

**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND ITS ROLE IN THE
PORTRAYAL OF GENDER ROLES:
ROALD DAHL'S *REVOLTING RHYMES***

(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

Mehtap ARAT

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KÜTAHYA DUMLUPINAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ
İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

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Kabul ve Onay

KÜTAHYA DUMLUPINAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ

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Özgeçmiş

Mehtap Arat 2010 yılında Hacettepe Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünden mezun oldu. 2012 yılından beri Öğretim Görevlisi olarak Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Yabancı Diller Bölümü'nde görev yapmaktadır. Aynı zamanda çocuk edebiyatı alanında çalışmalar sürdürmekte olup basılmış 5 çocuk kitabı bulunmaktadır.

ÖZET

ÇOCUK EDEBİYATI VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET ROLLERİNİN TASVİR EDİLMESİNDEKİ ROLÜ: ROALD DAHL'IN *REVOLTING RHYMES* BAŞLIKLİ ESERİ

ARAT, Mehtap

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

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Çocuk Edebiyatı, sosyal bilimlerdeki akademisyenler için nispeten yeni bir akademik çalışma alanı olarak görülse de, oldukça uzun zamandır insanların hem sosyal hayatlarında hem de eğitim hayatlarında farklı amaçlara hizmet ederek yer almıştır. Her ne kadar tanımlanması, içeriğinin ve sınırlarının belirlenmesi, dolayısıyla ayrı bir çalışma alanı olarak tanınması zaman almış olsa da, kökenleri hikâye anlatıcılığına dayanan çocuk edebiyatı, tarih boyunca bugünkü kitap formunu alana dek ninni, kısa öykü ve masal gibi türlerde karşımıza çıkmıştır. Bu tarihsel süreç içerisinde, çocuk edebiyatının iletişim, bilgi ve tecrübe aktarımı, eğitim gibi birçok amaç için etkili bir araç olarak kullanıldığı görülmüştür. Belki de çocuk edebiyatının en sık kullanıldığı yerlerden biri, toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini oluşturmak ve toplumsal kadın ve erkek rollerinin nasıl temsil edildiğini göstermektir. Özellikle masallar, yaşamın sosyal, politik ve ekonomik öncüllerini etkileyen kadın ve erkek tiplerinin mevcut özelliklerine azımsanamayacak ölçüde katkıda bulunmuştur. Bu tez, 20. yüzyıl çocuk edebiyatı yazarlarından Roald Dahl'ın *Revolting Rhymes* adlı kitabında, en bilinen masallarda yer alan bazı toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini nasıl yıktığını ve karakterleri itaatkâr stereotipler olmaktan çıkarıp kendini gerçekleştiren bireylere dönüştürerek nasıl yeniden anlattığını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuk Edebiyatı, Kalıp Yargıları, Masallar, *Revolting Rhymes*, Roald Dahl, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Roller

ABSTRACT

CHILDREN’S LITERATURE AND ITS ROLE IN THE PORTRAYAL OF GENDER ROLES: ROALD DAHL’S REVOLTING RHYMES

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Children’s Literature has long been taking part both in the social and educational lives of human beings by serving different purposes although it is regarded as a relatively new field of academic study for scholars in social sciences. Although it took time to define it, determine its content and boundaries, and thus be recognized as a separate field of study, children’s literature, the origins of which date back to storytelling, had appeared in genres such as lullabies, short stories and fairy tales throughout history until it took its current book form. Considering its historical development, it has been seen that children’s literature is used as an effective tool for many purposes such as facilitating communication, transferring knowledge and experience, as well as delivering education. Perhaps, one of the most frequent uses of children’s literature is to construct gender roles and show how the social roles of men and women are represented. In particular, fairy tales have contributed much to the present characteristics of fe/male stereotypes affecting social, political, and economic premises of life. This thesis aims to present how Roald Dahl, who was a twentieth-century children’s literature author, subverts the portrayal of some gender roles established in the most well-known fairy tales and how retells them by transforming the characters from being submissive stereotypes into self-realizing individuals in his book *Revolting Rhymes*.

Keywords: Children’s Literature, Fairy Tales, Gender Roles, Gender Stereotypes, *Revolting Rhymes*, Roald Dahl

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Dedicated to the Unborn.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ÖZET.....	v
ABSTRACT	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1

CHAPTER 1

THE TRADITIONAL PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE STEREOTYPES AND ROLES AND THEIR SUBVERSION BY DAHL

1.1. FEMALE ROLES AND STEREOTYPES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW ...	41
1.2. ANALYSIS OF HOW FEMALE STEREOTYPES ARE SUBVERTED BY DAHL	46

CHAPTER 2

THE TRADITIONAL PORTRAYAL OF MALE STEREOTYPES AND ROLES AND THEIR SUBVERSION BY DAHL

2.1. MALE ROLES AND STEREOTYPES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	64
2.2. ANALYSIS OF HOW MALE STEREOTYPES ARE SUBVERTED BY DAHL	69
CONCLUSION.....	80
APPENDIX	85
REFERENCES.....	95
INDEX.....	103

THESIS TEXT

INTRODUCTION

“To attempt to find more reasoned theoretical ground to discuss books for children is not to betray the field...but genuinely to respect children, their reading capacities and the efforts of those who write and illustrate for them.”

-Geoffrey Williams, ‘Letter to the Editor’, *Reading Time*, 1986.

This thesis aims to present how Roald Dahl, a twentieth-century British children’s literature author, subverts the portrayal of some of the gender roles/stereotypes in the most well-known fairy tales and retells them by transforming the characters from submissive stereotypes into self-actualizing individuals in his book *Revolting Rhymes*.

The thesis is structured on the relationship between children’s literature and the construction of gender roles/stereotypes as a framework. In the Introduction part, the study first reveals a closer analysis of how controversial opinions on defining children’s literature have contributed to unravelling its implicit role as a tool to reinforce the relationship in order to provide a meaningful background for a better comprehension of the research. A detailed review of how children’s literature is defined with divergent opinions and a brief historical account of it, which includes major breakthroughs in its emergence, its recognition as well as development has been associated with references to many sources. In this way, the roles attributed to children’s literature have been identified and presented to pinpoint its impact on its ab/use in the construction of gender roles/stereotypes. In addition, this part includes definitions of terms related to gender, fairy tales as a genre in children’s literature and its relation to gender construction as well as an introduction of Roald Dahl and his book *Revolting Rhymes* which consists of rewritings of the most well-known fairy tales. In the First Chapter, the study thematically touches upon how the roles/stereotypes of women have been portrayed in the original fairy tales to determine the status of women in society; and how Roald Dahl attempts to tackle the issue by rewriting the tales, subverting the existing roles/stereotypes by retelling them in *Revolting Rhymes*. In the Second Chapter, the same methodology has been used to analyse the roles/stereotypes of men in *Revolting Rhymes*. Bringing all the elements together, the conclusion provides the interpretation of how children’s literature, its definition and history, its attributed roles, and gender development are related to each other with references to Roald Dahl’s *Revolting Rhymes*.

Defining Children's Literature

The very idea of children's literature as a separate genre for scholarly research may seem to be shallow at first. There is a "widespread assumption that children's literature is too childish for adults to consider seriously" (Nodelman, 2008b, p.139). Yet, it encompasses a myriad of topics to offer both in theory and practice. Williams describes the research in this field as "a diverse phenomenon ranging across a wide span of disciplines and investigating a rich diversity of questions" (2000, p.111). Identified as a "vastly more complicated" research area by Hunt (1994a, p.4), children's literature, "a field which has struggled for so long to achieve academic recognition" (Williams, 2000, p.111), has been triggering a wide range of arguments over many topics, such as its existence, limitations, characteristics, societal roles, and even over its definition(s). Although it may be easier for those outside the academic and literary spheres to provide a definition, it is rather challenging for those inside these spheres to define it indisputably due to the fact that it is "an amorphous, ambiguous creature; its relationship to its audience is difficult; its relationship to the rest of literature, problematic" (Hunt, 2003b, p.1). Weinreich asserts that it is "an area of research and endless debate that is as old as research into children's literature itself. It is both the simplest and the most complex question we can ask: What is children's literature?" Sale simply clarifies this complexity stating "[e]veryone knows what children's literature is until asked to define it" (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.136). This definitional problem is the underlying reason for critics and reviewers to take divergent positions in defining children's literature, resulting in the question; to define or not to define? The limits of this term are clearly stated further in this study in accordance with the purpose of this thesis and in light of the research. But first, the reasons why the definition of this term has a problematic basis are explained in detail and with reference to different critics. This provides a deeper insight into the development of children's literature, its late recognition as a separate field of academic study as well as reasons to acknowledge it as a tool to foster the construction of gender roles and stereotypes.

For many critics, the existence of children's literature is still a matter of doubt, and they display a tendency to abstain as much as possible from providing a precise definition mainly for three reasons. Nodelman elaborately explains these reasons in *The Hidden Adult* (2008). The first reason is that it is not very possible to define children's literature since it is impossible to define childhood in a simple way (p.147). Nodelman further

connects this indefinability with the very nature of childhood:

Childhood cannot be defined because definition is an act of logic and reason, and childhood is presumably the antithesis of logic and reason- a time of innocence, the glory of which is exactly its irrationality, the lack of knowledge and understanding that presumably offers insight into a greater wisdom. (2008b, p.147)

The second reason lying behind the refusals to define is the notion that children are not seen as a different kind for which distinct literature is produced deliberately. There are many writers who explicitly acknowledge that their books are labelled as “children’s literature”, but not by themselves, and further add that they were not intended to be children’s books in the writing process. To illustrate, Boston states “Is there a conscious difference in the way I write for grown-ups and children? No, there is no difference of approach, style, vocabulary or standard” (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.140). Moreover, O’Dell expresses his concern in a more clear way in the following words: “Books of mine which are classified officially as books for children were not for children” (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.140). It may be well concluded that these authors did not officially predetermine their target audience for the books they had written. In other words, it is not unlikely to infer from this position of not defining children’s literature and not labelling the works that the audience for these literary works is not confined to a specific age range. This rejection of categorisation is also emphasized by Townsend as follows:

Surely Robinson Crusoe was not written for children, and do not the Alice books appeal at least as much to grown ups; if Tom Sawyer is children’s literature, what about Huckleberry Finn?; if the Jungle Books are children’s literature, what about Kim or Stalky? and if The Wind in the Willows is children’s literature, what about The Golden Age?; and so on. (as cited in Lesnik- Oberstein, 2005, p.15)

Townsend’s questioning of whether these texts fall into such a clear-cut categorisation or not is actually echoed by C.S.Lewis with these words: “I am almost inclined to set it up as a canon that a children’s story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children’s story,” which more or less maintains Townsend’s point of view in his questioning (1973, p.24).

The last but not the least significant reason, which actually may have the strongest argument over this definitional problem, by Nodelman is that children’s literature cannot exist theoretically since literary texts are written by adults. Rose also puts forward this reason by emphasizing the “impossibility” of children’s literature due to the fact that it is produced by adults:

Children's fiction is impossible, not in the sense that it cannot be written (that would be nonsense), but in that it hangs on an impossibility, one which it rarely ventures to speak. This is the impossible relation between adult and child. Children's fiction is clearly about that relation, but it has the remarkable characteristic of being about something which it hardly ever talks of. Children's fiction sets up a world in which the adult comes first (author, maker, giver) and the child comes after (reader, product, receiver), but where neither of them enter the space in between. To say that the child is inside the book- children's books are after all as often as not about children- is to fall straight into a trap. It is to confuse the adult's intention to get at the child with the child it portrays. If children's fiction builds an image of the child inside the book, it does so in order to secure the child who is outside the book, the one who does not come so easily within its grasp. (1993, p.1)

Rose evidently highlights the inevitable trespassing of the adult, who cannot avoid bringing adult ideology into children's literature. In other words, it is clearly maintained that instead of reflecting the actual images, features, aspirations and needs of children, what adults realize through children's literature cannot go beyond their own assumptions, expectations, perspectives as well as limitations. The adults reproduce and impose their own constructions of views, and through these constructions, they "seduce" and "colonize" the children (Redcay, 2005). In addition, Nodelman states that this type of colonization is not preventable to some extent. (1996a, p.82). Therefore, the third reason for not defining children's literature is the dominance or manipulation of the adult.

Although there is a great variety of reasons to eschew definitions due to the questionable nature of children's literature, many critics, reviewers and writers acknowledge this adult effect on the field, yet they still endeavour to provide definitions. According to Hunt, "it is arguably impossible for a children's book (especially one being read by a child) not to be educational or influential in some way; it cannot help but reflect an ideology and, by extension didacticism" (1994a, p.3). Similarly, Pullman states in Carnegie Medal acceptance speech that "All stories teach, whether the storyteller intends them to or not. They teach the world we create. They teach the morality we live by" (as cited in James, 2013). Contrary to those who refuse to define, Hunt contributes to the field by offering his own explanation, which has a more formal and restrictive perspective: "If a book, in the intention of the author, was for children, then it is within our frame of reference" (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.144). Likewise, McGillis prefers to limit the definition of children's literature by defining "children" at first and specifying an age range: " 'children' includes any and all persons who fall between the ages from birth to eighteen," and children's literature "includes all books published and marketed for people

falling between the ages I set out above” (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.144). Undoubtedly, attempts to define children’s literature by literary establishments like these contribute much to the recognition of the field as well as understanding its qualities and characteristics, which are also enriched by each idiosyncratic definition. According to Lesnik-Oberstein “it is a category of books the existence of which absolutely depends on supposed relationships with a particular reading audience: children.” (2005, p.15). Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson define it as follows: “Children’s Literature is good-quality trade books for children from birth to adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interest to children of those ages, through prose and poetry fiction and nonfiction” (1999, p.29). Hancock provides another definition as follows, which, Nodelman says, “represents a position taken by many people in the field” (2008b, p.147): “Children’s literature can be defined as literature that appeals to the interests, needs, and reading preferences of children and captivates children as its major audience” (as cited in Nodelman, 2008b, p.147). However, these definitions do not perfectly reflect the scope of this thesis as it aims to present a historical approach to show the emergence and development of children’s literature by indicating how and why the term has changed throughout history. It is significant to provide such an embracing definition since children’s literature does not have the same characteristics as it had at the very beginning. On the contrary, it has undergone a constant change and continued its evolution as the ages have passed. Therefore, this definition by Reynolds, who approaches the term in a broader sense and elaborates on a comprehensive definition including more or less a historical approach, is used to determine the boundaries of the term, and as a basis to set the rest of the research on:

Currently, everything from folk and fairy tales, myths and legends, ballads and nursery rhymes –many of which date back to preliterate epoch to such embodiments of our transliterate age as e-books, fan fiction, and computer games may come under the umbrella of children’s literature. Additionally, as an area of research and teaching, children’s literature encompasses all genres, formats, and media; all periods, movements, and kinds of writing from any part of the world, and often related ephemera and merchandise too. It addresses works that were specifically directed at the young, those that came to be regarded as children’s literature by being appropriated by young readers, and those that were once read by children but are now almost exclusively read by scholars. (2011, n.p.)

Reynolds’s compendious definition precisely demonstrates that children’s literature has more to offer than simply defining it as books written for children. Her definition entails all the historical ages, genres, formats and the position of authors, who intentionally or

unintentionally wrote for children, to shed light on the perception and recognition of children.

Even though there seem to be completely opposing views of those who define children's literature and those who intentionally do not, the intersection point of these two groups is mostly related to the problematic relationship between the adult/writer and the target audience: children. According to Trimmer, who is the founder of *The Guardian of Education*-which is recorded as "the first journal to carry reviews of children's books" (as cited in Reynolds, 2011, n.p.), the reading experiences of specific groups including children had to be regulated and be under control by the "responsible adults," which sounds quite conservative:

Children should not be permitted to make their own choice, or to read any books that may accidentally be thrown in their way, or offered for their perusal; but should be taught to consider it as a duty, to consult their parents in this momentous concern. (as cited in Reynolds, 2011, n.p.)

