and sensitive ruler needs by his side. This conclusion confirms the non-stereotypical depiction of the characters.

3.1.2 Structure of the Work

From a structuralist point of view, there is an initial starting point, which establishes subsequent events. There is a presentation of the problem faced by the kingdom, which is the main reason for the following sequence of the functional events. In other words, this phase presents the initial misfortune, to which the main character reacts in a certain way. In this fairy tale, it is the dispute between the King and the neighbouring Emperor that results in a battle. For this reason, the King gives this order to which, as was already mentioned, the main character reacts.

[...] King was not inclined to sit down patiently under his misfortunes. He called round him a few troops, and formed by degrees a small army, to increase which as quickly as possible, he issued a proclamation, requiring all the gentlemen of his kingdom to come and serve in person, or to send one of their sons well mounted and armed, and disposed to second all his enterprises.¹⁰⁵

It is clear from the example that another present function must be separation, i.e. that one of the family members leaves home and then “the adieus and regrets affecting on each side”¹⁰⁶ follow. In the fairy tale by d'Aulnoy, this part is repeated even three times, as there are three daughters of the old nobleman, one of whom becomes the heroine of the tale. Consequently, the protagonist meets a “donor”, who tests him and rewards him, often with magical abilities, with which he will then win in battles.

[...] for I am a fairy, and take pleasure in heaping benefits upon those who deserve them. You have a miserably poor horse; I will give you one.’ She struck the ground as she spoke with her crook, and immediately Belle-belle heard a neighing behind a bush; she turned quickly, and saw the most beautiful horse in the world.¹⁰⁷

‘He has many other qualities which I will detail to you. In the first place, he only eats once in eight days. You need not be at the trouble of looking after him; he knows the present, the past, and the future. I have had him a long time, and I have trained him as for myself. Whatever you wish to know, or whenever you need advice, you have but to address yourself to him; he will give you such good counsel, that sovereigns would be happy to have ministers like him; you must therefore consider him more as your friend than your horse.’¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 470.

¹⁰⁶ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 471.

¹⁰⁷ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 474 – 475.

¹⁰⁸ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 475.

The following function also fits into Propp's structuralist description of fairy tales. According to him, the protagonist in these texts is forbidden to do some activity, or on the contrary, is commanded to do something. This second possibility is introduced in the quote below, when the fairy speaks to Belle-Belle, saying: "You must also assume a name, for Belle-Belle will not suit the profession you are about to enter. It strikes me you might call yourself the Chevalier Fortuné."¹⁰⁹ Thus the fairy gives her a specific command. Also, at the end of this fairy tale, we can observe situations proving that this is a typical feature of a fairy tale; a wedding through which the main protagonist achieves a better position in society and then returns home as a hero. The above examples prove the existence of the functions determined by Propp; also the described characters performing these functions fit into his opinions defined in *Morphology*.

3.2 *Cinderella* by Charles Perrault

This theme about a modest girl who finds happiness through marriage to a Prince, for the first time saw the light of day on paper in Italy, mediated by the pen of the local storyteller Giambattista Basile in his collection entitled *Pentamerone*. Its adaptation by Perrault later became the best known in all of Europe, and will therefore serve as one of the primary sources of literature for analysis in this work. This fairy tale was first written by the aforementioned French author in 1697 under the title *Cendrillon ou La petite pantoufle de verre* (Cinderella; or, The Little Glass Slipper) and became a model for other versions by various creators. Thanks to the magical fairy, who is behind the development of the story in that direction, this version falls within the ATU system into the category called Supernatural Helpers. Due to the stereotypical portrayal of the characters, together with countless other fairy tales, it belongs to those that were criticized the most with the emerging movement of feminism in the 1970s.

3.2.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters

Cinderella is a representative of fairy tales promoting the androcentric views of society through the stereotypical depiction of the characters, "all of which remind us of the historical dominance of the male,"¹¹⁰ as is mentioned by David L. Russell. This story is well-known across generations, so the plot of a humble and hard-working girl who constantly endures humiliation from her sisters does not need to be described. From the very beginning of the narration, Cinderella is the embodiment of the biased portrayal of female characters and is thus typically portrayed as a good silent girl who follows the orders of her stepmother.

¹⁰⁹ d'Aulnoy, *Fairy Tales by the Countess d'Aulnoy*, 475.

¹¹⁰ Russell, *Literature for Children*, 77.

She could not bear the goodness of this young girl, because it made her own daughters appear the more odious. The stepmother gave her the meanest work in the house to do; she had to scour the dishes, tables, etc., and to scrub the floors and clean out the bedrooms. The poor girl had to sleep in the garret, upon a wretched straw bed, while her sisters lay in fine rooms with inlaid floors.¹¹¹

At the time of this fairy tale, the women were told that their task is to be a housewife who either takes care of children or cleans the house. Perrault's *Cinderella* thus reflects contemporary expectations but continues to influence the thinking of young girls that they must follow this mission in order to reach their happy ending. In addition to the internal characteristics, the external ones are also described, which underline beauty as an integral part of women. Charles Perrault writes in his fairy tale: "However, Cinderella, in spite of her mean apparel, was a hundred times more handsome than her sisters, though they were always richly dressed."¹¹² As can be seen, on the other hand, other female characters like her half-sisters and stepmother are not very beautiful, but they are eloquent and generally dominant, and evil, which is a common indication "that they were not the 'right' representation of a female."¹¹³ Although it might seem that the author made the chief protagonist courageous and ambitious, one must not forget that if she was not offered help, she herself would hardly manage to do anything more but cry hopelessly.

At last the happy day came; they went to Court, and Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could, and when she had lost sight of them, she started crying. Her godmother, who saw her all in tears, asked her what was the matter. 'I wish I could—I wish I could—' but she could not finish for sobbing. Her godmother, who was a fairy, said to her, 'You wish you could go to the ball; is it not so?' 'Alas, yes,' said Cinderella, sighing. 'Well,' said her godmother, 'be but a good girl, and I will see that you go.'¹¹⁴

Even this magical fairy does not deviate from the traditional concept of female characters with magical powers, by which they achieve not only their own goals but also goals of passive heroines, whom the authors describe as incapable of achieving success without outside help. That is why the fairy gives to the heroine "cloth of gold and silver, all decked with jewels [... and] a pair of the prettiest glass slippers in the whole world,"¹¹⁵ because "beauty, grace, luxurious dresses are what attract the attention of a royal man,"¹¹⁶ as Abir El Shaban puts it. It is important to add that expensive clothes not only attract the Prince's attention but without

¹¹¹ Charles Perrault, *Cinderella*, trans. Charles Welsh (New York: HarperCollins, 2014), 4.

¹¹² Perrault, *Cinderella*, 4.

¹¹³ Owner of Site, "Gender Awareness and Stereotypes," accessed March 8, 2021.

¹¹⁴ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 5.

¹¹⁵ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 7.

¹¹⁶ Abir El Shaban, "Gender Stereotypes in Fantasy Fairy Tales: Cinderella," *AWEJ for Translation & Literary Studies*, no. 2 (May 2017): 128.

them, he will not even recognize Cinderella among other women, despite dancing with her all night long. This instils in the readers another distorted idea; about the importance of expensive clothes and wealth in general, without which a girl is not worthy of a man's attention. The beautiful dress, which Cinderella only has until midnight, can be hers every day if she enchants the Prince with her beauty and becomes his wife. Girls are thus encouraged to believe that a beautiful woman does not have to do anything. According to fairy tale expert Zipes, this studied text shows this clearly.

After leaving her slipper at the ball she has nothing more to do but stay home and wait. The prince has commanded that the slipper be carried to every house in the kingdom, and that it be tried on the foot of every woman. Cinderella can remain quietly at home; the prince's servant will come to her house and will discover her identity.¹¹⁷

So doing nothing subsequently leads directly to a marriage to the Prince. He is thus behind rescuing the entire fate of the passive Princess, because Cinderella achieves her happiness thanks to this male protagonist, and is thus freed from a miserable life with her stepmother. Such circumstances make the Prince the main actor in the story and prove that men can easily own any woman they like. "Rejection by women or fate is completely missing in these fairy tales, thus leading boys to grow into vain."¹¹⁸ On the other hand, she is merely a servant of her half-sisters, until the Prince saves her, thus underlining the stereotypical images of both sexes. Since male gender stereotypes are presented as the opposite of female ones, they are amplified by the Prince's social status, which makes him an independent and self-willed powerful man, even though he does not have a name in the fairy tale, and is introduced only as the monarch's son. The male protagonist, who is a representative of the upper class, often a member of royalty, is thus another clear example of the male stereotype in fairy tales. Annette Wannamaker in her book entitled *Boys in Children's Literature and Popular Culture*, points out that "gay boys, poor boys, and minority boys are often invisible in popular texts or, worse, are presented as the other against which a protagonist's subjectivity is defined."¹¹⁹ And so, although the protagonist's orders may seem silly, because of his influence, every woman must obey, from a poor girl to a duchess.

What they said was true; for a few days after the King's son caused it to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry her whose foot this slipper would fit exactly. They

¹¹⁷ Zipes, *Don't Bet on the Prince*, 192.

¹¹⁸ R. Shamna, "The Making of Masculinity: Readings on the Male Stereotypes in Cinderella and The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, Vol. 3, Issue 11 (November 2017): 26.

¹¹⁹ Annette Wannamaker, *Boys in Children's Literature and Popular Culture*, (New York: Routledge: 2007), 8.

began to try it on the princesses, then on the duchesses, and then on all the ladies of the Court; but in vain.¹²⁰

His statement carries another androcentric view of the world manifested by the dominance of masculinity, specifically, that he is determined to marry any girl to whom the lost shoe fits, regardless of her opinion. The girl's opinion, as is customary in traditional fairy tales, is quite suppressed. Another generalization about men presented in this text is a sexual assertion. Not only is the Prince presented as constantly looking for a beautiful woman, but another male protagonist, namely the King, demonstrates this established pattern of behaviour observed here. "The King himself, old as he was, could not keep his eyes off her, and he told the Queen under his breath that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely a creature."¹²¹ Such content gives young female and male readers a very bad example of gender equality and can damage their emotional health. In addition to gender roles, the language used by the author can also be described as stereotypical. This can be seen, for example, at the moment when the godmother helps Cinderella get to the ball, as the website *Gender Awareness and Stereotypes* points out.¹²² In this passage, we can read about how a pumpkin is changed into a carriage, rats into coachmen, and lizards into footmen. Thus, in addition to magical powers, Cinderella is helped by men themselves, as is reflected in the use of words describing the respective characters. Such a description only widens the gap between the equal portrayal of the characters. According to Jane Yolen, in the case of this fairy tale, "the original heroine had never been 'catatonic,' but rather she had always fought actively for justice and truth. It was only toward the end of the seventeenth century that Perrault began to transform Cinderella protagonist into a passive and obedient young woman."¹²³ And so instead of emphasizing their educational meaning and new generations brought up in the light of the better society, these traditional fairy tales, that are still the most popular, rather "serve to acculturate women to traditional social roles"¹²⁴ and support a patriarchal system that puts too much pressure on boys and men. It can be seen from the above extracts from this fairy tale that this representative of the classical canon of children's literature evaluates female characters according to their physical appearance and, on the other contrary, the male ones on the basis of their actions. It is therefore not surprising that until these norms are changed, there are critics from the ranks of a general audience as well as experts who are sceptical about these works.

¹²⁰ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 11.

¹²¹ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 8.

¹²² Owner of Site, "Gender Awareness and Stereotypes," accessed March 8, 2021.

¹²³ Zipes, *Don't Bet on the Prince*, 7.

¹²⁴ Zipes, *Don't Bet on the Prince*, 185.

3.2.2 Structure of the Work

There is no doubt that the work falls into the category of children's literature. There are a number of elements that make it just this reviewed genre. This is proved, for example, by the actants that are presented in the story, but also by their acting functions that they have at their disposal. A certain division is evident from the first sentences: "Once upon a time, there was a gentleman who married, for his second wife, the proudest and most haughty woman that ever was seen. She had two daughters of her own, who were, indeed, exactly like her in all things."¹²⁵ Its content suggests that there are several characters, named by Propp as villains, whose function is characterised by a certain form of struggle with the main protagonist, who is actually the opposite of this character. The protagonist is also introduced immediately, and thanks to the definition in the previous sentence, readers can recognize her from the following passage: "The gentleman had also a young daughter, of rare goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world."¹²⁶ The relationship of these actants is manifested by the constant functions they perform. These are represented through a mutual counteraction or a situation where the hero receives a ban and then violates it, in this case, to visit the ball. As the hero/heroine sets out on a quest for the purpose of search, in this fairy tale her steps are directed to the ball where she meets the Prince. But first, the hero of the fairy tale must be equipped with a magical tool, therefore another from the list of *dramatis personae* shows up – the donor. In Charles Perrault's story, this is Cinderella's godmother, also called the magical fairy, who endows the girl with a number of enchanted objects that suddenly become her helpers. One of the hero's last spheres of action is a marriage, that will end the initial misfortune, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, will also happen in this tale. Perrault's lesson from his version, which tells children how right it is to forgive, cannot be overlooked either. This introduces the thirtieth function defined in *Morphology* when the villain is forgiven, and so "Cinderella, who was as good as she was beautiful, gave her two sisters a home in the palace, and that very same day married them to two great lords of the Court."¹²⁷ This proves the forgiveness of bad behaviour, which results in a happy ending, which is in a way also a rule that appears in all fairy tales.