While Trimmer claims complete authority and control over what children should be reading, Garner (1994) addresses the issue of adult trespassing taking the production stages of the books into consideration, and questions the place of the child reader:

There are three principal human beings between a story and the child reader: the writer, the editor and the adult who makes the book available. If they go down like dominoes, if the adult can dictate to the editor and the editor commandeer the author, then where is the story? Where is the child? (as cited in Hunt, 1994a, p.163)

Likewise, Nodelman (2008b) states that there is a strong inclination to support the notion that texts for children ought to teach them, and as a result responses to such texts primarily converge on the messages conveyed by the texts. Nodelman further points out that "[b]ut anyone who likes to read knows that, whether we are children or adults, we do so primarily because we enjoy it" (Nodelman, 1996a, p.67). What Nodelman endeavours to indicate is obviously another function of children's literature: not to instruct but to delight. He further elaborates on "the pleasures of children's literature" and lists twenty of them, including the pleasures of words, pictures, ideas, storytelling, having our emotions evoked, and finding mirrors for ourselves (1996a, p.20). Taking this list into consideration, it may be well understood that Nodelman links the reading experience to the pleasures, not to the instructional or moral purposes prioritised by the adult/writer. Although they have different concerns about the positions of children in a reading experience, what Trimmer, Garner and Nodelman disclose above is the fact that there is

an unavoidable and invisible adult effect even from the production stages of the books to their distribution and the probability of being accessed by children. Moreover, literary works for children are exposed to constant adult ideologies regardless of the purposes of writing them. Thus, the problematic relationship between the writer and the children addresses the issue of how adult ideologies are exploited and ab/used in children's literature depending on the messages to be conveyed. Similarly, Murat Moroglu, a Turkish children's books author, points out that using children's literature to convey adult ideologies no matter what the writer's intentions are causes the child reader to turn out to be an object rather than the subject of the reading experience (2020, p.500). The child reader, then, becomes passive; and the writer as the creator of the literary work ab/uses it as a tool to impose his/her own opinions, values, beliefs, as well as social and cultural codes. However, not all critics share the same point of view when it comes to ideology in writing. For instance, according to Stephens, childhood is a fundamental period, during which development is naturally based on the input they are provided about how the outer world operates. He clearly explains that children must not only learn the different "signifying codes" that society utilizes but also gain mastery of practising these codes to become functioning members of society by actively participating in its various structures (1992, p.8). Of these different codes, language as the leading means of social communication is the most essential one as it serves to the creation and preserving of stories, that's to say storytelling, which is one of the predominant traditions for societies to illustrate and instil their existing values, beliefs and attitudes (1992, p.8). Therefore, Stephens explicitly states that "[a] narrative without an ideology is unthinkable: ideology is formulated in and by language, meanings within language are socially determined, and narratives are constructed out of language" (1992, p.8). With these words, Stephen emphasizes a very important point about this problematic issue: ideology and language cannot be separated from each other, contrary to the notion that ideology is intentionally indoctrinated in children's literature. As he asserts, language is the first and most important systematic facilitator that children need to acquire in the society in which they are born, as they must adapt to the social order in which they can exist. While he does not deny the fact that societies utilise the tradition of storytelling to enable knowledge and experience transfer, he also underlines that ideology does already exist in the language, rather than being an externally added apparatus, which proves the fact that there is a mutually nourishing relationship between language and ideology; and that since narratives are born out of this relationship. Likewise, in an attempt to expound his views

on the issue thoroughly, Hollindale presents a more systematic approach, contrary to the attitudes of those who directly reject the ab/use of ideologies in children's literature. Hollindale classifies the ab/use of ideology in three different groups: “...(a) as the explicit, political, moral, or social beliefs of the writer; (b) as the passive, implicit, unexamined assumptions of the writer; and (c) as the ideology inherent in the language itself” (as cited in Bishop, 1994).

In the light of Hollindale's classification of different ab/uses of ideology, it may be well perceived that even not using explicit ideology is still a kind of ideology, an “inherent” one. In other words, it seems unattainable to purify a language and eliminate ideology from the writer's language. As Cameron puts forward “language and language use are themselves shaped by ideological factors” (2006, p.146). Hence, it is evident that children's literature, language and ideology cannot operate separately. On the other hand, Nikolajeva adopts a more insightful perspective, emphasising that the instructional and aesthetic aspects of children's literature should be embraced. She illustrates her points as follows;

In fact, it is quite legitimate to state that all literature is “both”, that is, both an art form and a didactic, or rather ideological vehicle. In this respect, children's literature is not unique. Perhaps the ideological, or pedagogical, intention is often more explicit in children's literature, but it is a matter of grade, not of nature. (2005, p. xii)

Nikolajeva touches upon a significant point in the discussion of ab/using ideology. It is not the nature of children's literature to possess implicit functions through certain ideological or instructional motives, as it belongs to the literature itself. Thus, Nikolajeva demonstrates that it is not very reasonable to discuss the existence of hidden ideologies, but the extent to which they are ab/used. In this context, considering Hollindale's notion that “[n]o work, even the most apparently simple book for children, can be innocent of some ideological freight”, children's literature may be said to have served many different functions, which are explicitly or implicitly attributed through ideologies carried by the language, since the very early emergence of it in history, which does not correspond to a certain time (as cited in Hunt, 2003b, p.18). Yet, the emergence and development of children's literature are thought to be linked to the concept of childhood. Grenby highlights the fact that “the notions of childhood have altered over time, so the purposes and practice of children's literature will have changed, meaning that children's books do not now do the same things that they once did” (2008a, p.3). Therefore, children's

literature has proved to function as an effective tool for many different purposes depending on the recognition of childhood as a phase of life over the course of time, which requires an overview of its emergence, history and functions in specific periods.

A Brief History of Children's Literature and Its Functions

It is acknowledged that literature has been an inseparable part of human beings' lives for ages although there is a great variety of views on specifically the existence and definition(s) of children's literature due to its blurred nature mentioned in the previous part. However, it is almost certain that people get acquainted with literature long before adulthood: "Our first encounters with literature take place in childhood, a time saturated with narratives that range from lullabies and hymns, fairy tales and bedtime stories, alphabets and how-to books, jokes and comic strips (...)" (Zipes, 2005c, p.28). Therefore, it is palatable to scrutinize the very beginnings of children's literature to understand its emergence, historical development, and recognition as a separate field to shed more light on the characteristics and functions of it. As Lerer establishes, "to understand the history, of children's literature is to understand the history of all forms of literary experience" (2008, p.16). That is to say, literature hinges on children's literature in a way. Nevertheless, it is not possible to claim a specific time at which children's literature is assumed to have started. Rather than an exact point of time, it is much more related to the recognition of it, on which there are many different ideas. According to Ewers, "[i]n Germany, as in England and France, children's literature in the modern sense begins only in the eighteenth century" (1996, p.728). Ellis states that it was not until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution that books for educational purposes were published (1963, p.1). Ellis recognizes John Newbery as "the earliest publisher" and the founder of children's literature (1963, p.3). Nevertheless, Grenby strictly criticises this "exaggerated role" of Newbery and underlines that "What Newbery and his contemporaries did not do was suddenly invent children's literature *ex nihilo*" (2009b, p.2). Therefore, it is significant to adopt a historical approach to understand how children's literature emerged and flourished as it depends on adults' perceptions and assumptions of childhood. Furniss claims that "what adults try to do to children via literary texts change through history and according to changing ideas about children and childhood" (2010, n.p.). In other words, there is not a straightforward answer to the question of when it started, yet it is reasonable to approach it retrospectively to have a solid grasp of how it evolved with respect to notions that belonged to a certain period of time. To begin with, Lerer provides a broad

perspective which explains the origins of children's literature as follows:

Ever since there were children, there has been children's literature. Long before John Newbery established the first press devoted to children's books, stories were told and written for the young, and books originally offered to mature readers were carefully recast or excerpted for youthful audiences. (2008, p.1)

Lerer's description of the origin cannot be completely denied as it has a meaningful point in this argument. Contrary to the generally accepted notion that its recorded beginning dates back to the 18th century, Lerer associates the origin of children's literature with the existence of children. Even though the argument seems impossible to be proved, it is also the same when it comes to providing a grounded refutation owing to the oral tradition, which makes it unmanageable to keep track of the first children's story. Children's literature, then, can be said to have its earliest origins in "the oral traditions of myth, fable, legend, folktale, and religion" (Zipes, 2005c, p.xxvii). Moreover, her discussion of the recorded origins of children's literature encompasses "Greek, Roman and medieval texts given to the young" (as cited in Reynolds, 2011, n.p.). To elaborate on Lerer's perspective, Reynolds expresses that children in ancient Greece and Rome, for example, learned and memorized sections from classics like *The Aeneid*, *The Illiad* and the fables of Aesop in order to acquire civic virtues, heroic traits, necessary details about morality and gender-appropriate behaviour (2011, n.p.). Despite the fact that the parts taken from general-audience texts instead of texts re-created especially for children, these texts were modified to meet the requirements and appeal to the young audience, which places them in the category of children's literature (Reynolds, 2011, n.p.).

What Reynolds exhibits in between these lines is that children's literature began with adaptations of these texts to meet the needs of the children, and these needs were determined by the adult to provide sustainability in society. Since children were "ignored and felt to be in need of moral instruction and idealistic example" for a considerable amount of time, this more or less paved the way for a late recognition of "life-stage of childhood" as well as a need for separate literature for children (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998, p.11). Townsend (1990) provides a critical explanation to delineate this late recognition of children's literature, which echoes Lerer's discussion: there have always been children for sure, but they were seen as "miniature men and women " (as cited in Rudd, 2010, p.3). Ariès (1962) emphasizes that a specific understanding of childhood as a unique development stage was not observed within the

social structures throughout the medieval era. Nevertheless, Ariès also highlights that this does not imply that they were ignored or mistreated. Rather, this nonexistence suggests that distinctive characteristics and special needs of children were not taken into account, which was not a consequence of a lacking parental attachment but rather an unawareness of recognizing the developmental differences between children and adults (p.128). He exemplifies how children were incorporated into the adult world stating that “ (...) as soon as the child could live without the constant solicitude of his mother, his nanny or his cradle-rocker, he belonged to adult society” (Ariès, 1962, p.128).

Considering this notion and the daily lives of Medieval people in their efforts to survive, it is by no means surprising that the children were also a part of society. In Medieval times, there was no clear distinction between adults and children, or neither was there between their daily lives as “[c]hildren drank alcoholic beverages, smoked tobacco, and used coarse language. After the age of seven, they were made to work in the kitchen, in the fields or in shops” (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998, p.11). They were to witness the bloodshed and had to learn what to do in order to survive any attack or simply to learn the behavioural codes of the society they would live in. Therefore, the literature was of great importance to pass these codes in the oral tradition to the future generation as a function. In that sense, the reason why children’s literature cannot be traced back to then primarily depends on the fact that oral tradition was the prevailing form of literature. Moreover, there was not an absolute distinction between the child, the adult, and their literature(s) as “‘children’s literature’...was simply the literature of the entire culture” (Hunt, 1994a, n.p). It may be well concluded that literary works were not specifically produced for children as they were not recognised as children. They were seen as little and inexperienced human beings who were in need of learning everything which more experienced adults determined to keep their society alive. Accordingly, the first books/ literary works produced particularly for children differ according to various sources. It is noted that the earliest books for children are known to be lesson books, which date back to the Anglo-Saxon period. Stevenson notes;

The monk Aelfric, one of the great teachers of his era, offered at the beginning of the 11th century an educational Latin dialogue (amended to include an Anglo-Saxon translation) between master and pupils, which gives a glimpse into the teacher-student relationship as well as the students’ reading matter. (2011, p.184)

Similarly, in addition to lessons books, *Elucidarium* (Fig.1), a theological book (mentioned as the first encyclopaedia written for children by Hughes) written by Honorius Augustodunensis near the end of the eleventh century, is also “presented in the form of a dialogue, in which a pupil asks a teacher a series of questions about the Fall, Redemption, the afterlife, etc.” (Wright, 2008). Yet, some other sources point out the establishment of the printing press by William Caxton in 1476, which paved the way for the first books published specifically for children. For instance, “he published one of the earliest books, especially for children. Called *A Book of Curteseye*, it was filled with do’s and don’ts for an audience of aristocratic boys preparing for social engagements and military careers” (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998, p.11).

With advancements in printing technology, the industry of publishing began to expand considerably in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries even in different languages such as English, French and German. As Stevenson noted, it was in 1484 when William Caxton translated *Aesop’s Fables* from a French edition and made it accessible to children as one of the oldest pieces of material still in existence today (2011, p.184). These fables, which were not specifically for children in the beginning, were known to be read not only by the young but also by the old, contributing to the elevation of the reading skills of their audience with a nature of being instructional and delightful at the same time (p.184). Even John Locke praises this quality of the fables identifying the book as “(...) the best, which being stories apt to delight and entertain a child” (1693, p.70).

Apart from these fables, there were different kinds of books that children had access to read. Until the eighteenth century, children utilised hornbooks and chapbooks as tools for their reading experience. *Hornbooks* were “(...) like paddles, averaged two and a half by five inches, were usually made of wood, and often were attached to a leather thong so that children could hang them around the neck or wrist” (Fig.2); while *chapbooks* “(‘chap’ is derived from the word ‘cheap’)” were “made of folded sheets of paper and so were inexpensive to produce and light to carry” (Fig.3) (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998, p.12). Hornbooks and chapbooks included stories, religious teachings, codes of conduct, the alphabet, as well as “large numbers of cautionary tales, those that inform of the do’s and don’ts of childhood” (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998, p.12). Moreover, the late sixteenth century witnessed a more pious focus on the texts written for children due to Puritan views. Grenby asserts that “(...) children’s literature began to be widely understood as a separate product only in the half-century or so

following 1660, when Puritan authors realised how effective it could be in furthering their campaign to reform personal piety of all individuals, adults and children alike” (2008a, p.4). According to the Puritans, who were noticed as “the first child-centered group in history,” children were believed to be vulnerable to being possessed by the devil, and they could be corrupted easily (Macdonald, 1982a, p.153). Therefore, the texts written with a Puritan view were glorifying the idea of dying at a young age rather than becoming a depraved adult (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 1998). As Grenby indicates, James Janeways’s *A Token for Children* (1672) (Fig.4) is one of the best examples to show the content of a children’s book instilled with a Puritan view commenting with these words: “His morbid, not to say traumatic, account of the ‘Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children’ is, in terms of tone and subject, very far from today’s children’s literature” (2008a, p.4). To illustrate, a part taken from the Preface is as follows:

How art thou affected, poor Child, in the Reading of this Book? Have you shed ever a tear since you begun reading? Have you been by yourself upon your knees; and begging that God would make you like these blessed Children? or are you as you use to be, as careless & foolish and disobedient and wicked as ever? (n.d.)

Janeway is said to have written this work to disseminate his theological notions in an effort to protect children from Hell and to teach them how to get to the ultimate salvation desired, which is Heaven (Grenby, 2008a, p.4).

It is clearly seen that the Puritan assumptions about children and childhood centralised on the salvation of the young owing to their inherent tendencies to corrupt and commit sins. According to Nodelman, these texts may be thought to be “both excessively preachy and unnecessarily depressing” (1996a, p.71) for many people today. Nevertheless, Darton (1932) points out that “...[t]hey were meant to give pleasure: the highest pleasure, that of studying and enjoying the Will of God” (as cited in Nodelman, 1996a, p.71). Leaving aside this Puritan effect discussion, it is noted that not all the works produced by the eighteenth century included religious doctrines (Stevenson, 2011, p.185). For instance, one of the major works of the time was *Orbis Pictus* (Fig.5) described as “a wonderfully encyclopaedic guide to myriad aspects of the world in Latin and the vernacular, illustrated with helpful woodcut diagrams” (Stevenson, 2011, p.185). It is noted as the beginning of “children’s books as objects of pleasure” (Hürlimann, 1968, p.246). This “pleasure” aspect of children’s literature is further emphasized by John Locke in his *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). Lerer summarizes how

Locke's ideas would be influential in the future of children's literature. According to Lerer, Locke provided an educational approach which was founded on philosophical principles with a view that humans learn by means of interactions with the outer world rather than possessing inherent notions when they are born (2008, p.104-105). Locke, as Lerer expresses, recommended that visual aids such as images, toys, and models may be utilized in this process to foster learning new vocabulary and concepts; thus highlighting that the ultimate aim of education ought to be "both instruction and delight". (2008, p.104-5). Lerer, therefore, asserts that this philosophy of education left its imprints on books written for children during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These books started to adopt Locke's educational philosophy and ideas in an attempt to provide education through engaging and enjoyable instruments for children (Lerer, 2008, p.104-5).

It is undeniable that what children's literature was and how it was defined was based on the assumptions of the more experienced adult about children and childhood, with an emphasis on moral and religious values as well as didactic and instructional content, before Locke's revolutionary philosophy and ideas about education. With Locke's innovative ideas, the perception of children's books began to change; and a gradual evolution period started. This is why John Newberry is recognized as the leading figure in children's literature publishing. It was in 1744 that John Newberry published *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (Fig.6), which is recognised as "the first children's book in which amusement rather than religious indoctrination was a central concern" (Zipes, 2005c, p.xxviii). Newberry is known to have published many books for children, which paved the way for children's literature to flourish. He undoubtedly had a profound impact on the recognition and development of a variety of books for children. In an attempt to illustrate the variety of the books published and contributions of Newberry to the field, Townsend states that "[s]ome, like the *Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, were miscellanies; some, of which the most famous was *Goody Two-Shoes*, were fiction; others, such as *The Newtonian System of Philosophy* (...) were educational" (1996, p.16). With these contributions, children's literature was now gaining attention and it turned out to be a commercial success, which would continue in the upcoming centuries and embrace distinctive mindsets. For instance, the eighteenth century witnessed the emergence of innovative concepts and fresh ideas about childhood studies, with an emphasis on education. The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in particular, contributed to the establishment of the principal notion about "naturally good children" and their

education. In his *Emile; or on Education* (1762), Rousseau elaborates on the development of children to become scholarly and righteous; and he maintains that “the naturally good child should be raised apart from, and thus uncorrupted by, society” (as cited in Zipes, 2005c, p.xxviii). In addition to these shifts, the nineteenth century witnessed a wide range of advances in different fields such as medicine, transport, education, commerce, and the rising of a powerful empire as well as the Industrial Revolution. These advances provided the literary world with a great source of inspiration and contributed much to the flowering of literary works in children’s literature, too. However, it was a crucial metamorphosis for the future of children’s literature as more challenging issues to handle would take place in the scope of children’s literature. According to Townsend the English-speaking world was mostly dominated by men throughout the Victorian era. The reading classes were principally for middle and upper-level classes (1996, p.39). In these courses, being a national hero to found a country or empire, winning wars, conquering new lands to expand his empire and creating new commercial opportunities for a prosperous future of his land were all considered to be men’s responsibility and joy, or at least dream (p.39). On the other hand, women were expected not to dream of a life beyond the borders of their homes and to endure all “the feminine virtues were piety, domesticity, sexual submission and repression” (Townsend, 1996, p.39). This separation of tasks also prevailed over the books written for boys and girls. The main content of books for boys, which were named “boy’s adventure stories”, included a series of actions and adventures taking place in the external world, while books for girls offered more suitable content to meet the needs of “the gentler sex” (Townsend, 1996, p.39).