¹²⁵ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 4.

¹²⁶ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 4.

¹²⁷ Perrault, *Cinderella*, 10 – 11.

3.3 *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch

In the 1980s, a movement arose, the authors of which tried to enforce the opposite situation by rewriting fairy tales. One of these authors is the American Robert Munsch with his brave princess Elizabeth appearing in the story of *The Paper Bag Princess*. It is one of the first picture books that tried to break the stereotypes about men and women. For the given content, it can be included in the category of Supernatural Adversaries – The Dragon-Slayer in the ATU system marked as a fairy tale type 300. Its acceptance by society, which is quite controversial, is also interesting. On the one hand, the author received a positive response from critics for writing a humorous story from the perspective of a female protagonist and it became an international bestseller. On the contrary, it faced post-publication criticism and was marked as anti-family “because the Princess refuses to marry the ratty Prince Ronald”¹²⁸ and is banned in some countries as a result. This fact only proves what problem the society faced at the time when the book was published. This publication was chosen for analysis for the above reasons, which are considered alarming. Thus, there is a closer comparison with the male-centred story, which has survived without problem for several centuries, unlike the book containing inverted roles, which encountered rejection.

3.3.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters

This work captures the gynocentric, or dominant focus on women, even though it was written by a male author. This fact proves that the stereotypical depiction of fairy tale characters, as described in the previous chapter, does not appear to be a problem only for women, but is perceived in the same way by men who are also striving for change. Although the beginning of the story – “Elizabeth was a beautiful princess. She lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince named Ronald”¹²⁹ – might suggest that it is another traditionally conceived book dedicated to children, which shows female beauty, expensive clothes and predetermines the future of its female protagonists. However, the author used this strategy to attract attention, and the audience immediately learns that it was not the Princess but the Prince who was kidnapped by a dragon and “Elizabeth decided to chase the dragon and get Ronald back.”¹³⁰ And so, after reading one sentence, this work takes a completely different direction. The Prince finds himself here in the role of a kind of ‘damsel in distress’ and the

¹²⁸ Dave Jenkinson, “Good libraries don’t: The censorship of Canadian picture books,” *Canadian Children’s Literature* (Fall, 1993): 43.

¹²⁹ Robert Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess* (Toronto: Annick Press, 2005), 6.

¹³⁰ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 10.

Princess is a brave, tenacious and clever female main character, who is not stopped by the fact that she has nothing to wear but a paper bag and sets out to outwit the dragon and get her Prince back. She thus finds herself in the role of a saviour, which is traditionally attributed to men. The longest passage of the book is devoted to how Elizabeth cleverly outwits the dragon, so it could be said that women's intelligence is the central motif in this fairy tale. An example of how a Princess in a paper bag uses her cleverness can be seen in the following excerpt.

Elizabeth said, 'Dragon, is it true that you can fly around the world in just ten seconds?' 'Why, yes,' said the dragon, and jumped up and flew all the way around the world in just ten seconds. He was very tired when he got back, but Elizabeth shouted, 'Fantastic, do it again!' So the dragon jumped up and flew around the whole world in just twenty seconds. When he got back he was too tired to talk, and he lay down and went straight to sleep.¹³¹

Several female stereotypes are refuted in the work of the mentioned American author, and to a large extent, Elizabeth's character can be considered dynamic, as she goes through a change in the course of the story. The Princess, who was fond of expensive dresses and the handsome Prince, becomes quite an ordinary girl. Thanks to her quest, she comes to a realization and at the end of the fairy tale, she is not blinded by her love for Ronald, as she was at the beginning, and learns who she really is.

'Ronald,' said Elizabeth, 'your clothes are really pretty and your hair is very neat. You look like a real prince, but you are a bum.'¹³²

She learnt that what one has inside, what his character is, and how he treats others is the most important thing. For this reason, there is no marriage between the two main characters in this fairy tale. However, this does not mean that there is no happy ending. The latest illustration from Michael Martchenko's creation for this book clearly depicts Elizabeth, who leaves the story and jumps with happiness. (see Appendix C).

Neither the Prince is a typical representative of fairy tales and future rulers imagined by children, and instead of the behaviour expected of him, he is a passive character in need of salvation, as was indicated. In addition, the Prince is depicted here in a negative light from the very beginning and his character does not develop in any way. In the opening picture (see Appendix D), one can notice Ronald's conceited expression, which shows that he is clearly not interested in Elizabeth, which is confirmed at the end of the story, where instead of expressing gratitude he complains about what the Princess looks like and refuses her help.

¹³¹ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 20, 22.

¹³² Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 28.

Elizabeth walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave. There was Prince Ronald. He looked at her and said, ‘Elizabeth, you are a mess! You smell like ashes, your hair is all tangled and you are wearing a dirty old paper bag. Come back when you are dressed like a real princess.’¹³³

The message to readers is therefore that boys should care about appearance, not about the behaviour and actions of others. It is right to want girls not to be tricked by ungrateful villains like Ronald. However, it is not right for boys from an early age, because an audience of this age is targeted by the picture book, to consider such a hero an ideal. Due to the fact that books have an educational significance for children, the character of Prince Ronald cannot be considered a good role model for the readers. Another character must be taken into account, who is also a representative of masculinity in this Munsch’s story. It is the dragon who resembles Prince Ronald only in that it is also a static figure. Its behaviour falls into the established patterns of stereotypical portrayal of the gender, which is characterized by the pursuit of self-interest and self-esteem. Precisely because Elizabeth bet on this typically masculine trait, she was able to outsmart the dragon. This reference to children, however, raises considerations regarding the presentation of one gender as being superior over the other. Thus, even though the author managed to break the stereotypes associated with femininity to some extent, he failed to set a good example of the depiction of masculinity. This is also reflected in the subsequent commentary appearing in the article *Spinning New Tales from Traditional Texts*. “These changes rely on a straightforward reversal of gender roles and the substitution of strong female characters for more passive female characters.”¹³⁴ This is why one cannot fully agree with the claim of Janel Rutzen, who reviews children’s literature: “Munsch does a wonderful job of switching up the stereotypical roles of the Prince and Princess, making Prince Ronald the one who needs help from the Princess,”¹³⁵ Robert Munsch does change the roles of the characters, but for one simple reason his work cannot be described as ‘a wonderful job’. This is because this version cannot be considered to portray gender roles correctly. According to Leslee Farish Kuykendall and Brian W. Sturm, “the simple reversal of gender roles does not result in a feminist fairy tale, but rather a fractured fairy tale,”¹³⁶ of which *The Paper Bag Princess* is proof.

¹³³ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 26.

¹³⁴ Hilary S. Crew, “Spinning New Tales from Traditional Texts,” *Children's Literature in Education*, volume 33 (2002): 82.

¹³⁵ Janel Rutzen, “The Paper Bag Princess,” review of *The Paper Bag Princess*, by Robert Munsch, *Children's Literature Book Reviews*, December 2009.

¹³⁶ Kuykendall and Sturm, “We Said Feminist Fairy Tales,” 40.

3.3.2 Structure of the Work

Although there are inverted roles in variables intervening in the field of gender, the structure of the work is still unchanged and the rules concerning the negotiators and their functions defined by the Russian folklorist still apply. For example, the clearly presented initial situation at the beginning of the fairy tale, which develops its plot, is at a time when “a dragon smashed her [Princess’s] castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald”¹³⁷ and Elizabeth sets out to save him, thus triggering the main story. Three actants take part here. The main character is, of course, Elizabeth, who leaves her ruined kingdom, her home and sets out to save the Prince. Since, as has already been discussed, there are changed tasks, as opposed to those that usually appear in fairy tales, this author’s approach is also reflected in the acting roles. Because the character of Prince Ronald is the sought-for person in this fairy tale, he corresponds in Propp’s list to the Tsar’s daughter, the royal princess. However, the fact is that this character appears here and confirms the rules set out in *Morphology*. There is also a villain, which is the dragon due to its actions. At the beginning of the story, it destroys the castle and kidnaps the victim, making the dragon the anti-hero and a symbol of evil. With the action of smashing Elizabeth’s castle, the dragon also performs the eighth function of a magical fairy tale, where the villain causes damage to one of the family members, which is shown here both by the destruction of the castle and the loss of all clothing that was of great importance to Elizabeth at that time. The villain is also attributed another emerging function, specifically its defeat, which was discussed in the previous subchapter.

It can be seen that there are a number of well-defined structures, although the story is rather short in comparison to the previous ones, which make it a magical fairy tale intended for children.

3.4 *Beast* by Donna Jo Napoli

This American writer is one of the current authors dealing with gender issues in fairy tales, who are well aware that the reversal of female and male roles is not the right direction to approach this problem. Hilary S. Crew writes that “a truly feminist children’s story has recently been defined as one in which the main character is empowered, regardless of gender.”¹³⁸ Precisely with this idea Napoli works and her tales deploy a way of narration that enables the achievement of her intention. The goal is a disruption of the traditional use of an omniscient narrator who

¹³⁷ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 8.

¹³⁸ Crew, “Spinning New Tales from Traditional Texts, 82 – 83.

knows everything about all the characters, including their thoughts. Instead, she prefers a direct narrator who is himself one of the characters and tells the story in the first person. This strategy allows the protagonists to be actants in their own narratives. This is no different for the tale *Beast*, which is analysed here. Like the classic version of the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*, within the Aarne-Thompson-Uther classification, this one falls into the category 425: Supernatural or Enchanted Husband. Within the analysis aimed to offer a comprehensive comparison of fairy tales from different periods of origin, this book was selected as the most modern one.

3.4.1 The Way of Depicting Female and Male Characters

The story is about a Prince named Orasmyn, who is a devout Muslim. From the beginning, sexuality seems to be an important element here. His faith did not allow him to ever see a woman's face (except his mother's). He will be allowed to do so only after the wedding, so he is looking forward to his father choosing a bride for him.

Father, the Shah of all Persia, has promised to find me a suitable wife soon. I will be the first adult male outside the young woman's family to ever set eyes on her bare face, to ever know her mysteries. Warmth threads up my throat to my cheeks. I stroke my short beard and smile broad to hide my thoughts.¹³⁹

Despite his piety and virtue, it is clear what an exciting mystery the representatives of the opposite sex are for him, and he is full of desire and anticipation. Napoli did not deny this masculine eagerness to her hero, and in her story, it becomes one of the typical traits attributed to men. In this area, Orasmyn is put to the test when he meets a girl who claims to have been attacked, and her appearance corresponds to this – she does not have a covered face, as the local faith dictates, and her clothes are torn. Looking at her, the Prince is waging an inner battle with his sexual desire. However, it turns out that this maid is not human, but a *pari*, a fairy who punishes people for bad deeds, and therefore set this trap for the Prince. Because the Prince was conceited and arrogant, he was cursed by this fairy and must live in the form of a lion as punishment. Readers encounter his proud demeanour at the very beginning of the story, as is seen in his conversation with his mother.

Mother squats and catches my hand between hers. ‘Orasmyn, I’ve got a present for you. In my room. A book by Saadi.’ The prospect intrigues me, for this great mystic, this Sufi, is known for mixing the spirit of Islam with the culture of Persia. But Mother’s tone irritates. I pull my hand away. ‘I don’t need help in choosing my reading.’

¹³⁹ Donna Jo Napoli, *Beast* (New York City: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2015), 8.

‘We all need help, Orasmyn.’
‘A prince doesn’t.’¹⁴⁰

In order to break this curse and return to his original life with a human face, he must win the heart of a woman.

‘Proud, stupid Orasmyn. [...] Only a woman’s love can undo the curse. And no woman will ever love you.’

‘My mother loves me.’

The *pari* laughs and gives a little yank to my beard. ‘You know the love I mean.’¹⁴¹

This curse has affected the hero’s form, which is animal-like, however, his mind is still human, and therefore he spends a lot of time thinking. The intelligence as a mental component of man is thus left here to promote the balance of these mental dispositions in both sexes, as will be proved later. While the Persian successor to the throne tries to gain a balance between his body and mind, he decides to embark on a journey of search. He spends two years in India trying to live with his species, but realizes that this is not the right way to go and settles in France, where he finds an abandoned castle from which he builds a home to support his ‘human self’. Here is manifested his fondness for gardening and love for roses. The affection for flowers is generally perceived as a feminine element of humanity, thus the authoress is balancing the gender aspects of this character. At the same time, however, she does not refute the commonly accepted facts concerning the opposite sex. The hero himself is aware of it.