Besides this Victorian mindset, children’s literature was facilitated by the advent of the increase in literacy rates, and new technologies in printing, – a period during which plenty of books were published for children in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Furthermore, the twentieth century witnessed another evolution period during which new forms appeared. Zipes et al. elaborate on this period, which actually presents a comprehensive portrait of children’s literature clarifying how the relationship between children’s literature and prevailing popular culture has extended beyond the “printed age” (2005c, p. xxix). In addition to the advent of new technologies such as broadcasting systems and the Internet, social change movements altered the content and style of books written specifically for children. Furthermore, children’s literature has recently demonstrated a shift towards an exploration of subjects similar to those of adult

literature to address social issues such as “homelessness, drug addiction, abuse, and terrorism and expanding the notion of family to include nontraditional families led by single parents, stepparents, and gay and lesbian parents”, with a more straightforward and awkward use of language (2005c, p. xxix).

Children’s literature is not limited to this brief historical account, which encompasses only the major breakthroughs. On the contrary, it has proved to date back further than expected by examining many resources referenced; and not to be a simple, shallow and “childish” field of study, as it is actually very much related to the adult world. It has been indicated through this brief history that children’s literature has been dominated by the needs, values, beliefs, concerns, fears, wishes, and principles -in short, the ideologies of the adults throughout its history. This fact marks the origins of definitional problems mentioned in the beginning. Children and childhood have always been defined by adults depending on their perspectives and assumptions. To be more clear, “[a]dults use children to define themselves, in an ideological process of domination and self-definition analogous to the way in which men defined women and colonialists have defined those they colonized, as ‘the other’” (Thorne, 1987, p. 93). Similarly, there were several assumptions of the adults, who always defined children within the limitations of their own perceptions of how children should be; they were thought to be miniature adults, they were prone to mischief or evil, they were not knowledgeable, experienced or mature enough, they were innocent and pure, they needed protection, and they needed education and religious guidance. As a result of these judgmental assumptions, children’s literature had to undertake various of different functions and incorporated specific ideologies depending on the needs, requirements and values of the time. As also shown all through this account, it may be well summarised that children’s literature has been used as a tool for the fulfilment the predetermined purposes. These purposes can be primarily summarised as instilling religious dogma, providing salvation, teaching societal codes of behaviour as well as politics, protecting their souls, disseminating religious or political propaganda, protecting and sustaining certain morals and ideals, instructing, educating their minds and delighting, advocating as well as enforcing specific social norms.

Whatever the purpose is, it is evident that children’s literature has not been able to dissociate itself from adult ideologies, and the disguised adult has always succeeded in constructing zir own ideologies in the mind of children through texts, on which Thorne

comments stating “the experiences of children are filtered through adult concerns” (1987, p.89). Thorne’s statement reinforces the idea that children’s experiences are only invisible through an adult lens, and adult concerns take priority over the needs of children. Despite this adult hegemony, children’s literature as a separate field is still on its way to evolving with constant change in form and content, yet it may be well perceived that the position and attributed roles of children’s literature have not changed much. Jarkovská points out that children’s literature is an area which is characterized by political and ideological disputes that might lead to social unrest or instability (2014, p.73). By reading or telling stories, parents aim to impart a specific worldview that they expect their children to employ. Jarkovská also clarifies that some parents may be selective in what they share with their children when narrating stories, thus they are prone to ignore some specifics that are not similar to their own values and views while some others basically believe that stories should embrace fundamental concepts of morality (2014, p.73).

The attitude of the parents may not come as a surprise as even literary critics agree that the experience of reading itself is used for specific aims. According to Temple et al., it is significant to understand what happens when a literary work is read (1998, n.p.). Therefore, there are five ways of reading identified pertaining to the works of literary critics as shown in Table.1 (see Appendix).

As shown in the table, these different ways of reading provide the audience with a variety of approaches and reading experiences. However, this depends heavily on the predetermined goals and interests of the book or text provider, who aims to shape and influence a child’s perception of the world, values and beliefs. For instance, certain cultural, social and political attitudes and prejudices might well be reflected in reading materials like textbooks, literary works, and the media. These materials may potentially marginalize or dismiss alternative perspectives while presenting some other viewpoints as the “correct” or “normal” way of thinking.

Bringing all these elements together, it is observed that children’s literature has been subject to various interpretations and approaches throughout its history. It has been clearly exposed to several different attitudes from authors, the people in the publishing process, the parents (or anyone who provides the books for children) and the literary critics. The focal point of these different groups is that they are all adults, somehow claiming authority over children’s literature and ab/using it for specific purposes rather than solely for pleasure. This is the underlying reason why there are dissenting views on

providing a precise definition of the term children's literature among literary scholars, who have asserted that authors should be creating works that allow children to explore themselves and the outer world through their own perceptions, rather than being implicitly or explicitly exposed to construction and perception of adult's ideological agenda. Likewise, the publishing process may have a considerable and undeniable impact on the content of children's literature, with editors and publishers potentially censoring certain content or promoting for works to convey specific messages. Parents and other adults who provide books to their children may also have an effect on the genre. Instead of encouraging children to explore a variety of ideas, they may choose to introduce them to works that align with their own beliefs or values. This can be problematic since this limits children's imagination and sense of exploration. Subsequently, literary scholars tend to be overly suspicious or critical of the field of literature for children, resulting in an absence of appreciation for specific publications or writers.

All in all, it is evident that children's literature as a separate field of study is confronted with a wide range of adult approaches and viewpoints. Despite the fact that these may exert negative influence on psychological and intellectual development, the censorship or intentional avoidance of some works owing to ideological abuse of children's literature may be justified.

Children's Literature and Gender

The history of children's literature establishes the fact that the adult gradually discovered the power of children's literature and how to abuse it by delegating responsibilities and attributing specific functions, which have been mentioned in the previous part. Reynolds explicitly echoes the fact, which turns out to be "exercising power" and authority over children through literary texts with the following words; "Throughout history, children's literature has been used by adults to encourage readers to think in particular ways, to value certain kinds of behaviours and activities and to refrain from others" (2011, n.p.). Among all the functions that children's literature has had to embark on so far, one of the most momentous and conspicuous is its potential to construct gender and illustrate (mis)presentations of femininity and masculinity in society. To better understand how this function operates, this part of the study aims to define the key terms related to sex and gender, explain theories of gender development, present what gender roles and stereotypes are and how they are perpetuated in the gears of society, and lastly the role of children's literature in the portrayal of these. In other words, this part

introduces the theoretical framework of the study and its relation to children's literature with specific references to major sources.

To begin with, sex and gender are two foundational terms in any research dealing with gender issues, and they are somehow confused; or used interchangeably (Eren, 2015; Basow, 1992). However; these terms belong to separate areas, which are explained in an illuminative way. As Lindsey elucidates, the term "sex" pertains to the physical characteristics that differentiate males and females. This definition highlights the distinctions between men and women in terms of their "chromosomes, anatomy, hormones, reproductive systems, and other physiological components" (2011, p.4). On the other hand, "gender" pertains to the "social, cultural, and psychological traits" that are associated with being male or female within specific social contexts (Lindsey, 2011, p.4). While sex determines whether we are biologically male or female, it is the gender that determines whether we exhibit traits that are typically considered masculine or feminine. An individual's sex is assigned at birth and is considered an innate characteristic, whereas their gender is learned and is considered an acquired trait (Lindsey, 2011, p.4).

As it is emphasized above, the major difference between these terms is the source they come from; while external factors cannot construct the former, the latter is acquired through these factors specified above; and it turns out to represent certain sets of attitudes and behaviour that are learnt. It is best explained by De Beauvoir as "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (1953); and by Butler as "... gender is an aspect of identity gradually acquired" (1986). Once sex is determined by biological factors and one is born with male or female anatomy, gender is shaped by the dynamics of the environment surrounding bodily existence. These dynamics, which may represent different sets of ideas, beliefs and values, differentiate female tasks from male tasks in society. These tasks are called gender roles. In Lindsey's words; "[g]ender roles, therefore, are the expected attitudes and behaviours a society associates with each sex" (2011, p.4).

From a sociological perspective, the origin of these differentiated tasks is based on "structural functionalism" which points out that society is a mechanism consisting of multiple gears that are dependent on each other to function as a whole (Lindsey, 2011, p.5). As Lindsey notes, these roles date back to the preindustrial period rooted in a functionalist viewpoint. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the social balance was preserved in traditional civilizations by giving men and women specific responsibilities.

Gender-specific duties were regarded as a practical need in these civilizations since the main economic activities in these societies were hunting, gathering and farming. While women, constrained by pregnancy, were assigned domestic roles such as housekeeping, nursing and being caregivers of children, men were responsible for hunting and often had to spend extended time away from home to provide food for the family. In this functionalist structure, children were given the task of providing assistance with agricultural and domestic issues. Girls were to carry on these agricultural and domestic activities. On the other hand, boys were permitted to accompany the older males in hunting after they became old enough. This functionalist labour division was then repeated for centuries (Lindsey, 2011, p.6).

Even though centuries have passed, these roles have not changed considerably due to the fact that “[f]rom the moment a girl infant is wrapped in a pink blanket and a boy in a blue one, gender role development begins (...) As these infants grow, other cultural artifacts will ensure this distinction remains intact” (Lindsey, 2011, p.54). It is obvious that gender role development is reinforced by specific sets of attitudes, and this may be well manifested with the socialization process of infants. According to Lindsey, the term *socialization* refers to a process which lasts for a lifetime; and it contains acquiring the social and cultural background such as norms, values and beliefs to make sense of one’s function in society and to build his or her self-existence within a socially satisfactory and acceptable identity as a result of interacting and communicating with the other members (Lindsey, 2011, 54). As Lindsey clarifies, the socialization process has different levels; *primary socialization* [emphasis added] -the process within the family to develop the essential skills that are required to adapt to society; and *continuing socialization*, [emphasis added]- the process during which an individual is exposed to a variety of roles to be taken in a variety of social contexts (2011, p.54).

Another type of socialization process is gender socialization. “*Gender socialization* [emphasis added] is the process by which individuals learn the cultural behaviour of femininity or masculinity that is associated with the biological sex of female or male” (p.55). In order to fully comprehend how gender roles develop, it is more than necessary to touch upon the theories of gender socialization. However, within the scope of this study, theories are limited to three in number; social learning theory, social cognitive theory and gender schema theory. These theories are briefly explained according to their connection with children and children’s literature.

Developed by Walter Mischel and contributed much by Albert Bandura, *social learning theory* [emphasis added] primarily focuses on how people learn to behave. Basow (1992) states that Walter Mischel, Albert Bandura, R.H. Walters and D.B. Lynn relate this theory to the process of gender development. Highlighting that gender roles are not innate, Bandura, Mischel and Walters state that gender roles are learned through the environment with the use of some reinforcement methods. According to them, there are two reinforcement methods; direct and indirect. As echoed by Lindsey; “gender roles are learned directly, through reprimands and rewards, and indirectly through observation and imitation” (Bandura and Walters, 1963; Mischel, 1966; as cited in Lindsey 2011, p.59). In other words, gender-appropriate behaviours are reinforced by the people around the children through direct and indirect reinforcement methods. In the early years, this environment is limited to parents. To illustrate, it is the “duty” of the parents to hinder a girl from playing football and a boy from playing with dolls in the primary years, during which same-sex modelling also starts and paves the way for the development of a permanent gender identity through observation and imitation (Lindsey 2011, p.59). These behaviours “have been observed by the end of the first year of life and are present in most children by age 2 or 3” (as cited in Basow, 1992, p.121). In addition to the family members, children also observe and imitate other people such as; extended family, peers, friends, neighbours, teachers, female and male representatives in media, characters from books, and whomever they are in direct contact with in their continuing socialization process to internalise gender-linked behaviours (Eren, 2015, p.35).

Another theory related to gender development is the *social cognitive theory* [emphasis added], which was developed taking its origins from social learning theory, by Kay Bussey and Albert Bandura in the 1960s. This theory postulates that “learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior” (LaMorte, 2022, n.p.). Contrary to social learning theory, social cognitive theory hypothesizes that gender development is not restricted to environmental factors, observation and imitation. Bussey and Bandura clarify the principles of the theory clearly stating that gender development is not a straightforward process but is instead affected by a variety of factors that interact with each other in complex ways (1999, p.684). According to them, these factors can be broadly categorized into personal factors (such as cognitive processes, hormones and chromosomes), behaviour patterns, and environmental events (such as cultural norms and expectations, family dynamics as well

as social experiences) (1999, p.684). They all contribute to the development of gender identity. In *triadic reciprocal causation*, as Bussey and Bandura (1999) explain, these various factors are seen as operating “bidirectionally”, meaning that each factor can affect and be affected by the other factors in a dynamic and ongoing process (p.684). For instance, biological components may influence cognitive processes, which may in turn shape behaviour patterns. Moreover, the environment in which an individual is raised may also affect their cognitive processes, which may then have an impact on their behaviour patterns. Therefore, *triadic reciprocal causation* suggests that gender development is a complex and multifaceted process that cannot be entirely explained by any single factor alone.

According to social cognitive theory, there are three primary forms of force that contribute to the development of gender; modelling—including common models from the immediate environment and mass media, enactive experience—based on determining the gender connection of behaviour out of reactions as a result of one’s deeds, and finally direct tuition, a way to provide knowledge on different types of conducts in relation to gender roles (Bussey and Bandura, 1999, p.684-5). Therefore, it is emphasized that children are not only influenced by the environment but also by types of mass media, such as print media (books and newspapers), broadcasting media (television and radio) and digital media (the internet), as well as by course books at school or instructional materials, in which gender relevant models are presented. Observation of these models and personal filters of perceptions lead to the reinforcement of gender roles. This is exemplified by Bussey and Bandura as follows;

If children routinely see women performing homemaking activities, and males only occasionally try their hand at it, homemaking readily gets gender-typed as a woman’s role. However, if children often observe both men and women gardening, it is not as easily linked to gender. (1999, p.698)

As accentuated by Bussey and Bandura, modelling is a distinctive process to develop gender-related knowledge and internalise gender roles in social cognitive theory. They further highlight the considerable contribution of representations of men and women in the mass media and particularly in children’s books, which explicitly or implicitly present models featuring specific gender roles (Eren, 2015, p.37).

The third theory, which highlights the influence of the representations of women and men on developing gender-related knowledge and constructing gender identity, is

gender schema theory [emphasis added] developed by Sandra Bem. This theory “contains features of both social learning and cognitive development theories, as well as acknowledging the importance of cultural factors” (Basow, 1992, p. 125). It is principally based on structures known as schemas, which “are viewed as dynamic knowledge structures that change according to situations and age-related changes in person perception with content that varies with social experiences and other individual and cultural differences” (Martinez, Osornio, Halim, & Zosuls, 2008). Lindsey elaborates on Bem’s theory asserting that as soon as the child incorporates the societal perceptions of gender schemas, they serve as the central framework for organizing all other information around themselves (2011, p.62). According to cognitive development theory, children must have the cognitive ability to appropriately perceive gender before creating schemas around which gender-related information is processed. Although babies as early as nine months old may discriminate between males and females, identification is not significantly connected with gender knowledge until children are two or three years old (Lindsey, 2011, p.62).

Gender schemas teach children what behaviours are acceptable or unacceptable based on their gender, and they have an impact on behaviour and self-confidence. The extent to which a child’s behaviour conforms to established gender schemas is related to that child’s sense of self. A girl incorporates politeness and kindness into her developing gender schema when she learns that these traits are prescribed for femininity in her society and changes how she behaves as a consequence (Lindsey, 2011, p.62).