I realized that this garden holds an even greater hope. I must make the garden inviting, enticing. Then I will lure a woman here. And she will walk through the rose garden on her own. She will run. She will dance. She will love my gulistan [the flower garden]. And then she will come to love the other gardens. And the dovecote. And the castle. She will love the whole magical world within the perimeter of brambles.¹⁴²

To put it another way, Orasmyn hopes to win the woman’s heart, by which the curse will be lifted. As was already indicated, thanks to this new home, he again feels more like a human being and can find a certain balance between his two forms. The main character of the fairy tale *Beast* is thus portrayed not only as brave but also loving and kind-hearted.¹⁴³ “Napoli has created a character in which stereotypes of masculinity are broken, or at least bent to present an expanded view of masculinity,”¹⁴⁴ in the opinion of Hilary S. Crew. In one character, the writer cleverly embodied character traits that are traditionally attributed to women or men. The reader

¹⁴⁰ Napoli, *Beast*, 8 – 9.

¹⁴¹ Napoli, *Beast*, 47.

¹⁴² Napoli, *Beast*, 119.

¹⁴³ Crew *Donna Jo Napoli*, 8.

¹⁴⁴ Crew *Donna Jo Napoli*, 8.

can observe them also later in the second part of the book in another character, at the moment when Belle enters the story. Like in the classic version of the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*, the two main characters meet here because of Bella's father, who stole Orasmyn's roses. The youngest of the daughters sacrifices herself for his guilt. This emphasizes the importance of good relationships between parents and children and the aspect of love as an integral part of life, which sets a good example for its readers. In contrast to these atypical manifestations of a character of her gender, Belle shows even more traditional ones, such as the appearance of beauty and the expected traits and behaviour associated with femininity. This is, for example, her eloquence as soon as she feels safe in the Beast's vicinity.

Belle talks about the sky and what weather she can read from it—though she's quite poor at forecasts. She talks about her vegetable garden. About the birds and butterflies that have come in profusion to the flower gardens. About all the details of the world around her.¹⁴⁵

Even though she is initially naturally afraid of him, they gradually find mutual understanding. The girl writes her thoughts and feelings about this special situation in her diary, which proves the fact that she masters the language in its written as well as spoken form.

Napoli, thus, positions Belle in a positive relation to language and culture by subverting androcentric theories that devalue women's status in a patriarchal sex-gender system on the grounds that women do not have full access to the symbolic (language as power and culture).¹⁴⁶

The authoress thus succeeded in the difficult task of avoiding gender stereotypes, and with her work, she shows the readers the importance of mutual equality by “drawing attention to women's relationship to language and education”¹⁴⁷ as well as to men's. The example below shows how both characters are interested in education. Even though the Prince, in his lion form, is not the best reader, Belle reads to him.

She reads again, but now out loud. I lower my front half and lie with my chin on my paws, ears high. Belle reads quickly, so much more quickly than I can with my lion eyes. She finishes the entire first book of the epic and closes the covers gently. ‘Good night, Mon Ami.’¹⁴⁸

Associated with this is her intellectual ability to switch between reflections on two different forms of the living being since it is important for her to know Orasmyn correctly based on his deeds rather than his appearance. Such passages rightly stimulate in young readers the essential elements on the basis of which it is necessary to build mutual relations, which subsequently

¹⁴⁵ Napoli, *Beast*, 165.

¹⁴⁶ Crew, “Spinning New Tales from Traditional Texts,” 86.

¹⁴⁷ Crew, *Donna Jo Napoli*, 9.

¹⁴⁸ Napoli, *Beast*, 172.

shape the proper functioning of society. Both main characters are presented as complex, making mistakes, from which lessons can be learned, they are dynamic characters and they go through their personal development during the whole story. Orasmyn overcame his pride and self-centeredness when he endangered his salvation by allowing Belle to visit her father. In her voluntary return to the Beast, the authoress's belief in free will is presented, which proves that young girls can make such decisions, just as Belle decides on her own to return to the castle. Thanks to her, the Prince was finally able to feel and show the true love that saved him from the curse. Together, Belle and Orasmyn form a fairy tale where human traits and actions are not attributed according to the character in the story. Napoli pays as much attention to subverting stereotypes of heroes and princes as she does to redefining female protagonists¹⁴⁹ and thus creates versions of fairy tales that can be considered gender-balanced.

3.4.2 Structure of the Work

Like the previously analysed stories, also this most modern case falls into the literary genre of fairy tales. Although it might seem in some parts that this text is not intended directly for children, Donna Jo Napoli wrote it with this intention in mind, commenting on her typical writing:

I do not hesitate to present them with the sadness of mortality and the horrors of wickedness – but I always try to leave them with a sense that whether or not they can change the problems in life, they can find a way to live decently and joyfully. Hope is an internal matter. I strive to cultivate it in my readers.¹⁵⁰

Her style of writing, in addition to hope as a central element, which in a way can be found in all fairy tales, also corresponds to the structure, which is typical for this genre, too. There is an initial situation that introduces the reader to the description of the main character, his background and other members of his family.

Mother comes in, her face unveiled — she has not yet left the palace this morning. The pleasure of seeing the dark sliver moons under her eyes, her full cheeks, pulls me at once from the violence on the page to the sweet calm of our lives.¹⁵¹

As in all previously studied stories, actants are manifesting their functions. Based on Propp's theory, the main protagonist in Orasmyn's story can be described as a hero. According to the definition of this pioneer of structuralist research of fairy tales, the hero performs the function of departure for the purpose of searching, which the character Beast exhibits in the work of the

¹⁴⁹ Crew, "Spinning New Tales from Traditional Texts," 83 -85.

¹⁵⁰ Hilary S. Crew, *Donna Jo Napoli: Writing with Passion* (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 7.

¹⁵¹ Napoli, *Beast*, 8.

same name. Because of his curse, he sets out in search of true love, which alone can help him. Given that the *dramatis personae*, whom Propp describes as the Tsar's daughter, is the sought-for person in fairy tales, and here, as was mentioned in the previous sentence, a woman who will love Orasmyn is searched. This actant is undoubtedly Belle, who does so. As for the character of *pari*, it acts as a dispatcher in the story, who participates in the initial situation and encourages the hero to act. Because the fairy cursed Orasmyn, he is determined to take action to find love and his redemption. He succeeds in doing so, and therefore the situation where the task is resolved must not be overlooked.