As Lindsey points out, gender schema theory is a multi-levelled process, which starts with forming schemas, and progresses by building on these schemas with regard to the cultural values, beliefs and norms of the society to which the child belongs. As Bem suggests; “[t]he child, in short, learns to encode and to organize information in terms of an evolving gender schema” (1983, p.6,3). Therefore, the child may well be said to possess a much more active role as a processor through a cultural filter and adjust his or her gender-related behaviour, which may explain why gender schema theory is labelled as “a theory of process, not content” (Bem, 1983, p.605). As a part of this cultural filter to exhibit gender-related knowledge and gender roles, children’s books are as paramount as immediate/extended family and mass media to facilitate gender-appropriate behaviour (Eren, 2015, p.40).

By and large, these three theories clearly attempt to explain that “... gender is constructed by people, not by biology, and this construction is shaped by historical, cultural and psychological processes” (Basow, 1992, p.2-3). In addition, it has been vigorously emphasized that gender socialization process occurs in childhood. In essence, social learning theory employs rewards and punishment, social cognitive theory is based on self-regulation through observation, and lastly gender schema theory focuses on information processing on schemas that a child learns. All of these gender socialization processes explained by these theories exist through particular *socialization agents* [emphasis added], a term defined by Lindsey with the following words; “...the people, groups, and social institutions that provide critical information needed for children to become fully functioning members of society” (2011, p.66). According to Lindsey, these socialization agents basically incorporate the family, peers, school, television as well as individual preferences (2011, p.66). As Basow explains, children’s development is greatly influenced by socializing agents including parents, relatives, teachers and classmates, especially in terms of their knowledge and acceptance of gender roles (1992, p.140). It is also clarified that parents frequently treat boys and girls differently with regard to toys and domestic tasks, and they also set an example by modelling various behaviours that fit into stereotypical gender roles. Similarly, teachers frequently display gender bias in the classroom, treating boys and girls in different ways. In addition, gender stereotyping is further promoted by peers by using direct and indirect methods, such as praising gender-specific behaviour and sex isolation. As a result, children typically have a clear understanding of what is considered appropriate behaviour for their gender by the time they start school, and they tend to adopt these societal expectations (Basow, 1992, p.140).

It is clearly discernible that gender-related knowledge and gender roles are undoubtedly reinforced by gender stereotypes, which are presented through these socialization agents. Basow defines stereotypes as “strongly held overgeneralizations about people in some designated social category. Such beliefs tend to be universally shared within a given society and re-learned as part of the processes of growing up in that society” (Basow, 1992, p.3). Ashmore and Del Boca define the term in relation to gender as “the structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes of women and men” (1979, p.219). Although the definition seems brief and simple, it encompasses a lot of implicit information to process on the cognitive level. First of all, the words “structured” and

“attributes” bear the meaning that “sets of beliefs” are formed by the external factors. These “sets of beliefs” are assumptions or personal judgements that are “attributed” to women and men to categorise certain traits, thus evolving into stereotypes. For Basow, “[t]hese beliefs are *normative* in the sense that they imply that gender-linked characteristics not only exist but also are desirable” (1992, p.3). Therefore, these gender stereotypes are acquired and perpetuated in a society through societal norms, values, habits and traditions in a way that does not even evoke questioning and results in a vicious cycle; they are presented, accepted, acquired and perpetuated. Breaking this vicious cycle necessitates examining how these stereotypes are portrayed and which traits are attributed to women and men. These stereotypical descriptors are illustrated as in Table.2 (see in Appendix).

All the descriptors specified in Table.2 sharpen the boundaries of masculinity, which is affiliated with being active and dominant as well as holding “power and control,” and femininity, which is affiliated with being passive and subservient as well as being powerless and under control (Basow, 1992). These over-generalized stereotypic traits, which begin to be constructed from the early stages of childhood, continue to exist due to their portrayals in numerous instruments that impart cultural norms, values, and beliefs and ensure the functioning of society- which is a highly patriarchal one. Given the significance of the relationship between the child, childhood, gender development theories, and gender stereotypes, the vicious cycle of gender stereotyping operates and become a breathing and self-feeding mechanism in the following route. Having acquired gender roles through socialization agents specified above in different socialization processes, a child develops an insight into his or her gender identity as a “boy” or a “girl” internalising the generally accepted gender-appropriate roles and traits, and thus behaves accordingly. Practising the “shoulds” and “shouldn’ts” of the roles determined by societal expectations, the child then is accepted to be a functioning part of this mechanism, creating new domains to the perpetuation of gender roles and stereotypes. One of the most influential domains in which gender roles and stereotypes are reinforced is children’s literature. It has evolved into an outstanding and powerful one for the portrayal and perpetuation of these stereotypes. McKenzie and Guittar give prominence to the role of children’s literature in the reinforcement of gender stereotyping. They assert that children’s perceptions of their own gender and the genders of others are profoundly influenced by the portrayal of female and male characters in children’s books (2016, p.1).

Despite being fictional, children's books play a significant role in teaching young children social morals and norms, as they are often accompanied by visual aids and storylines, especially in the early years. Whether or not a children's book has received an award, they stimulate socially acceptable norms, values and behaviours that contribute to appropriate gender socialization. These books convey messages about what is considered to be appropriate behaviour for each gender within these norms, values, and behaviours (2016, p.1).

Furthermore, the manifestation of gender stereotyping in children's literature is also observed at schools. According to Trepanier-Street and Romatowski, "[a] potential resource for influencing young children's thinking regarding gender roles is the classroom use of children's literature" (1999, p.155). Dating back to the 1970s, many other experimental studies conducted at different levels of education have provided substantial evidence to underline the perceptible existence of gender stereotyping, under/misrepresentation of female characters as well as a glaring inadequacy of egalitarian approach in children's literature (Eagly and Steffen, 1984; Brugeilles et al., 2002; Diekman and Murnen, 2004; Hamilton et al., 2006). For many years, scholars have been diligently researching the possible correlation between children's literature and gender stereotyping, in a determined attempt to better understand the effects this probable correlation may have on the young. As it is widely comprehended and elaborated in the theoretical background, the stories children read and the characters they are exposed to in childhood can have a long-lasting impact on their views, beliefs and attitudes. It is thereby asserted that "...stereotyped portrayals of the sexes and underrepresentation of female characters contribute negatively to children's development, limit their career aspirations, frame their attitudes about their future roles as parents, and even influence their personality characteristics" (Hamilton et al., 2006, p.757). As a result, it is a matter of utmost importance to apprehend how gender stereotyping in literature may influence the development of children, and ultimately the society in which they live. A thorough consideration of the implicit messages within these stories and the manner in which they are portrayed may provide a revealing insight into the potential consequences of these on the collective future. To this end, children's literature undeniably serves as an essential tool in the exploration of gender role construction and stereotypes. Nevertheless, the term children's literature is a quite broad one as it encompasses many genres ranging from nursery rhymes to ballads, myths and legends (see Reynolds' definition on p.5).

Therefore, this study focuses solely on a specific genre, that is fairy tales. Since fairy tales date back to the oral tradition period, they provide relatively much more content in comparison with other genres. In the following section, a brief history of fairy tales is presented with regard to their salient effect on gender construction and stereotyping.

Fairy Tales and Gender Stereotyping

Fairy tales have contributed enormously to the present characteristics of female and male stereotypes affecting social, political, and economical premises of life. Many of the purportedly innocent fairy tales that have been passed down from generation to generation have attributed roles to females and males, which in return determines the status of women and men in society depending on their under/misrepresentations in these tales. In this regard, it would not be inappropriate to assert that these roles and stereotyping of women and men are not as innocent as the fairy tales, which have been identifying women as naive, vulnerable, and submissive princesses, cruel ugly witches, and self-sacrificing mothers; and men as strong, handsome, and extra-intelligent heroes. A consideration of the origins and the historical development of fairy tales as well as the reasons clarifying why these tales have been rewritten unveils much about their profound influence on gender stereotyping and the gender construction process since the analysis of this thesis is established on Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*, a collection of fairy tales reworked.

At the beginning of this study, the discussions on the definition of children's literature were presented in detail. It is possible to say that fairy tale as a genre confronts these definitional problems as well due to its ambiguous nature(s). In an attempt to describe this problematic issue, Zipes points out that there are many stories that could be considered "fairy tales," but there is no single, definitive version of what a fairy tale is. In fact, the diversity of these stories is so great that it's difficult to imagine how they could all be classified under one genre (2000b, p.xv). Furthermore, Zipes notes that many readers in the West tend to "resist defining the fairy tale" as if these tales are sacred and should not be tampered with (2000b, p.xv). One of the most important reasons which contribute to this definitional quandary is that the term fairy tale was never used by the storytellers prior to 1697 when d'Aulnoy preferred to employ it in the publication of her inaugural anthology of such tales. In addition, Zipes further notes that "[s]he never wrote a word about why she used the term. Yet it was and is highly significant that she chose to call her stories *contes de fées*, literally 'tales about fairies'" (2012e, p.22). Considering

the German and French origins from which these stories developed gradually, this simplified definition may not represent what the term precisely signifies. “*Zaubermaerchen* in German, *contes merveilleux* in French correspond to the accurate translation of magic/wonder tale which is especially preferred in academic studies, but the term has been thoroughly established in general usage” (as cited in Bartu, 2014, p.4). To this end, it can be surmised that the term fairy tale does not necessarily mean “a tale about fairies,” rather it implies a more profound meaning, encompassing more elements dating back to its traditional forms.

The difficulty in establishing a precise definition of the fairy tale as a genre owes much to the scarcity of written records suggesting its origins and early history. Many scholars have highlighted the fact that the fairy tale is a component of folk literature and oral tradition, with its development and dissemination among communities over the ages relying heavily on being verbally recited, rather than being written down. As a result, the history of the fairy tale is somewhat vague and open to various interpretations. Furthermore, the meaning behind the stories – their symbolic value, and the messages they seek to convey – can vary widely depending on their cultural context, making it challenging to draw hard and fast distinctions between fairy tales and other forms of folklore. (Cuddon, 1977; Nodelman, 1996b; Lerer, 2008; Zipes, 2012e). Zipes underscores the long-standing history of fairy tales, with their foundations stretching as far back as the dawn of humanity and the beginnings of narrative (2012e, p.2). He thereby emphasizes that these stories have captivated and fascinated audiences for generations and that they have survived through the ages. He expresses with clarity that it is not possible to pinpoint the precise time and location of the origin and development of fairy tales, yet it is a very well-known fact that humans have been telling stories once they had the ability to speak. His further comments point out that before the development of speech, sign language may have been used to convey important information for their survival and adaptation to their surroundings. Over time, these pieces of information were compiled into narratives that allowed humans to gain insight into themselves and the world they lived in. As Zipes suggests, stories were shared as a means of communicating knowledge and experience in social interactions (2012e, p.2). Therefore, storytelling served as an excellent medium for the dissemination of information. It was particularly useful in passing on traditions, customs and cultural values, as the stories provided an entertaining way to learn important lessons and values. Moreover, the art of storytelling

served to bring people together, helping to strengthen bonds between family, friends and communities. In this way, people have been able to pass on their own stories and acquire knowledge from those of others, providing an essential form of communication for generations.

Having their roots in storytelling as a part of oral tradition, the fairy tale, along with folktale, as disparate genres are only sub-categories of a broader term *wonder folk tale* which is also named “*the magic tale*, which generally focuses on miraculous transformations that overcome the disadvantages of the protagonists and enable them to succeed in life” (Zipes, 2005c, p.175). Although there is a common tendency to use these terms interchangeably, each one of them bears a different meaning. Vladimir Propp, a Russian structuralist, asserts the idea that under the umbrella term “folklore”, wonder tales may well be regarded as “an alternative coinage for fairy and folk tales”, which encompasses both terms (as cited in Bartu, 2014, p.3). Nevertheless, Bottigheimer makes a distinction between folktales and fairy tales in terms of structure, characters and development of the plots. Bottigheimer posits that the characteristics of a traditional folktale can be generalized in a number of ways. To begin with, they tend to be of a succinct length; their plotlines are typically straightforward and uncomplicated, with their protagonists usually being mundane individuals in their everyday lives such as married couples and commoners. The events that often unravel in these stories are those that could have been witnessed in a comparable world, with the story typically revolving around dilemmas and judgements that both individuals and societies must come to terms with (Bottigheimer 2009, as cited in Bartu, 2014, p.3-4). Ultimately, in spite of the trials and tribulations that are often associated with folktales, it is quite rare to find that they are concluded with a happy ending. On the contrary, fairy tales are endowed with “fantasy, magical, ideal, fictitious or untrue” events, and the story unfolds with transformation in the characters, generally ending up with a happy closure (Ashliman, 2004; as cited in Bartu, 2014, p.4). In addition, the characters in fairy tales reflect societal status ranging from “woodcutters, tailors, cobblers, peasants, swineherds, goose-girls, kitchen maids, cottagers, crofters, and discharged soldiers” at the bottom to members of the royal family such as kings, queens, princes and princesses at the top (Bartu, 2014, p.4). In addition, as Lane suggests “stories with genies, ogres, imps, wizards, brownies, witches, sorcerers, oni or fairies are all fairy tales”, rejecting the very simple and shallow but common definition of fairy tales as stories about fairies (1994, p.3).

The advent of the recording of the earliest forms of oral tradition has sparked an abundance of interest amongst scholars and folklorists alike. This has led to a rigorous search in various contexts in order to uncover the deeper meaning and greater insight into the tales that have been passed down through the ages. Despite the difficulty in tracking the sources of such stories, the exploration of this captivating and enigmatic genre of history has opened up a wealth of knowledge and understanding that would otherwise remain undisclosed. Cuddon summarizes these recorded forms and elaborates on their development in printed collections. In his definition of written fairy tales, Cuddon states that fairy tales take the shape of a prose narrative that depicts the triumphs and tribulations of a protagonist –either male or female (1977, p.258). Such a protagonist undergoes a series of supernatural experiences and achieves happiness in the end. These tales are infused with some magical elements, including spells, charms and disguises, and frequently provide deep insights into human character and psychology (1977, p.258). As specified by Cuddon, three significant collections can be found in European literature; *Contes de ma mere l'Oye* (1697) by Charles Perrault, which Robert Samber translated into English in 1729, *Haus-Marchen* or *Household Tales* by the Grimm Brothers, and *Fairy Tales (Eventyr)* by Hans Christian Andersen, which was published in 1835 (1977, p.258).

Cuddon's definition of fairy tales shows that fairy tales cannot be from a single source because their origins are storytelling and oral tradition, and they were compiled by many different people at many different times. Obviously, although not all compilations are exactly the same, they are similar to each other. Hence, it is no surprise that fairy tales have been able to pass through the generations and remain relevant to this day. One of the primary reasons behind this is the fact that they are universal in nature, transcending the boundaries of time and place. This universality is seen in the fact that these tales are capable of resonating with an audience in any era, culture or society, and therefore they possess a timeless appeal that allows them to be "ageless" (Zipes, 2006d). This universality feature of fairy tales starts from the very beginning of each story with the expression "Once upon a time", which gives the fairy tale the freedom of not belonging to a specific culture, country or time, paving the way for adapting, evolving, thus surviving in many different languages and cultures all around the world. Therefore, fairy tales have enabled disparate storytellers and writers of different ages, cultures and countries to produce on a more flexible literary playground, compatible with the literary

and societal functions of fairy tales. According to Zipes, the function of these tales was not merely to entertain; they also served to “establish the conventions of a discourse on manners and civilité”, with an underlying code that conformed to the norms of appropriateness (2005c, p.177). Consequently, the tales varied considerably in terms of content and style depending on the identity of the teller or the writer, thus failing to maintain the original version. These stories were exposed to further modifications as there was a shift from being communicated orally to being transcribed and recorded. The authors incorporated more poetic language with more surprising events to embellish the tales (Zipes, 2005c, p.177). What Zipes attempts to demonstrate with these words is the fact that fairy tales had more than an entertaining function. They also served a societal function by revealing appropriate behaviour as well as courtesy. As these tales were passed down through generations, textual alterations were made to impart the necessary knowledge and values to adapt to the time and culture. The lasting power of fairy tales to continuously evolve in accordance with the time and place has enabled them to endure many different cultures and remain relevant, thus preserving their universal appeal. Moreover, this constant alteration has been discerned not only in content, style, time, culture and purpose but also in the audience that is the addressee of these tales. Zipes (2005c) expounds on this shift in the addressee of the tales firstly clarifying that all of these fairy tales were originally written for an adult audience, including those by Perrault. This is worth emphasizing, according to Zipes (2005c), as many people incorrectly attribute the origin of fairy tales for children to this time period. However, there is not enough evidence that these “complex and nuanced tales” were communicated to children, or that they did so at their own will. Instead, the fairy tales that children listened to had been originally for adults. These original stories for adults did have an impact on the tales written for children afterwards. For instance, the fairy tales of d’Aulnoy, Perrault and others were put in chapbooks in abridged versions shortly after their publication. Therefore, as Zipes expresses, it is worth noting that the period between 1830 and 1900, which saw “the explosive growth of the middle classes fueled by the Industrial Revolution” was the time when the fairy tale specifically for children began to gain popularity (2005c, p.177-9).