The words seep into my head, they grow hot and loud, louder and louder, they deafen me, and I'm screaming screaming. But it's Belle who's screaming, not me. Her hands grasp at the air. And I catch them in mine — in my own hands. Human hands. Me, I am me. I pull Belle close and hold her fast against the impossible knowledge. And we weep, together. Shaking. Belle and I. Human tears for human love.¹⁵²

This extract proves, as was already described, that the fairy tale *Beast* has a happy ending and the Prince returns to living in the human body.

4. Conclusion

The analysis revealed that the selected primary works share the same firmly set structure which characterises them; this component connects all of them across their different times of origin and diverse versions. On that account, one can agree with the statement in the book *Děti a svět pohádek* (Children and the World of Fairy Tales), namely that this permanent composition of event summaries “shows a chaotic and incomprehensible world in front of a developing child's soul in understandable images,”¹⁵³ that is, this part of fairy tales is a stable element for young readers, an element that gives them some certainty and is therefore considered appropriate for the respective audience. However, in keeping with the carried out analyses, it was proved that, in addition to these fixed rules which make a story a fairy tale, there are also other components, namely those that Propp defines as variables. The evaluation of these components in the area of gender proves that during the evolution of fairy tales to this day it has more or less been the case that literature in a way corresponded to current social events that are to some extent reflected in it. And since the society under the reign of men always persisted, for this reason, children's literature which promoted a social status that favoured just men was preferred.

¹⁵² Napoli, *Beast*, 209.

¹⁵³ Michal Černoušek, *Děti a svět pohádek* (Praha: Albatros, 1990), 9.

Unsurprisingly, fairy tales written in this way were created mainly by male authors, who pushed their female colleagues and their works into the background. Among these authors is, for example, Charles Perrault, who, together with other writers, presented stories that had spread among people due to their popularity for centuries and continued to anchor the patriarchal view of society, as is portrayed in the analysis of *Cinderella*. They benefited from the fact that the work of other writers, represented by Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, had not become the canon. In d'Aulnoy's fairy tale, which was written at the beginning of the 17th century, there are perfectly portrayed female and male characters without preconceived stereotypes. She can thus be called a forerunner of her time, as such misrepresentation of male and female characters began to be noticed only in the 1970s when the feminist movement began intervening in literature. In an effort to redress and improve the reputation of oppressed female representatives, texts began to emerge which, on the contrary, favoured women. In this spirit, the story by Robert Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, was created, which is a clear example of the fact that this method rather deepened gender inequalities by showcasing female strength at the expense of male protagonists. It is only with the development of gender studies and the promotion of the efforts of this line of thought concerning mutual equality in a society that fairy tales are gradually rewritten, where neither sex is preferred. Readers thus encounter works, the creators of which are fully aware that "children books writers should be cautious of all their implicit and explicit messages within a textbook."¹⁵⁴ Therefore, the characters depicted here are complex and do not represent any stereotypes attributed to feminine women or masculine men. An example is the *Beast* by Donna Jo Napoli, which not only in length but also in content and approach to the issue of gender, resembles the works created in the 17th century in France by Madame d'Aulnoy. *Cinderella* by Perrault and *The Paper Bag Princess* by Munsch, as representatives of works based on the polarization of characters, are confronted with much older as well as newer stories. Thus, although each of them stands at the opposite end of the timeline of the examined fairy tales, they agree in depicting female and male characters without prejudices and stereotypes. It follows that the gradually changing patriarchal system allows the creation of stories that do not favour one sex and at the same time gives space to works that were not so lucky at the time of their creation.

¹⁵⁴ El Shaban, "Gender Stereotypes in Fantasy Fairy Tales," 129.

Resumé

Pohádky zpočátku nebyly určeny dětskému publiku, a i přes to dnes od útlého dětství tvoří nedílnou součást určité etapy života většiny lidí a svým způsobem ovlivňují jejich vnímání společnosti. Mnoho aktuálních společenských otázek úzce souvisí s genderovou problematikou. Proto jsou tyto oblasti předmětem dané diplomové práce, v jejímž centru stojí zjištění, jak se autoři dětské literatury vypořádávají s vyobrazováním mužských a ženských postav, které má následně velký vliv na čtenáře a posluchače těchto textů.

První část práce se zaměřuje na zachycení vývoje zkoumaného žánru. Je důležité podotknout, že jeho součástí je i tvorba bez písemného záznamu, která se označuje jako lidová slovesnost, avšak pro účely této práce není rozdíl mezi literární a ústní tradicí vnímán jako podstatný. Vznik pohádek a jejich vývoj do dnešní podoby je popsán dle toho, komu jsou pohádky určeny. Jinými slovy, tato oblast se utvářela v souladu s tím, jak bylo v průběhu historie nahlíženo na koncept dětství, a představuje tedy stěžejní přístup i pro úvodní kapitolu práce. Jelikož děti nejprve nebyly vnímány jako část společnosti odlišná od dospělých, nevznikaly ani texty určené pouze jim, nicméně se objevovala díla, která k utvoření žánru přispěla. Postupně se zmiňované nahlížení měnilo, ale až počátek moderních dějin přinesl změnu, která s sebou nesla myšlenku, že fáze dětství si vyžaduje jiný přístup, a to nejen v literatuře. Nicméně díla tehdy vznikala v latině a zřídka kdy došlo k přeložení do národního jazyka. Jako důkaz může posloužit i kniha s názvem *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* od Jana Amose Komenského, která byla určena pro studium latiny. Z toho vyplývá, že produkované texty měly vzdělávací význam a pro zábavu či potěšení muselo dětské publikum stále vyhledávat literaturu určenou dospělým, jako tomu bylo například u příběhu Daniela Defoea *Robinson Crusoe*. Teprve až v 18. století přišel John Newbury s nápadem vydat knihu bez primárně edukativního či náboženského rázu, a tak se *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* stala důležitým mezníkem v tomto vývoji. Postupem času se podobná tvorba rozšířila a začaly vznikat rozličné verze od různých spisovatelů, které se později dočkaly i překladu do angličtiny. Mezi ně patří například sbírka Charlese Perraulta, která obsahovala pohádky s postavami jako Popelka nebo Sněhurka, které patří mezi nejoblíbenější i v současnosti. I jeho němečtí kolegové Jacob a Wilhelm Grimmovi za sebou zanechali nemalý odkaz a inspirovali řadu dalších spisovatelů. V reakci na takto úspěšné autory se začal šířit názor, že lidé na území Anglie pro svůj národ nevytvořili žádné vlastní pohádky, ale pouze dochází k překladu zahraničních tvůrců. S tím nesouhlasil Angličan Joseph Jacobs, jehož přístup k obhájení pohádkových tradic byl na dobu 19. století velmi moderní. Obrovský vliv na podobu pohádkových příběhů mělo následující století, a to zejména díky animovanému

studiu Disney, kterému se podařilo uspět na filmovém plátně. Jak je zde shrnuto, v práci je tedy možné pozorovat postupný proces vzniku dětské literatury, který je popsán chronologicky v souladu s ustáleným kánonem. Tudíž se zde záměrně nevyskytují autoři ženského pohlaví, jejichž tvorba nebyla v dané době přijata, a to kvůli převládající patriarchální společnosti, kterou ve svých textech narušovaly. O existenci psaných děl od spisovatelek, jako jsou d'Aulnoy, Lhéritier nebo La Force, se tím pádem čtenáři dozvídají až o mnoho let později. Jejich pohádky se po staletí nešířily jako například ty od zmiňovaných mužských autorů, jejichž verze, jak již bylo naznačeno, se tradují až do dnešního dne. Jedná se totiž o spisovatele mužského pohlaví, kteří svá díla tvořili podle převládajícího společenského dění dané doby. Ačkoli se od sebe jednotlivá podání liší svým přístupem k danému problému, všechny spojuje společná struktura. Na to upozorňuje další pasáž práce, která se zabývá strukturalistickým přístupem k literatuře a vyzdvihuje tři představitele v oboru, jmenovitě to jsou Vladimír Propp, Claude Lévi Strauss a Alan Dundes. Právě myšlenky ruského folkloristy Proppa a jeho teorie sepsaná v *Morfologii pohádky* slouží jako jeden z hlavních nástrojů pro analýzu. Konkrétně se jedná o přesvědčení o výskytu konstantních funkcí, kterými se podle něj v pohádkách vyznačují postavy neboli jednací osoby. Těchto funkcí sepsal celkem 31 a patří sem ku příkladu odchod jednoho ze členů rodiny či svatba. Vykonávat je mohou v každé pohádce jiné osoby, mezi nimi například hrdina, škůdce nebo dárce, nicméně jejich přítomnost je považována za stěžejní. Vedle této kritické literární teorie je zde zapojena i další, a tou je feminismus, který má ke zkoumanému tématu nejbližší. Zastoupeny jsou tu dva hlavní směry, které se v literatuře uplatňují, jsou jimi androcentrismus a gynocentrismus. Uvedené teorie stojí na opačných koncích pomyslné osy daného přístupu, první z nich staví do středu dění muže a druhý naopak ženy, opačné pohlaví je v obou případech upozaděno a prezentováno jako méněhodnotné. Popsané jednání, ať už ve fiktivním světě pohádek či v tom reálném, není správné, a proto se jím zabývá samotná disciplína s názvem genderová studia. Kapitola věnovaná těmto problémům má za úkol nejen objasnit termíny jako jsou gender, genderový stereotyp či genderová role, ale také vyzdvihnout jejich závažnost v dnešní společnosti, ve které, ač se dějí pozitivní změny, stále převládá patriarchální nadvláda. Ta se odráží i v textech pro děti, kde představuje obzvláště velkou potíž, a to vzhledem k výchovnému a vzdělávacímu významu, kterým se tento druh literatury vyznačuje. Zejména hlavní postavy často umožňují dětem první setkání s genderovou identitou a pomáhají jim k rozeznání kulturních norem, které jsou ve společnosti přijímány. Tradiční pohádky vykreslují své mužské představitele jako takové, kteří nevykazují žádné z ženských rysů, jsou aktivní a stateční. Ženy jsou naopak charakterizovány jako pasivní bytosti, u kterých je nejcennější jejich krása. Toho si s rozvojem feministického

hnutí a navazujících genderových studií začalo všimnout stále více tvůrců i čtenářů a opřeli se do kritiky stereotypně vykreslených postav jak ženského, tak i mužského pohlaví. Není divu, že začali vytvářet příběhy, které se tradičnímu pojetí vymykají. Cílem práce bylo proto zjistit, jak se tyto moderní varianty liší od těch tradičních ve vyobrazování postav neboli jak se snaží řešit genderové nerovnosti, které se vyskytují v dětské literatuře. Jako první byla k analýze vybrána pohádka od francouzské autorky Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy s názvem *Belle-Belle, ou Le Chavailer Fortuné*. Dílo pojednává o osudu království, které zachrání statečná a milá dívka. Ta později ze své vůle pojme za manžela krále, který je moudrý, avšak vůdcovskými schopnostmi neopývá. Lze vidět, že hraběnka d'Aulnoy nepřipisuje stereotypní vlastnosti či dovednosti ani jednomu pohlaví a v textu tak lze pozorovat komplexní postavy, které nepředurčují představy o mužství a ženství. Naopak je tomu u známé knihy od Charlese Perraulta. Jeho verze Popelky je klasickým příkladem předpojatého vykreslení hlavní ženské postavy jako pasivní bytosti vyjímající se pouze krásou, která čeká na záchranu od udatného prince. Sňatek s ním pak představuje vysvobození z jejího politováníhodného osudu. Jako další byl k rozboru zvolen příběh od Roberta Munsche, který si vzal za úkol vytvořit přesný opak nečinné hrdinky. Představitelka princezny Elizabeth je proto velmi statečná a záleží jí na důležitějších věcech, než jsou pěkné drahé šaty. Nicméně tento americký autor opomenul správný přístup u opačného pohlaví a z prince Ronalda udělal postavu namyšlenou a neschopnou. Teprve až Donna Jo Napoli uchopila genderové role za správný konec a vytvořila verzi klasického příběhu *Kráska a zvíře* s rovnocennými ženskými i mužskými postavami. V jejím díle *Beast* se čtenáři setkávají s postavami, které nejsou statické a v průběhu svého prozření nevykazují rysy, které by zapadly do zažitých stereotypů.