Rather than simply limiting the definition of a fairy tale to its literary meaning, adopting a holistic approach to analyze its beginnings, its historical evolution, its implicit or explicit functions as well as its changes in terms of its intended audience throws light

on how fairy tales have provided fertile ground for imparting any type of knowledge pertinent to any social context. Throughout the centuries, fairy tales have been recognized both as a source of entertainment and as a tool to encode attitudes, impart knowledge, provide a means of communication and raise awareness of social issues. Only by exploring all the elements that contributed to the birth and evolution of fairy tales thoroughly is it possible to gain fulfilment in a better comprehension of how these stories have contributed to the construction of our perception of the beliefs, values and notions to become the gears of society, and eventually the world. Additionally, the strong possibility of exploiting the enormous potential of fairy tales to be leveraged in pursuance of epitomizing numerous societal issues, such as poverty, economy, ethnicity, corruption, terror, immigration, education, human rights, environmental issues, wars, and last but not least gender issues, cannot be simply denied. To this end, changing the addressee from adult to children may provide sufficient evidence of how children's literature has captured the attention of tale makers to maintain the survival and evolution of fairy tales through the ages.

There are many approaches, such as psychological, historicist, and sociological to be adopted to interpret the functions of fairy tales and their influences in specific contexts. To illustrate, from the psychological perspective, Bettelheim asserts that "fairy tales contain symbolic images which reflect inner psychic processes and which, in so far as these processes are common to all children, enable children to externalize and work through their psychological problems" (as cited in Zipes, 2000b, p.19). However, this study is limited to the influence of fairy tales on gender construction and does not elaborate on the other perspectives.

In regards to gender, fairy tales are often seen as a genre that effectively utilizes male and female representations to emphasize gender roles and generate gender stereotypes. These depictions of gender are designed to cement gender inequality within the realm of children's literature. This is achieved through the implicit messages woven into the narrative and can be seen as a subtle means of influencing the young minds of those who are exposed to these traditional tales in their primary or continuing socialization environment. Thus, it is a reasonable interpretation to suggest that fairy tales are a way for authors to reinforce gender inequality through their portrayal of gender roles and stereotypes. Considering the previously mentioned relationship between gender development theories and children's literature, how fairy tales operate to help construct

gender-related schemata is revealed by Nodelman. He merely illustrates how weird and perplexing it may be when a child with no previous exposure to literature and TV reads or listens to a tale like *Cinderella* for the first time in his/her life. According to Nodelman, it necessitates literary competence, such as understanding the magical elements presented are common in literature, to fully grasp the tale (1996a, p.141). Without any prior experience in engaging with such stories about the transformation of a mistreated girl into a princess, the child would find the events in this story unusual and hard to comprehend. That means he or she does not have a previous schema. Nevertheless, as Nodelman further clarifies, learning about *Snow White* would enable the child to develop a schema for these types of tales as he or she might be able to recognize and identify the connection between these two stories (1996a, p.141). Nodelman's argument suggests that children are exposed to gender roles and stereotypes through fairy tales and, consequently, develop a subconscious attitude towards such roles in different social contexts. This highlights the potency of fairy tales as a narrative genre to effectively propagate gender inequality. By repeatedly being exposed to these stories, children's minds become unconsciously conditioned to accept such norms as the status quo, thus making it more difficult to challenge pre-existing gender norms in the future. In this way, fairy tales act as a powerful tool to establish and reinforce gender-based social structures. According to Nodelman, after fairy tales were gathered and adapted for children, they served as examples for authors such as Hans Christian Andersen, George MacDonald, and Oscar Wilde, who wrote their own stories inspired by these traditional tales (1996a, p.260). However, as Sarı puts it, these adaptations were not innocent ones, they reflected the same "patriarchal ideologies" and they promote and contribute to their perpetuation (2018, p.141). Underlined by Basow (1992, n.p), these pre-existing ideologies depending heavily on the roles attributed long before do create a differentiation between the female and male in terms of superiority-inferiority and dominance-sub dominance to the detriment of especially the female, it is of vital importance to subvert what has been established through fairy tales so far.

Basow depicts the effects of gender stereotyping and expresses the necessity of a radical change as follows:

The effects of gender stereotypes and roles are pervasive, intense and generally damaging to all individuals, to their relationships, and to society as a whole. To break free is a difficult yet beneficial process that requires a complete transformation of society. (1992, p.vii)

Interestingly enough, in an attempt to “break free” from these impacts of gender stereotyping and roles reinforced by fairy tales, several authors have turned to the genre itself for inspiration, resulting in the birth of literary fairy tales.

Despite being rooted in traditional fairy tales, these new stories frequently differed largely from their original versions and are referred to as *literary fairy tales* [emphasis added] (Nodelman, 1996a, p.260). While the term *literary fairy tales* is designated by Nodelman, Bartu clarifies this shift stating that “[i]n later years of the nineteenth century, with a change in the trajectory of the fairy tale genre, English writers began to write fantasy literature for children under the influence of the fairy tales. As Bratton states, there was ‘a didactic takeover of fantasy tales derived from fairy tales’ ” (2014, p.46). This didactic shift, as Zipes (2005c) suggests, corresponded to the end of the nineteenth century by the end of which the fairy tale was included in the school curriculums officially in Great Britain and the United States; and it continued throughout the twentieth century, which marked the beginning of a significant transformation in the use of fairy tales. This incorporation of fairy tales into the curriculum had a twofold effect: it not only established a common canon of literature for children to engage with but also paved the way for the critical questioning of the implicit messages and content of these stories both by the literary spheres and the public, especially parents, as this incorporation meant that even a child with no prior acquaintance with fairy tales through their primary socialization environment was exposed to them through their continuing socialization, allowing them to develop an understanding of these stories and the values they impart. Levorato reinforces this idea stating that both Zipes and Stephens share a common perspective on the socializing power of children’s stories, contending that fairy tales and society have a symbolic connection (2003, p.147). In their view, as Levorato mentions, fairy tales are products of society’s attitudes toward “child-rearing”, and they, in turn, play a role in preserving or transforming the existing “status quo”, which also underscores the risk of repression inherent in such stories as well as their potential for emancipation (2003, p.147). Thus, this incorporation of the fairy tales led to contentious debates as the content of the tales was thought to be inappropriate for children, which eventually resulted in “sanitizing” the tales by reinterpreting and rewriting them (Zipes, 2005c). Bartu summarizes the underlying reasons why the content of these tales sparked objections and the way how these tales began to be reinterpreted as follows:

Therefore, the fairy tale genre was called into question for its highly conservative nature, discriminatory relations and the sexist and patriarchal system that they reflected. Postmodern writers, both men and women, started to alter and subvert the original tales through their rewritings and they either caricatured the original versions, reimagined different stories for the same characters, setting and plot or wrote prequels and sequels for them. (2014, p.46)

In the era of postmodernism, there was a challenge to the meta-narratives by dismantling the dominant ideologies, and this involved “replacing the central with the peripheral” (Sarı, 2018, p.141). Öteyaka (2022) explains that postmodern thought challenges the traditional beliefs and structures that hold power in the creation and interpretation of meaning, as well as in defining a cultural existence that is considered valid and applicable to everyone (p.61). In a way, postmodernism suggests that such beliefs and structures are not objective and fixed, but rather, they are subjective and constantly changing. Therefore, postmodernism seeks to question and disrupt the dominant narratives and power structures, which reveals why “[s]ubversion became the battle cry: the tales were to be turned inside out and upside down” (Warner, 2014, p.133; as cited in Sarı, 2018, p.141). This was accomplished using a variety of literary devices including irony, satire, parody, and pastiche, which were used to subvert traditional notions and assumptions presented in these tales. As also highlighted by Sarı, “[p]ostmodern writers relying on intertextuality challenged the ancient lore mainly through the use of the fantastic, subsequently re-writing and questioning the reliability of the so-called ‘original’ tales” (2018, p.141). Re-writing fairy tales often establishes a modernized twist on traditional tales, with characters challenging the status quo and making their own destiny. By doing so, authors are able to explore the themes of gender roles and stereotypes in a creative way, whilst still maintaining the sense of enchantment and wonder that is associated with traditional fairy tales. It provides a unique platform for authors to address important topics such as gender inequality revealed through gender stereotypes and attribution of gender roles, as well as helps undo what has been constructed so far to construct a more egalitarian system of values, especially for children. It is, in short, an individual manifestation of protesting the unbalanced societal systems implicitly formulated by the fairy tales in a bid to retell the possibility of a more equitable one. Since the twentieth century, rewriting fairy tales both for adults and children has been favoured particularly by a variety of authors such as Angela Carter (*The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, 1979), Jeanette Winterson (*Hansel and Greta: A Fairy Tale Revolution*, 2020), Carol

Ann Duffy (*Faery Tales*, 2014) and Anna Kemp (*The Worst Princess*, 2013) and many others “to expose the prerogatives of aristocrats, fathers, and other authorities, to liberate the libido of young women from the taboos of politesse, to tell things how they are –and how they could be” (Warner, 2014, p. 156 as cited in Sari, 2018, p.142). Although re-writing is mentioned as “a feminist tool” which has been used by female authors to alter the traditional sets of mind established by previous male authors (Sari, 2018, p.143), Roald Dahl is a prominent British male author who retold the classical fairy tales in a collection named *Revolting Rhymes* (1982), which is the major work of this thesis to be analyzed in further chapters. What makes Dahl and his work the subject matter of this thesis is his use of “the feminist tool”- namely re-writing as a male author to subvert the gender ideologies that the classic fairy tales established for long. Yet, Dahl’s rewritings provide a more panoramic view of the issue; that is to say, Dahl does not only subvert the male stereotypes but also the female ones offering more twists on the original tales and rebelling against the authority. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasising that there is no source in which Dahl explicitly states that he deliberately tried to subvert these roles using postmodernist techniques and approaches. An account of his life provides more insight into his literary style and an understanding of why he employs this rewriting tool to subvert the authority in his books written for children.

Born in 1916 to a family of Norwegian origin, Roald Dahl is actually best known for his books *James and the Giant Peach* (1961) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964). What makes him more distinguishable is his personal background before being recognized as a children’s book author. As a child, Roald Dahl lived in Britain for a period of time during which he witnessed the deaths of his sister and his father Harald successively. Having been sent to many private schools, the first of which was a proper boy school named the Cathedral School in Llandaff where he did not spend the happiest days of his life due to the physical violence he experienced, he took a job with the Shell Oil Company in Africa at the age of eighteen contrary to his mother’s insistence on attending university. When World War II broke out, he joined the Royal Air Force as a fighter pilot, fortunately surviving a plane crash after which he came a close brush with death (Thompson, 2016, n.p; Wales Arts: Roald Dahl Biography, 2010). However, this plane crash was probably the plot twist of his entire life. A Dahl biographer, Donald Sturrock comments on the aftermath of this incident in the following words:

The crash clearly was incredibly important because it became the subject of his first piece of published work, but I think it also may well have changed his personality. He thought and often said he felt something had changed in him as a result of this crash. They were the head injuries that made him into a writer. (as cited in Thompson, 2016, n.p)

Based on his experiences in the war, his first short story *Shot Down Over Libya* (1942), which was for adults, was published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, launching a successful career. Nevertheless, Dahl would discover that he had a much bigger impact on the world when he began writing stories specifically for children. In 1960, while living in England with his family, he began writing stories for children. He wrote these stories mainly for the enjoyment of his own children and dedicated many of his books to them. Even though he spent a life flooded with many turmoils and struggles, such as being exposed to physical violence at school, witnessing the deaths of family members and friends at war, and surviving a plane crash, his daughter Lucy Dahl expresses that “[e]verything that happened in his life coloured his work” (as cited in Thompson, 2016, n.p.). Despite the fact that Roald Dahl is a well-recognised author, named “a kind of two-headed creature” both for adults and children, his works for children have caused a great deal of controversy among literary critics (as cited in Valle, 2015, p.3). Some have praised the captivating nature of Dahl’s style that draws young readers in, while others assert that his stories are not appropriate for younger audiences. Numerous aspects, such as violence, terror, and language that some consider unsuitable, have led to considerable criticism of Dahl’s works, especially from many different groups. To illustrate, according to Culley Dahl’s powerful writings have the exceptional capability of transporting readers back to their childhood, evoking an impressive level of eloquent detail in the reader’s memory (as cited in Valle, 2015). Dahl captures the unique experience of being a child in difficult and challenging situations through this vivid recall. His books not only serve as a form of catharsis for him but also as an invaluable source of comfort and consolation to readers who have faced or are facing similar difficulties in their own lives. (Culley 1991; as cited in Valle, 2015). Contrary to the well-deserved praise for his style, a considerable amount of disapproval from teachers, parents and even librarians has been expressed intensely. Valle describes this opposition, its causes, and its consequences as follows:

However, the popularity of Dahl has run parallel with negative criticism. His children’s books have received strong opposition from parents, librarians, teachers and reviewers. One of the first controversial issues appeared in 1971, with a charge of racism against Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (1964). Since then, accusations of tastelessness, misogyny, sexism, fascism, ageism, violence, vulgarity, sadism, occult overtones and promotion of

criminal behaviour have followed. Objections to his work have even led to attempts to remove some of his titles from school libraries and supermarkets. In 1995, for instance, George's Marvellous Medicine was challenged by a group called Parents Involved for a Better Community established in Georgia, USA. The mother of a six-year-old complained that the book "details how a boy poisons his cranky grandmother and wins his parents' approval". (2015, p.2)

Another Dahl work that suffered from this opposition and was censored in the United States in the 1990s is *Revolting Rhymes*, which he wrote in 1982 and reinterpreted the traditional fairy tales in his own unique style, due to improper wording. It is unsurprising that groups of authorities such as parents, librarians or literary critics yearning for creating a readership based on their own assumptions and standards of their own choosing, who attempt to exercise power and control over children's literature which has long been ab/used for many purposes already, vehemently opposed to these retellings. However, this opposition had already been answered by Dahl himself in a documentary decades ago even before the publication of *Revolting Rhymes* with the following words: "I have never liked authority, I have never got on very well in institutions. I am still a rebel in some aspects, yes very much so. I do not like conformists, people who conform" (as cited in Thompson, 2016, n.p). Thus, it can be concluded that Dahl attempts to challenge and subvert the authority of traditional fairy tales. Although this rebellion against authority is not unique to *Revolting Rhymes* (as in most of the child characters he creates, a rebellion against the authority of adults is observed. For example, Matilda is a curious and intelligent little girl who is open to learning in a family to which she does not feel she belongs. She faces many challenges in dealing with the adults both in her family and at school.), it is the most attention-grabbing one in terms of the issues he addresses. Through his retellings, Dahl makes a powerful and influential statement; a declaration of rebellion against the conventions which have been imposed upon these tales throughout their existence. Therefore, even the title *Revolting Rhymes* is a manifestation of how Dahl stands against authority and its conventionally structured gendered society. As Bartu puts forward "[t]hrough reformulation, Dahl projects to subvert the moral, inequitable, and discriminatory aspects of the fairy tales in a more unexpected, parodic and revolting way" (2021, p.523).

In this frame, this thesis concentrates on how Dahl subverts some of the gender roles and stereotypes and re-portrays them in his unique style in addition to touching upon the traditional representations of female and male roles that were constructed by classical

fairy tales. This study is distinct from prior research as it aims to provide a panoramic perspective by investigating not only the female perspective but also the male one. It seeks to explore how both genders are represented in both the traditional tales and Dahl's reinterpretations. As for the retellings, *Revolting Rhymes* includes six rewritten fairy tales; "Cinderella," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," "Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf," and "The Three Little Pigs". Within the scope of this literary analysis, as all the original fairy tales reworked by Dahl cannot be found in a single compilation by a specific compiler of their age, they have been taken from Maria Tatar's *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales* (2002). These original tales are; *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Little Snow White* by the Grimm Brothers; *Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper* by Charles Perrault; *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *The Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Joseph Jacobs, and lastly *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*— or as the name Tatar notes *The story of the Three Bears*¹ in her annotated compilation. Nonetheless, the following chapters involve thematic analysis depending on the representations of gender roles and stereotypes by comparing the original version with Dahl's rewritings, therefore not every single story is analysed separately. In addition, Dahl's "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and the original version *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* do not include much relevant textual evidence in terms of gender stereotyping and subversion. Therefore, the original story and Dahl's rewriting of it are not analyzed within the scope of this thesis.

¹ As Maria Tatar notes, "The British poet Robert Southey was the first to record "The Story of the Three Bears" in narrative form, in his anonymous miscellany *The Doctor*, which appeared in 1837 (...)The British storyteller Flora Annie Steel turned the girl's name into Goldilocks in her *English Fairy Tales of 1918*" (2002, p.245).