Na základě prozkoumání čtyř kouzelných pohádek z různých období vývoje, jejichž příslušnost k danému žánru byla ověřena pomocí strukturalistické analýzy, došlo k následujícímu zjištění. Pod přísnou vládou patriarchy nemohla být oslavována díla, která by toto společenské dění narušovala. Ačkoliv si nerovnocenného vyobrazování začali kritici všimnout dříve, jejich snahy nelze označit za genderově správné, jelikož naopak stavěli muže do podřadných rolí. Až s poměrně aktuálním stavem ve společnosti se do povědomí čtenářů dostávají díla, která byla předtím opomenuta. Zároveň však vznikají nové příběhy, které jsou jim co do uchopení genderové problematiky velmi podobné, jelikož dnešní doba tyto změny vítá.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The Types of the Folktale according to the ATU system¹⁵⁵

I. ANIMAL TALES

1—99 Wild Animals
100— 149 Wild Animals and Domestic Animals
150— 199 Man and Wild Animals
200— 219 Domestic Animals
220—249 Birds
250—274 Fish
275—299 Other Animals and Objects

II. ORDINARY FOLK-TALES

300— 749 A) Tales of Magic
300—399 Supernatural Adversaries
400—459 Supernatural or Enchanted Husband (Wife) or Other Relatives
460—499 Supernatural Tasks
500— 559 Supernatural Helpers
560—649 Magic Objects
650—699 Supernatural Power or Knowledge
700— 749 Other Tales of the Supernatural
750 -849 B) Religious Tales
850—999 C) Realistic Tales
1000— 1199 D) Tales of the Stupid Ogre (Giant, Devil)

III. JOKES AND ANECDOTES

1200— 1349 Stories about a Fool
1350— 1439 Stories about Married Couples
1440—1524 Stories about a Woman (Girl)

¹⁵⁵ “Aarne-Thompson-Uther Classification of Folk Tales,” Multilingual Folk Tale Database, accessed March 25, 2021. <http://www.mftd.org/index.php?action=atu>.

1525— 1874 Stories about a Man (Boy)
1525— 1639 The Clever Man
1640— 1674 Lucky Accidents
1675—1724 The Stupid Man
1725—1849 Jokes about Clergymen and Religious Figures
1850—1874 Anecdotes about Other Groups of People
1875—1999 Tales of Lying

IV. FORMULA TALES

2000—2199 Cumulative Tales
2200—2249 Catch Tales
2300—2399 Other Formula Tales

V. UNCLASSIFIED TALES

2400—2499 Unclassified Tales

Appendix B: The list of Propp's functions¹⁵⁶

After the initial situation there follow functions:

- I. ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF A FAMILY ABSENTS HIMSELF FROM HOME.
(Definition: absentation. Designation: β.)
- II. AN INTERDICTION IS ADDRESSED TO THE HERO.
(Definition: interdiction. Designation: γ.)
- III. THE INTERDICTION IS VIOLATED
(Definition: violation. Designation: δ.)
- IV. THE VILLAIN MAKES AN ATTEMPT AT RECONNAISSANCE.
(Definition: reconnaissance. Designation: ε.)
- V. THE VILLAIN RECEIVES INFORMATION ABOUT HIS VICTIM.
(Definition: delivery. Designation: ζ.)
- VI. THE VILLAIN ATTEMPTS TO DECEIVE HIS VICTIM IN ORDER TO TAKE POSSESSION OF HIM OR OF HIS BELONGINGS.
(Definition: trickery. Designation: η.)
- VII. THE VICTIM SUBMITS TO DECEPTION AND THEREBY UNWITTINGLY HELPS HIS ENEMY.
(Definition: complicity. Designation: θ.)
- VIII. ONE MEMBER OF A FAMILY EITHER LACKS SOMETHING OR DESIRES TO HAVE SOMETHING.
(Definition: lack. Designation: α.)
- IX. MISFORTUNE OR LACK IS MADE KNOWN; THE HERO IS APPROACHED WITH A REQUEST OR COMMAND; HE IS ALLOWED TO GO OR HE IS DISPATCHED.
(Definition: mediation, the connective incident. Designation: B.)
- X. THE SEEKER AGREES TO OR DECIDES UPON COUNTERACTION.
(Definition: beginning counteraction. Designation: C.)
- XI. THE HERO LEAVES HOME.
(Definition: departure. Designation: ↑.)
- XII. THE HERO IS TESTED, INTERROGATED, ATTACKED, ETC., WHICH PREPARES THE WAY FOR HIS RECEIVING EITHER A MAGICAL AGENT

¹⁵⁶ Propp, *Morphology*, 26 – 63.

- OR HELPER.
(Definition: the first function of the donor. Designation: D.)
- XIII. THE HERO REACTS TO THE ACTIONS OF THE FUTURE DONOR.
(Definition: the hero's reaction. Designation: E.)
- XIV. THE HERO ACQUIRES THE USE OF A MAGICAL AGENT.
(Definition: provision or receipt of a magical agent. Designation: F.)
- XV. XV. THE HERO IS TRANSFERRED, DELIVERED, OR LED TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF AN OBJECT OF SEARCH.
(Definition: spatial transference between two kingdoms, guidance. Designation: G.)
- XVI. THE HERO AND THE VILLAIN JOIN IN DIRECT COMBAT.
(Definition: struggle. Designation: H.)
- XVII. THE HERO IS BRANDED.
(Definition: branding, marking. Designation: J.)
- XVIII. THE VILLAIN IS DEFEATED.
(Definition: victory. Designation: I.)
- XIX. THE INITIAL MISFORTUNE OR LACK IS LIQUIDATED.
(Designation: K.)
- XX. THE HERO RETURNS.
(Definition: return. Designation: ↓.)
- XXI. THE HERO IS PURSUED.
(Definition: pursuit, chase. Designation: Pr.)
- XXII. RESCUE OF THE HERO FROM PURSUIT.
(Definition: rescue. Designation: Rs.)
- XXIII. THE HERO, UNRECOGNIZED, ARRIVES HOME OR IN ANOTHER COUNTRY.
(Definition: unrecognized arrival. Designation: o.)
- XXIV. A FALSE HERO PRESENTS UNFOUNDED CLAIMS.
(Definition: unfounded claims. Designation: L.)
- XXV. A DIFFICULT TASK IS PROPOSED TO THE HERO.
(Definition: difficult task. Designation: M.)
- XXVI. THE TASK IS RESOLVED.
(Definition: solution. Designation: N.)

XXVII. THE HERO IS RECOGNIZED.

(Definition: recognition. Designation: Q.)

XXVIII. THE FALSE HERO OR VILLAIN IS EXPOSED.

(Definition: exposure. Designation: Ex.)

XXIX. THE HERO IS GIVEN A NEW APPEARANCE.

(Definition: transfiguration. Designation: T.)

XXX. THE VILLAIN IS PUNISHED.

(Definition: punishment. Designation: U.)

XXXI. THE HERO IS MARRIED AND ASCENDS THE

(Definition: wedding. Designation: W.)

Appendix C: An illustration of Princess Elizabeth leaving the story¹⁵⁷



¹⁵⁷ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 29.



¹⁵⁸ Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*, 7.