CHAPTER 1
THE TRADITIONAL PORTRAYAL OF FEMALE STEREOTYPES AND
ROLES AND THEIR SUBVERSION BY DAHL

1.1. FEMALE ROLES AND STEREOTYPES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Over the centuries, several efforts have been spared to establish equal gender representation. Nevertheless, gender roles continue to be associated with the responsibilities and duties that are assigned to women. Women are typically required to deal with domestic activities such as housekeeping, cooking, and childcare in addition to home economics even though these assigned responsibilities rarely receive the same level of recognition or appreciation compared to those performed by men. To understand how gender roles are still relevant in the modern world, it is essential to explore the historical motives that have shaped and perpetuated them. In the Introduction part of this thesis, it has been outlined that functionalists believed that men and women had distinct roles within pre-industrial societies, which enabled social stability in the construction of a society. This was based on the idea that the physical and mental features of men and women were naturally, or to say biologically, different and that these differences were suitable for particular tasks. Men, with their assumed strength and physical power, were responsible for working outside of the home, providing income and protection for the family, being the hero of the outer world. Women, however, were thought to be weaker and less able to cope with the outside world. Thus, they were given the duties of looking after the children and being the main care provider within the home. Basically, the dependence of women on men was a consequence of the system that women were held accountable to, which only served to further reinforce the foundations of a patriarchal society. In other words, this reliance upon men meant that women were limited in their ability to progress and become independent, thus cementing the notion of male superiority which had an inevitable outcome: the subordination of women.

Much has been said, written and discussed about the position of women in society by examining the issue within historical periods. It is interesting, if not unbelievable, that when considering literature specifically, children's literature is considered to be a kind of women's literature since the people who take care of children are traditionally women. Nodelman posits that "[p]erhaps children's literature as a whole is a sort of women's literature" (1996, p.125). Nodelman's argument that children's literature is a type of women's literature is indeed a compelling one in that while the male-dominated society was very generous in giving the ownership of children's literature to women, or to say they had to do so due to the maternal responsibilities that had been placed upon them, they were not that willing in giving the authorship. To further clarify,

Zipes (1994a) gives a detailed explanation of how the authorship was passed on to men. As stated by Zipes, the establishment of the literary fairy tale, which started in the seventeenth century in the salons, was originally intended for adults (1994a, p.23-24). It emerged as a response to the desire of aristocratic women to explore and imagine alternative ways of living, beyond what men had determined for them. The fairy tale was used in sophisticated conversations as a means for women to envision how their lives could be improved (1994a, p.23-24). Once this discourse became more commonplace among women and gradually accepted by men, it formed the basis for a literary genre that was mainly embraced by the aristocracy and upper-middle class (1994a, p.23-24). Over time, the tales were altered to include morals for children, which accentuated the reinforcement of a patriarchal standard of behaviour, although the original authors were women (1994a, p.23-24).

This investigation of literary fairy tales does provide researchers with an efficient viewpoint on women's hidden power in the midst of prevailing patriarchal domination. On one hand, it exemplifies how, even with the oppressive environment, women were able to use their stories to reveal their aspirations for a better life. It may well be observed how the authors were able to subvert their society's traditional patriarchal values and communicate their own personal beliefs and values through subtle changes to the tales over time. This delivers us a fascinating insight into the potential of fairy tales and women's potential to be revolutionary and rebellious throughout the face of challenges. On the other hand, what is also indicated is that "...it all started as a female reaction against gender bias, but, ironically, as time passed, the stories became men's tools to foster their power over women" (Pekşen, 2012, p.153).

Even a century later, this patriarchal dominance was still prevalent in many premises of life, which urged women to sow the seeds of the feminist movements and in a way to stimulate the questioning of traditional fairy tales abused to propagate patriarchal agenda. Long before the emergence of feminism, one of the most influential and prominent philosophers of the Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who had an undeniable impact on eighteenth-century intellectual thought, wrote in his *Emile, or on Education* that "[t]he whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honoured by them (...) and to make life agreeable and sweet to them—these are the duties of women at all times" (1762, p.263), which would inflame debates on the equality of women and men, probably, more

fiercely than ever. Influenced and inspired by the French Revolution, Mary Wollstonecraft, who is regarded as one of the foremothers of feminist theory, wrote *Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792 to stand up to doctrines such as Rousseau's by making very revolutionary demands, on which feminist thought would be founded. Her postulations included the idea that women are not inferior to men and should have the same social, legal and intellectual equality, thus sowing the seeds of three waves of feminism. However, until the first wave of feminism, the boundaries of manhood and womanhood had been sharpened more than ever.

The following century brought about many challenges, especially for women in Britain. The nineteenth-century in Britain is best known for eighteen-year-old Victoria's accession to the throne, a period, which started in 1837 and was marked by its idiosyncratic complexities. Queen Victoria, who was the ruler for almost 64 years, gave her name to the age, which was characterised by considerable economic and scientific progress, social reforms, and unprecedented changes in addition to great contradictions. The era, which is defined as the "age of transition" by Houghton, witnessed a wide range of advances in different fields such as medicine, transport, education, commerce, and the rising of a powerful empire as well as the Industrial Revolution (2014, p.1). This "age of transition" provided the literary world with a great source of inspiration and contributed much to the flowering of literary work. Many authors chose to touch upon issues such as gender, race and class in order to reflect the condition of England. Among the issues, gender and gender roles — especially roles of women, were at the centre of the literary interest. The questioning of womanhood, women, and their places in public sphere was frequently brought about, which was the result of the emerging concept of an idealized family. Apart from giving her name to the era, what Queen Victoria plainly presented to her people was the concept of an ideal family. Her representation of family served to emphasize femininity and motherhood within the boundaries of morality, which was the reason behind the period's reputation as "the domestic age par excellence" (Abrams, 2001, n.p.). Abrams summarizes Victoria's role as follows:

Accompanied by her beloved husband Albert, and surrounded by her many children in the sumptuous but homely surroundings of Balmoral Castle, Victoria became an icon of late-19th-century middle-class femininity and domesticity. Indeed, Victoria came to be seen as the very model of marital stability and domestic virtue. Her marriage to Albert represented the ideal of marital harmony. She was described as 'the mother of the nation', and she came to embody the idea of home as a cosy, domestic space. (2001, n.p.)

With this ideal family concept, Queen Victoria would inevitably give rise to defining the expected roles of Victorian men and women under an idealized roof of decency, which was marriage, reinforcing the domestic roles attributed to women.

Another most comprehensively illuminating definition of the roles that men and women were given in Victorian Britain was put forward by John Ruskin in *Sesame and Lillies*:

The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle, —and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims, and their places. Her great function is Praise: she enters into no contest, but infallibly judges the crown of contest. (2006, p. 99)

These lines, along with Queen Victoria's idealized family concept, clearly demonstrate the Victorian notion of two separate spheres; "public sphere" for men and "private sphere" for women (Abrams, 2001, np.). In this sense, Victorian men were expected to be active outside their homes as warriors and defenders of their families while the women were to show a commitment to their duties as the wife, housekeepers and mothers to be able to merit praise from their society. This separation reinforced the conservative view that there was an absolute superiority of men over women.

Basically, the period saw two main propensities, especially in literary works. First, the women insisted on demanding their political rights as well as equal social and economic freedom, but they were not seen to belong in the public sphere, which used to be dominated by men. The second propensity was to portray and present the women in their peaceful homes as the caretaker of the family in the domestic sphere. To illustrate, contrary to many female novelists of the age such as Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë, who put in a great deal of effort to mirror the ills of the Victorian concept of womanhood to stimulate social reform, there were also stout supporters of the domesticity. The role(s) of women was often reinforced by some of the writers of the age such as Sarah Stickney Ellis and Coventry Patmore. Sarah Stickney Ellis was one of those who wanted to preserve this domesticity for Evangelical concerns. Ellis emphasized the conservative view that there was an absolute superiority of men over women. In order to keep the women in their domestic sphere, Ellis wrote "conduct books", which may be

regarded as reference books to help women serve better as a wife, a mother, a housekeeper and whatever society expected them to be (Eden, Morris, & Vickers, 2006). Ellis wrote a series of conduct books; *The Women of England, their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (1839), *The Daughters of England* (1842), *The Wives of England* (1843), and *The Mothers of England* (1843) respectively. Her first conduct book, *The Women of England* “[b]ecame a best seller, going through sixteen editions in two years” (Greenblatt, 2012, p. 656). In her *The Women of England*, she explains how to be better wives, mothers, housekeepers and even sisters. It defines womanhood and the expected roles of women (Ellis, 1846).

This historical examination shows that while the developments in the nineteenth century accelerated the spread of the notion that men were superior to women, resulting in internalising the gender roles and stereotypes portrayed in literary works, it also paved the way for the flowering of feminist movements. The term “wave” is used to refer to the different periods of feminism throughout history. The history of modern feminism beginning with Wollstonecraft then would be divided into three waves chronologically by feminists and scholars. The first wave was characterized by the movements for women’s suffrage, which focused primarily on securing the right of women to be able to vote. These movements emerged in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and were motivated by the notion that women ought to have equal political representation and the right to participate in democracy. The second wave, which arose in the 1960s, placed strong attention on the legal and social liberties of women. The main intention of this second wave was to deal with concerns such as discrimination in the workplace, sexual harassment, and women’s reproductive rights. Numerous feminist groups and notable feminist writers garnered attention as a result of greater activism. The third wave evolved in the 1990s in response to the perceptions of those who identified the shortcomings of the previous wave. Incorporating distinctive perspectives and experiences of women with a variety of racial backgrounds and sexual preferences, this wave differed from the second one due to its inclusiveness, which also highlighted the singularity of personal agency. This, in a way, was a challenge to the earlier feminist movements, the nature of which was more dictating and deterministic (Aikau, Erickson, & Pierce, 2018). In short, each wave contributed considerably to the advancement of the rights opportunities of women and was characterized by its own distinct set of issues and objectives (Aikau, Erickson, & Pierce, 2018). As feminist movements evolved over time, they addressed different

issues related to gender inequality and sought to challenge and change different cultural and social norms. The analysis of fairy tales and their portrayal of female characters is one way of examining how gender norms have been constructed and perpetuated over time. All these developments in social and literary contexts gave rise to the questions, which have been the subject matter of numerous studies; are fairy tales fair enough? What roles and stereotypes have fairy tales constructed and perpetuated so far? In the following section of the study, the original fairy tales and Dahl's retellings are analysed in regard to their portrayals of female characters by providing textual evidence.

1.2. ANALYSIS OF HOW FEMALE STEREOTYPES ARE SUBVERTED BY DAHL

As the Introduction part of this study has shown, fairy tales have been around for centuries entralling the addressee with all the enchanting elements. However, as a genre, it has been examined closer from many perspectives and traditional fairy tales have been severely criticised for the stereotypical portrayal of female characters who are often illustrated as "either merely beautiful, passive recipients of good luck, usually in the form of a handsome and wealthy prince-husband, or ugly, churlish witches who have nothing but contempt for the world they live in" (MacDonald, 1982b, p.18). From beautiful princesses to evil stepmothers, traditional fairy tales offer a variety of female stereotypes. In contrast, Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes* subverts common fairy tale themes by featuring powerful, self-reliant women who take charge of their own destinies. This section analyses how women are portrayed in classic fairy tales and Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes*, providing textual evidence to support the argument of this thesis. It sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how traditional fairy tales shape our perception of gender roles and the ways in which Dahl's retellings challenge traditional gender norms. The section starts with a critical examination of specifically the perception of beauty, domesticity, passivity, and innocence by comparing the portrayals of princesses, step/mothers and daughters/girls presented both in classic tales and Dahl's retellings. It aims to show how Dahl subverts these themes through his portrayal of characters and plot twists.

To start with, as Lorber states, gender ideologies are reinforced by way of gender imagery, which refers to the cultural depictions of gender and the representations of gender through symbolic language and art (1994, p.30-31). As also put forward by Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz, there is a feminine beauty ideal embedded in fairy tales (2003,

p.711). According to them, the gendered nature of children's fairy tales emphasizes "women's passivity and beauty" reinforcing and legitimizing the dominant system (2003, p.711). In other words, these stories serve as a facilitator to perpetuate the feminine beauty ideal. The depictions of the female characters in fairy tales are often limited to their physical appearance, and their worth is determined by their beauty.

In classic fairy tales, feminine beauty is idealized and praised as a crucial quality, linking it to the personal traits of the characters; such as being decent, innocent and simply good in parallel with societal expectations. However, ironically, feminine beauty is also linked to being evil when combined with envy and pride. The physical appearance and female beauty of the characters caused women to be divided by patriarchal ideologies into two different stereotypes; good women and bad women. Grimm's *Little Snow White* is the most prominent example of this emphasis on beauty. Snow White is presented as a beautiful princess who is envied by her stepmother- the evil queen as she desires to be "the fairest them all." She is depicted as "a beautiful lady, but proud and overbearing, and she could not bear the thought that anyone might be more beautiful than she was" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.82). This is the main conflict between Snow White and her stepmother stemming from the emphasis on beauty, placing them in a position of "angel woman and monster-woman of Western culture" as Tatar notes (2002, p.80). The evil queen possesses a magic mirror which responds to her question "Mirror, mirror on the Wall / Who's the fairest one of all?" (p.82). The mirror's reply "You, O Queen, are the fairest of all" does not change until Snow White becomes "as beautiful as the bright day and more beautiful than the queen herself" (p.82-3). Tatar explains this emphasis on beauty as follows:

The voice in the mirror may be viewed as a judgmental voice, representing the missing, absent father or patriarchy in general, which places a premium on beauty. But that voice could also be an echo of the queen's own self-assessment, one that is, to be sure, informed by cultural norms about physical appearances. (2002, p.82)

This emphasis on beauty forms the core of the story and the events revolve around this theme. The evil queen is obsessed with beauty and wants to murder Snow White. However, the huntsman she assigns is impressed by the physical appearance of Snow White and decides not to kill her as stated in the story; "Snow White was so beautiful that the huntsman took pity on her" (p.83). Snow White runs into the forest where she discovers a little cottage owned by the seven dwarfs and she is seen there by the seven

dwarfs, who are also impressed by her beauty with these words; “My goodness, my goodness! What a beautiful child” (p.86), then they decide to host and protect her in their cottage. Upon the murderous attempts of the evil queen, Snow White is thought to be dead at the third attempt. She is placed in a glass coffin because her beauty is believed to be too great to be buried underground. According to Tatar, this glass coffin turns Snow White into an aesthetic object to be displayed as “something of a tourist attraction” (2002, p.93). And one day, a prince passing by falls in love with Snow White’s beauty at first sight, even though he thinks she is dead, begging “Make me a present of it, for I can’t live without seeing Snow White. I will honor and cherish her as if she were my beloved” (2002, p.93).

Snow White is not the only character whose beauty is idealized and determines the course of the upcoming events. Perrault’s *Cinderella* is another illustration of how physical appearance proves decisive in traditional fairy tales. Cinderella is depicted as a beautiful young woman who is exposed to continuous mistreatment by her stepmother and stepsisters because of her good qualities and beauty. Like Snow White’s stepmother, Cinderella’s stepsisters are jealous of her beauty, which is “concealed by soot, dust and cinders” (Tatar, 2002, p.30). In Perrault’s words, “[t]he stepsisters dressed in magnificent clothes, yet Cinderella looked a thousand times prettier, even in her shabby apparel” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.31). The desire for being more beautiful than Cinderella, makes sisters look for the best hairdresser and purchase the best makeup items. However, she is portrayed as having such a “good-nature” that she helps her stepsisters with putting their hair up as best as she can. As Tatar notes, Perrault was strongly committed to the notion that good behaviour should be rewarded in fairy tales, and he emphasized this by highlighting the protagonist’s kind and gentle nature (2002, p.31). It is seen that only with her kind and gentle nature, Cinderella is able to escape her miserable life with the help of her fairy godmother who transforms her into a beautiful princess. Moreover, Cinderella herself questions her physical appearance when the godmother asks whether she is happy or not after she creates a beautiful coach to carry her to the ball. She replies “Yes, but do I have to go as I am, in these shabby clothes?” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.35). Similar to Snow White, Cinderella’s beauty is presented as her most valuable asset, and it is her beauty that attracts the attention of the prince. It’s not only the prince who is charmed by the beauty but also the other guests are fascinated as told in the story:

Suddenly everyone fell silent. No one was dancing, and the violins stopped playing, because everyone was so absorbed in contemplating the great beauty of the unknown lady who had just entered. There was nothing but a confusion of voices. "Oh, how beautiful she is!" The king himself, as old as he was, could not take his eyes off the princess and whispered to the queen that it had been a long time since he had seen such a beautiful and charming person.
(as cited in Tatar, 2002,2002,p.37)

Although it is not as exaggerated as in the stories of Cinderella and Snow White and does not affect the events that develop in the course of the story, there is also a reference to beauty in Grimm's *Little Red Riding Hood*. The story begins with depicting the protagonist with these words: "Once upon a time, there was a charming little girl. Everyone who set eyes on her adored her" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.19). In the light of the textual evidence provided, the way women are portrayed in these tales indicates that their physical appearance is a crucial determinant of their value, and their beauty is often used to determine their moral standing. Unfortunately, this upholds the archaic and limited view of feminine attractiveness as well as the patriarchal system that places a premium on outward look over inner qualities. However, Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes* challenges these stereotypes by including strong, autonomous, and powerful female characters.

In Dahl's version of Snow White, unlike the traditional story, there is no mention of her mother's beauty legacy for Snow White, and the story begins directly with the king's wish to marry another woman upon her mother's death. There is no description of the appearance of the woman the king marries in Dahl's version. However, the framework of the story does not change and the use of the mirror as a beauty scale is again described. This mirror is characterised by Dahl as a toy that the queen brings with her and gives her a never-ending pleasure with these words: "A lady called Miss Maclahose/ Who brought along a curious toy/ That seemed to give her endless joy/ This was a mirror framed in brass/ A magic talking looking-glass" (1982, p.21). The queen is characterised as "spoilt and stupid" because of her fondness for this toy and the inevitable question is asked again in his version too: "Oh Mirror Mirror on the Wall / Who is the fairest them all?" (p.22). The queen's fulfilment of her obsession with her physical appearance through the mirror is described by Dahl as an "absurd routine" (p.22). Upon hearing the mirror's reply "From now on, Queen, you're Number Two / Snow White is prettier than you!", the queen decides to kill Snow White after she is found more beautiful by the mirror and assigns the hunter, similar to the classic story. The hunter takes Snow White to the forest and lets her

go, not because he is impressed by her beauty, as it is emphasized in the classic story, but because Snow White cries that “I’ve done nothing wrong!” (p.23). This suggests that she appeals to his emotions, not to his eyes with her beauty. Instead of Snow White coming across the little cottage of the seven dwarfs in the forest as told in the Grimm version, Dahl draws the image of a princess who goes to the city, finds a job and works with the Seven Dwarfs. Likewise, there is no reference to Snow White’s beauty in her encounter with the Seven Dwarfs. In addition, in the later part of the story, it is told that Snow White secretly returns to the palace and steals the queen’s mirror to help the seven dwarfs; and she uses this mirror for a more functional reason: “On tip-toe through the mighty hall / And grabbed the Mirror off the wall / As soon as she had got it home, She told the Senior Dwarf (or Gnome) / To ask it what he wished to know” (p.26). This departure from the original story is significant as it subverts the traditional portrayal of the mirror as a tool for measuring feminine beauty. By stealing the mirror and using it for a more pragmatic reason, Snow White disrupts the queen’s “absurd” obsession with beauty. In this regard, Dahl’s retelling challenges the traditional narrative of Snow White, which places a high value on beauty and reinforces the idea that a woman’s value is determined by her physical appearance. Similar to the fairy tale of Snow White, the story of Cinderella lacks this emphasis on feminine beauty. Dahl skillfully demonstrates how the events unfold without altering the framework of the story and sticking to the theme of beauty. Unlike the original story, there is no exaggerated depiction of physical appearance, garments or jewels; and the story does not reveal any details about Cinderella helping her stepsisters prepare for the ball, but rather with Cinderella being locked “in a slimy cellar” (p.5). In addition, although Cinderella is not explicitly portrayed by her feminine beauty, the ugliness of the stepsisters is depicted in aspects that are not the common standard of beauty, such as the following; “At once, one of the Ugly Sisters, (The one whose face was blotched with blisters” (p.8) and “The shoe was long and very wide (A normal foot got lost inside) /Also it smelled a wee bit icky (The owner’s feet were hot and sticky)” (p.9).

Likewise, the story of “Little Red Riding Hood” does not reveal any details regarding the physical appearance of the protagonist with a specific emphasis on the beauty aspect. Rather, the story opens with Wolf’s lust for “a decent meal” and provides a depiction of it by picturing “[t]he sharp White teeth, the horrid grin” (p.36), on which the course of the events unfold. It may be surmised that Dahl’s omission of a focus on the beauty within his stories is an intentional endeavour to subvert the traditional emphasis

placed on beauty in the original fairy tales. His conceptualization of beauty and ugliness is divergent from the traditional ones. This perception is explicitly demonstrated in his other children's book, *The Twits*, wherein he articulates;

If a person has ugly thoughts, it begins to show on the face. And when that person has ugly thoughts every day, every week, every year, the face gets uglier until it gets so ugly you can hardly bear to look at it. A person who has good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a crooked mouth and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely.
(1982, p.7)

As this passage may well convey, Dahl's perception of beauty and ugliness he represents in his works derives from one's thoughts and attitudes rather than physical appearance. Consequently, this may clarify why his female protagonists are not characterized by how physically attractive they are. In this way, Dahl challenges the traditional emphasis of feminine beauty long established in fairy tales by developing female characters who take control of their own lives and defy conventional notions of attractiveness.

Another idealized theme reinforced by traditional fairy tales is domesticity and marriage, which also appears in Table.2 (see Appendix: Stereotypic sex role descriptors) as "very home-oriented". The portrayal of female characters as caretakers such as mothers, (future) wives and homemakers perpetuate the notion that women belong to the domestic sphere. This domestic sphere functions as a place of safety for the female protagonist to live at subsistence level with all the domestic tasks to be fulfilled by her. This emphasis on domesticity is often rewarded with a marriage at the end to live happily ever after. This depiction of the female protagonists as homemakers or caregivers can be recognized in the original versions of Snow White and Cinderella. Deeply impressed by Snow White's beauty, the dwarfs propose that they provide shelter and whatever is needed for Snow White in exchange for the domestic duties to be carried out by her with the following words; "If you will keep house for us, cook, make the beds, wash, sew, knit, and keep everything neat and tidy, then you can stay with us, and we'll give you everything you need"; and she readily agrees "with pleasure" (p.87). Tatar (2002) asserts in her annotation that her engagement in domestic duties is "a new development stage", which reflects the importance of these tasks in female maturation and preparation for marriage; thus traditional gender roles and emphasis on domesticity (p.87). It is also implied by the reference to a "contract" that domestic labour is authoritatively binding similar to marriage (p.87). Tatar's remark accentuates the significance of domestic labour

and how it pertains to the roles and responsibilities of women in the domestic sphere in classic fairy tales. Likewise, the story of Cinderella also emphasises the traditional gender roles and domesticity-centred themes that are common in fairy tales. Cinderella serves as a domestic servant performing a variety of household chores as stated in the story; “It was she who had to wash the dishes and scrub the stairs, who cleaned the rooms of the mistress and her daughters” (p.30). Similar to Snow White’s commitment, Cinderella is also presented as a dutiful character in the story, demonstrating her good nature by putting up with all the tasks assigned to her as illustrated; “The poor child endured with everything with patience” including the mistreatment by her stepsisters (p.30). Enduring all the mistreatment and abuse, Cinderella never complains even to her father, which is an implication of how women should be content with their domestic roles bearing all the hardships experienced within their domestic sphere. Echoing societal expectations of female behaviour, the narrative demeans womanhood by placing domesticity as central to the female identity and worth. At the end of both stories, both protagonists are rewarded with marriage to a prince in return for their anguish.

The themes of domesticity and marriage presented in classic fairy tales are frequently accompanied by the portrayal of dependent, passive, submissive female stereotypes and maternal figures within the confines of matrimony. These are not only the themes intertwined with domesticity and marriage embedded in only fairy tales but they are also listed as the result of a research study on stereotypical sex descriptors, shown in Table.2 (see Appendix), depicting the feminine traits as “very submissive, very passive, not at all dependent”, having “difficulty making decisions” as well as not acting as a leader. These stereotyped feminine traits are strongly apparent in the classic fairy tales discussed in this study. Grimm’s classic *Snow White* fairy tale reveals a stark contrast between two central female characters— the pure and beautiful princess and the evil stepmother. The stepmother is portrayed as “[a] plotter, a plot-maker, a schemer, a witch, an artist (...) witty, wily and self-absorbed as all artists traditionally are” by Susan M.Gilbert and Sandra Gubar (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.88) while Snow White is depicted as a passive and subservient character who readily allows her fate to be determined by others. From the very beginning, her life is influenced by the decisions of those around her. She makes no attempts to change the sequence of the events that follow the marriage of her father to the evil stepmother. Indeed, she appears to embrace whatever happens to her throughout the narrative, even if it endangers her life. For instance, when the

hunter is sent to kill her in the forest, Snow White does not attempt to escape or fight back. Instead, she pleads for mercy stating “Alas, dear hunter, spare my life” (p.83), and her fate is determined by the hunter depending heavily on her beauty. The same happens when she seeks shelter and protection in the dwarf’s cottage; she embraces the domestic responsibilities they assign without any hesitation or questioning. She is subjected to her stepmother’s attempts to murder her in this domestic sphere which symbolizes comfort and safety, despite all the warnings of the seven dwarfs; “Be on your guard, and don’t let anyone in unless we’re at home” (p.88). Furthermore, where to take the body of Snow White, who is thought to have died as a result of her stepmother’s third attempt, is decided by a prince. Snow White, upon her accidental awakening, does not even object to marrying the prince, who is in love with her at first sight, since it is the happiest ending that the patriarchal society deems worthy of a woman. Snow White, who cannot even protect herself in the domestic sphere without the existence of male power, is depicted with her passive and submissive nature, is condemned to domesticity and marriage and has become a dependent female stereotype by living a fate decided for her by a prince. The patriarchal system in a way dictates that her ultimate happiness lies in marriage and domesticity, reinforcing the notion that women are not capable of taking control of their own lives, but rather are reliant on men to live a happy life.

Similarly, Perrault’s *Cinderella* serves as a vivid illustration of how patriarchy exercises power on the perception of womanhood since her life is framed by societal expectations placed on women. It cannot go beyond the framework of femininity that the patriarchal system deems appropriate for women. Defined by her good nature, Cinderella, fulfilling her domestic duties in the best way possible, cannot even express her desire to go to the ball with her stepsisters and even expresses that she does not even consider herself worthy of attending the ball when her stepsisters ask her if she wants to go to the ball with the following words; “Alas, dear ladies! You’re just making fun of me. That’s not a place where I could be seen” (p.32). Cinderella, who provides the best service to her sisters in preparing for the ball, is also unable to respond when she is being made fun of, and when the sisters leave home to go to the ball, she breaks down in tears. It is not until she is asked by the fairy godmother that she expresses her desire to go to the ball and sobs, saying only “I should so like to” (p.34). Her fate is not in her own hands, despite the fact that Cinderella attends the ball with the help of her fairy godmother and impresses everyone there-including the prince with her beauty. Leaving the palace in a hurry at

twelve o'clock, Cinderella drops one of her glass slippers there. The prince's search for Cinderella prompts him to examine this slipper and orders his men to try the on everyone to find "the woman whose foot fit the slipper" (p.41). He announces that the owner of the slipper is to be his bride. When Cinderella tries on the slipper, especially the stepsisters are surprised and their attitude towards Cinderella changes because they know that the prince will marry her, and even at the end of the story, Cinderella enables her stepsisters to marry two noblemen after her stepsisters ask her for forgiveness. Throughout the story, starting with the second marriage of Cinderella's father, Perrault portrays her as follows: dependent on her stepfamily because she has nowhere else to go, forced to accept domestic responsibilities because she is dependent, too passive to express herself, unable to express her wishes, submissive to all the humiliations of her stepsisters, unable to decide of her own will on the prince's request to marry her, and marrying a prince in order to be respected is presented as the only happy ending for her. The Cinderella story, therefore, functions as a sharp reminder of the restrictions imposed on women within the context of patriarchal hegemony. These patriarchal constraints, hidden in the themes that dominate both the stories of *Cinderella* and *Snow White*, recur several times through the portrayal of characters in other fairy tales mentioned in the previous parts of this thesis. In the fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*, the little girl asked to bring cake and wine to her grandmother is called "look straight ahead of you like a good little girl and don't stray from the path" which is annotated by Tatar (2002) as an attempt by the Grimm brothers to instil "morals messages, and lessons in etiquette" to the story. However, the little girl is easily manipulated by the cunning wolf who says "Little Red Riding Hood, have you noticed the beautiful flowers around? Why don't you stay and look at them for a while?" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.22) and she eventually becomes the second victim of the wolf after her grandmother. While the wolf is asleep, the poor girl and her grandmother are rescued by a passing huntsman. The rescue of these passive female figures by the huntsman, who cannot protect themselves, expresses "patriarchal protection for the two women, who are unable to fend for themselves", according to Tatar (2002, p.25-26). These depictions of submissive female passivity and dependency, which patriarchal hegemony weaves through domesticity and marriage, are particularly highlighted with the representation of motherhood. As an illustration, the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* opens with the introduction of the mother with these words; "[t]here was once upon a time a poor widow" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.133), which constructs the identity of the female upon the death of her husband. This poor widow has only one son named Jack and

a cow named Milky-white. It is meaningful that even the cow is introduced with its name, yet the female character is identified by her role as a mother. They live off the milk until one day it gives no milk, which places the mother in a more dependent position, expecting his son to take action with an emphasis on her passivity. With the same passivity and incompetence, the story of *The Three Little Pigs* begins with the introduction of an adult female pig; “There was an old sow with three little pigs, as she had not enough to keep them, she sent them out to seek their fortune” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.208). These representations of female figures as passive and dependent reinforce the perception that women possess a subordinate role and are in need of male protection and guidance to be able to survive or take care of their offspring. This theme of passive and dependent motherhood stands in stark contrast to the theme of stepmotherhood seen in the fairy tales *Snow White* and *Cinderella*. Nevertheless, the purpose of this is to “preserve the sanctity of the motherhood”, as Tatar notes, contributing to the polarized “angel-woman” and the “monster-woman” conflict (2002, p.80).

While classic fairy tales that were recorded by male authors prevent the female characters from tackling with the effects of patriarchy, Dahl’s portrayal of these female characters as rebels against the stereotyped roles of femininity challenges this patriarchal hegemony, and he demonstrates a subversive approach in rewriting these fairy tales as a male author. In his versions, the themes of domesticity, marriage, passivity, dependency and motherhood are subverted and his stories are transformed into liberating narratives, employing modernized twists on the course of the events and characterization. To illustrate, in his version of *Snow White*, Dahl presents a more active protagonist. While his portrayal of the queen is not as scheming as the one in the original story and does not demonstrate a high level of competence to plot against her step-daughter with the three murderous attempts — as she is obviously depicted as “spoiled and stupid” (Dahl, 1982, p.24), Snow White, in contrast, is considerably active and cunning to cope with the difficulties as the story unfolds. After the huntsman sets her free, Snow White takes a completely different route from the one presented in the original narrative. She courageously ventures out into the outer world rather than into a small cottage in the forest, which in the original story belongs to the seven dwarfs and symbolizes the patriarchal boundaries with all the safety and domesticity it offers; “She’d found it easy, being pretty, / To hitch a ride into the city, / And there she’d got a job, unpaid, / As general cook and parlour-maid” (Dahl, 1982, p.24). The domestic tasks of cooking and

housekeeping now are shown as her job (though unpaid) taken by her own decision instead of presenting these as expected roles within the context of a pre-marriage contracted by the seven dwarfs as in the original story. In addition, Dahl's Snow White, who makes her own decisions and takes control of her own destiny, becomes the heroine who saves the seven dwarfs as "[t]hey squandered all of their resources / At the race-track backing horses" (Dahl, 1982, p.26). Snow White, who orders the seven dwarfs "I think I've got a great idea. / Just leave it all to me, okay?" (p.26), returns to her palace, skilfully steals her stepmother's mirror, brings it to the seven dwarfs and makes them win in the races. The story ends not with Snow White marrying a prince against her will, as in the original story, but with Snow White and the seven dwarfs becoming millionaires thanks to the mirror; "Thereafter, every single day, / The Mirror made the bookies pay. / Each Dwarf and Snow White got a share, / And each was soon a millionaire" (p.28). Dahl's Snow White is presented as a female protagonist who, contrary to the traditional female stereotype in the original tale, takes charge of her own life as an action-taking and problem-solving leader. In this version, Dahl not only eschews an exaggerated emphasis on beauty but also avoids elaborated narration of domestic responsibilities, the conflict between angel-woman and monster-woman, passivity and dependence on patriarchal protection or income by revealing an alternative way of life and liberating the female protagonist.

As for Cinderella, Dahl maintains the same liberating plot and characterization, deliberately avoiding the same emphasis on beauty, and domestic tasks assigned by the stepmother, even the stepmother figure mentioned in the classic version. Dahl's version opens with his assertion that the original story was invented in an extremely emotional way by disclosing his intention to show how he subverts this tale from the very beginning in these stanzas;

I guess you think you know this story.

You don't. The real one's much more gory.

The phoney one, the one you know,

Was cooked up years and years ago,

And made to sound all soft and sappy

Just to keep the children happy. (p.5)

Dahl's version does not include any details regarding the mistreatment of Cinderella by the stepsisters, nor does it include any details about her good nature and kindness in providing her best service to put their hair up, or how she bursts into tears after they leave the ball. The story illustrates that Cinderella is "locked up in a slimy cellar" and how she calls for help. Hearing her cries, the magic fairy comes up, asking if Cinderella is "all right". Cinderella's reply may well be seen as proof of how Dahl subverts the image of the good-natured and kind girl presented in Perrault's version. Dahl's Cinderella is a rebellious one expressing herself in a straightforward manner as these stanzas exemplify;

*'All right? Cried Cindy. 'Can't you see
 'I feel as rotten as can be!'
 She beat her fist against the Wall,
 And shouted, 'Get me to the Ball!
 'There is a Disco at the Palace!
 The rest have gone and I am jealous! (p.6)*

The female protagonist in Dahl's version represents an absolute uprising against the silent, passive and emotionally repressed female stereotype that patriarchal hegemony praises in classic tales since she is totally aware of her desires, is able to communicate her feelings honestly and directly, and is not characterised by her politeness or tenderness. Her directness enables her to attend the ball looking exactly as she desires. Furthermore, Dahl's portrayal of Cinderella goes beyond the borders of the feminine passivity that classic fairy tales determined for women in her dance with the prince; "She held him very tight and pressed / Herself against his manly chest. / The Prince himself was turned to pulp, All he could do was gasp and gulp" (p.6). Dahl not only emphasizes an active female protagonist in this rewriting, but he also subverts the female stereotypes who surrender to the fate imposed by patriarchal hegemony. Rather than depicting her beauty, he illustrates a smart and determined Cinderella, taking charge of her own fate and rejecting to submit to a subordinate role. Dahl, who narrates the story of Cinderella in a similar plot until the moment when one of the slippers is lost, changes the course of the events in the rest in his unique narrative style. Upon the prince's announcement that he will marry whomever the owner of this slipper is, one of the ugly sisters is seen to take action. In contrast to the passive stepsister in the original story, Dahl describes the female figure in an attempt to show her agency as follows;

*At once, one of the Ugly Sisters,
 (The one whose face was blotched with blisters)
 Sneaked up and grabbed the dainty shoe,
 And quickly flushed it down to the loo.
 Then in its place she calmly put
 The slipper from her own left foot. (p.9)*

This agency paves the way for Dahl's plot twist, and as he states "(...) the plot grows thicker" (p.9). The unexpected events begin with the prince's discovery that the slipper belongs to the ugly sister. The ugly sister reverses the patriarchal expectation of marriage as the happy ending in the original fairy tale as follows;

*Now came the Ugly Sisters' go.
 One tries it on. The Prince screamed, 'No!'
 But she screamed, 'Yes! It fits! Whoopee!
 'So now you've got to marry me!' (p.9)*

These lines are critical of the original plot in which Cinderella is obliged to marry the prince when the slipper fits and she does not rebel against this patriarchal fait accompli. The *ugly* [emphasis added] sister's statement that the prince has to marry her, in a way, may be regarded as a symbol of how *ugly* [emphasis added] this patriarchal fait accompli is. Upon the ugly stepsister's statement, the prince unexpectedly resorts to violence and kills her with an outcry "Off with her head!" (p.11). The second stepsister- who wants to try on the slipper, does not have a very different destiny and, as it is narrated by Dahl, "[h]er head went crashing to the ground" (p.11). Witnessing all this, Cinderella's thoughts about the prince change and she begins to question; "My prince! She thought. He chops heads! How could I marry anyone Who does sort of thing for fun?" (p.11). Unlike classical fairy tales, Cinderella, who is not impressed by his physical strength, transforms into a female figure who questions the idea of marrying the prince. Meanwhile, the Magic Fairy arrives and hears Cinderella's cry; "No more Princes, no more money, I have had my taste of honey. I'm wishing for a decent man" (p.12). This fairy tale ends not with the prince and the beautiful female stereotype, who displays submissive tendencies to marry the prince with an emphasis on a supposedly happy ending, but rather with marrying an ordinary but "decent" man of her own choice, contrary to the patriarchal expectations.

Consequently, in his version of Cinderella, Dahl presents portrayals of female figures who are active, strong-willed and autonomous.

“Little Red Riding Hood” is another narrative, the female protagonist of which is liberated from patriarchal perceptions of defenceless and dependent femininity by Dahl. Dahl subverts the tale by employing a completely different characterization to operate as an instrument to offer his own happy ending. The narrative begins by depicting the appetite of the wolf and how he eats up the grandma. The scene in which how Little Red Riding Hood is manipulated by the wolf on the way to her grandma in the forest is not included in Dahl’s version, which implies that evil does not emerge as a result of her innocence and the manipulation of the little girl by the wolf, but rather evil is already there in the very beginning. Furthermore, the following lines illustrate how the wolf meticulously prepares for the atrocity he is plotting; “[h]e dressed himself in coat and hat / [h]e put on shoes and after that / [h]e even brushed and curled his hair, / [t]hen sat himself in Grandma’s chair” (1982, p.38). Similar to the original story, the dialogue between the wolf and the little girl proceeds in the form of question and answer and the wolf is almost certain that he will devour her. These lines emphasize how enthusiastic the wolf is about her youth by comparing his new prey to an unfertilized fish egg; “[h]e sat there watching her and smiled / [h]e thought, I’m going to eat this child / [c]ompared with her old Grandmamma / [s]he’s going to taste like caviare” (p.38). As Tatar notes in her annotations, “The wolf, with his predatory nature, is frequently seen as a metaphor for sexually seductive men (...) the swallowing whole of the grandmother and the girl has been seen as a symbolic double rape” (2002, p.20-25) Through his characterization and the plot twist, Dahl subverts the original the story with an unexpected end. In the original story, when the little girl asks “Oh, Grandmother, what a big, scary mouth you have!” (Tatar, 2002, p.24), the wolf devours her. However, the twist Dahl employs actually is the absence of this question in his version. Upon this absence of the question, the wolf asks “Have you forgot / to tell me what big teeth I’ve got?” in astonishment. The little girl prefers to answer this question with an action she confidently takes; “The small girl smiles. One eyelid flickers. / She whips a pistol from her knickers. /She aims it at the creature’s head / And bang bang bang, she shoots him dead (1982, p.40). Dahl obviously presents a female protagonist who is competent enough to deal with the evils outside, about which classic fairy tales constantly warned the audience within a patriarchal viewpoint constraining the women to remain silent in their domestic sphere and declaring

that they could not live without male protection, guidance and wisdom. To amplify the impact of this autonomous female protagonist, at the end of the story, Dahl emphasizes this shift in his characterization of the little girl by taking off her “little hood of red velvet” that her grandmother gives in the original story (Tatar, 2002, p.19):

*A few weeks later, in the wood,
I came across Miss Riding Hood.
But what a change! No cloak of red,
No silly hood upon her head,
She said ‘Hello, and do please note
‘My lovely furry WOLFSKIN COAT’ (1982, p.40)*

Dahl takes one step further in his characterization of Little Red Riding Hood and portrays her becoming a popular heroine in the following story of “The Three Little Pigs” in his book. The classic one tells the story of three little pigs that are sent out by their mother to “to seek their fortune” (Tatar, 2002, p.208). They construct their own homes by using different materials respectively; straw, furze and bricks. As Tatar annotates, “indolence and lack of foresight are responsible for the deaths of the first two pigs, who build their houses out of materials vulnerable to the destructive puffs of the wolf’s breath” (2002, p.206). The rest of the story tells how the third pig deals with the trickster wolf and ultimately outsmarts him, “turning the predator into dinner” (Tatar, 2002, p.211). The framework of the narrative remains the same in Dahl’s rewriting, with the first two pigs building their house out of straw and twigs and cannot escape falling prey to the wolf. Although the third pig, who has built his house of bricks and is introduced “as bright and brainy” (p.45) feels almost certain that the wolf will not be able to capture him, he dreadfully worries once he hears the wolf’s strategy described in the following lines;

*Wolf huffed and puffed and blew and blew.
The house stayed up as good as new.
‘If I can’t blow it down,’ Wolf said,
‘I’ll have to blow it up instead.
‘I’ll come back in the dead of night
‘And blow it up with dynamite!’
Pig cried, ‘You brute! I might have known!’ (p.44)*

The pig, who wishes to get rid of the wolf, finds a solution and calls Little Red Riding Hood as she has become the heroine of her own story and gained popularity for her bravery. Dahl, who skillfully connects the two stories, names her Miss Hood in this story. The third pig explains the reason why he calls Miss Hood as follows; “I know you’ve dealt with wolves before” (p.46). Dahl once again demonstrates how he transforms a passive lady into a heroine by emphasising her bravery, which is recognized by the others. Miss Hood helps the pig by killing the wolf with a single shot, yet the closure of the narrative overwhelms the audience as Miss Riding Hood “[n]ot only has two wolfskin coats / [b]ut when she goes from place to place / [s]he has a pigskin travelling case” (p.47). With this baffling end, Dahl subverts the traditional two polarized ideas of womanhood; angel-woman and monster-woman. He ingeniously blurs the sharp distinction between the exaggerated depiction of good and evil women by his characterization of Little Red Riding Hood, who features both.

Considering motherhood, the sanctity of motherhood and the mother figures depicted in classical fairy tales in connection with the theme of domesticity, such emphases are not found in Dahl’s rewritten fairy tales. It is never mentioned how good-natured and beautiful the mothers of Snow White and Cinderella are. In the stepmother representations, Snow White’s stepmother is only described with the adjectives “spoilt and stupid”, but unlike in the original story, her murderous attempts are left out of Dahl’s version. Cinderella’s stepmother is never mentioned. In other words, the sanctity of the mother or the cruelty of the stepmother in classical fairy tales does not find a place in Dahl’s stories. In addition, unlike the originals, there is no information about the mother of Little Red Riding Hood, which in a way proves that Dahl does not define the female protagonists through their mothers. Similarly, the representation of the desperate mother described in the traditional story of “The Three Little Pigs” is also absent in Dahl’s version. The representation of the mother in the story of “Jack and the Beanstalk,” on the other hand, is depicted by Dahl quite differently from the original in order to subvert the idea of the sanctity of motherhood imposed by patriarchal norms and how protective mother figures are. In the original story, the mother figure is portrayed as a poor widow dependent on the actions her son takes. When she finds out that her son has swapped their cow for magical beans, she scolds Jack for his foolishness (p.135). The punishment; however, is not as severe as the punishment in Dahl’s version; “And now off with you to bed. Not a sup shall you drink, and not a bit shall you swallow this very night” (Tatar,

2002, p.135). Dahl's portrayal of the mother has a departure from the original story with the punishment scene; "[t]hen summoning up all her power, / [s]he beat the boy for half an hour, / [u]sing (and nothing could be meaner) / The handle of a vacuum-cleaner" (p.15). Within the theme of motherhood, Dahl once again offers a gray space instead of either white/good or black/evil representations of mothers.

Based on the textual evidence presented throughout this chapter, it may well be concluded that Dahl, through his unique characterization and unanticipated plot twists, distinctively challenges the traditional fairy tales and subverts especially the themes of feminine beauty, domesticity and marriage, passivity and submission to patriarchal norms without questioning in his rewritings. He features strong, determined, autonomous, self-sufficient and active female figures by addressing individuality and independency to subvert the long-established patriarchal framework of womanhood.

CHAPTER 2
THE TRADITIONAL PORTRAYAL OF MALE STEREOTYPES AND ROLES
AND THEIR SUBVERSION BY DAHL

2.1. MALE ROLES AND STEREOTYPES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Attaining gender equality without prioritizing male over female, or female over male has been the most discussed topic and the main controversial subject matter in gender studies. Even though great progress has been achieved in tackling this long-established disparity, it is of utmost importance to be cognizant of the fact that these achievements may not necessarily lead to radical solutions to establishing complete gender equity. As it has been revealed in the preceding chapter, the issues regarding the subordination of women have been identified, addressed and discussed as a result of complementary feminist movements and the efforts of leading female authors and critics mentioned. These have illuminated the numerous forms of oppression, which led to the stereotyping of women and defined a rigid framework of womanhood compatible with the patriarchal expectations, at the workplace, in family relationships, and in the society they live in. This chapter first aims to provide a background by explaining the late emergence of masculine studies, a brief overview of the historical motives that have led to the construction of masculine traits resulting in male stereotyping and gender-appropriate roles assigned to them, and how these have been perpetuated. This background is further used in examining the male roles and stereotyping in the traditional fairy tales and how Dahl subverts these traditional roles and stereotypes in his rewriting *Revolting Rhymes*.

In contrast to research on feminist studies, the emergence of studies on masculinity has taken more time, primarily for two reasons. The first reason is that scientific examination of men in relation to their gender-related representation has been criticised due to the claims that men have long been dominating over women, so there should not be as much of a requirement to investigate their perceptions of the world. Nevertheless, on this domination issue, Hacker (1957) asserts that it not only affects the subordinated group but also impedes the advancement of the dominating group. Furthermore, as Hacker puts forward, there has not been enough emphasis placed on the sociological study of this dominant group of males, and the challenges they experience as a result of their roles and status. As a response to the criticisms about the unnecessary of masculinity studies, Kilmartin explains the necessity of conducting research in this field identifying four key reasons. To begin, regardless of having an immense impact on society, many men have been severely influenced by the traditional and rigid masculine ideals imposed upon them (1994, p.5). Secondly, gaining more insight into this field

provides the means to learn how males react to women's advancement in society as well as their arguments against feminist ideas of gender equality (1994, p.5). The third reason is that an investigation into men's studies facilitates concentration on issues such as gender-based violence which has destructive impacts both on men and women (1994, p.5). Finally, as Kilmartin states, males also encounter a range of difficulties related to their gender and the imposed traits prescribed for men might influence their health and well-being, concluding that "all is not well with men" (Kilmartin, 1994, p.5-6).

The second reason underlying the late emergence of masculinity studies is that research into men and masculine studies has been overwhelmed by the greater emphasis on the subordination of women. However, the literature review mentioned in the introduction part of this study has demonstrated that gender stereotyping has detrimental impacts both on males and females restricting their potential, hindering the value of singularity and embracing diversity. Horzum also sheds light on this as follows;

In fact, due to the discussions that inevitably flared up on the woman question, female identities, and femininities, the field of gender studies mainly focused on the patriarchal appropriation of the female body as a commodity, neglecting the questions regarding the male. Thus, gender studies, in general, has been translated into women's studies, overshadowing the discussions on men and masculinities until about three decades ago. (2015, p.3)

The reason behind this absence of masculine studies had been emphasized by Hacker long before the necessity of establishing the field was identified as follows;

Possibly one reason why masculine social roles have not been subjected to scrutiny is that such a concept has not clearly emerged. Men have stood for mankind, and their problems have been identified with the general human condition. It is a plausible hypothesis, however, that men, as well as women, suffer from the lack of a generally accepted, clearly defined pattern of behaviour expected of them, and that their interpretation of the masculine role varies according to individual personality needs and social situations. (1957, p.227).

Reinforcing the notion that masculine studies have been overshadowed, Horrocks does not hesitate to assert that "men and manhood has been lifted out of a deep unconsciousness by feminism" (1994, p.12). Therefore, the birth of masculine studies in relation to gender studies owes immensely to the success of feminist discourse in their revolt against the patriarchal hegemony, which also paved the way for recognizing the necessity to investigate masculine studies. Compatible with the objective of this thesis, it is more than evident that research into gender studies embracing both male and female

perspectives contributes more to the value of the subject in terms of providing a panoramic perspective and addressing the issues related to each other. Until 1970s, during which research focusing on men and masculinity evolved in response to the growing influence of second-wave feminism as Coltrane states, stringent rules of manhood had been established and promulgated depending on the prevailing social, cultural, and economic factors (1994, p.39). Therefore, understanding the path to the emergence of masculinity studies necessitates a retrospective approach by illustrating how male stereotyping and the construction of masculinity have been molded and perpetuated, especially by means of literature throughout history.

Considering Judith Butler's notion of gender as a performative act meaning that gender identity is not inherent but rather constructed by means of cultural and social norms, the definition of masculinity depends on the constructions of these norms functioning to determine and confine masculinity within specific frames. Since antiquity, the construction of masculinity has been in a vigorous state of flux, which encompasses a variety of attributes to males. These attributes principally fall into three categories; physiological attributes, such as physical strength and fortitude, psychological and emotional attributes, such as bravery and morality, as well as financial and occupational attributes such as breadwinning as essential indicators of manliness (Sussman, 2012). The construction of manhood dates back as early as Aristotle and was incorporated into the Bible. Believing that the male is more evolved, greater in size and more robust, Aristotle advocated the male has superiority over the female in terms of intellectuality and morality, thus maintaining that male dominance was "the will of nature" (Stuber, 2008, p.2). This notion was also advocated by the Bible emphasizing the dominant nature of the male as Stuber also states "[s]ince men were made in the image of God, they were naturally inclined to rule" (2008, p.2). Therefore, the male was believed to be encoded with an innate dominancy.

In ancient societies, like Greek and Roman ones, the idealized masculinity was constructed on the notions of being physically strong and influential by means of heroic deeds, which were performed by warriors. To exemplify, Homer's *Iliad* illustrates the perception of masculinity with a great emphasis on the portrayal of warriors. In this significant epic, the Trojan champion Hector confronts the unbeatable Greek champion, Achilles. Depicted to be willing to pass away with dignity, Hector, in all respects, embraces the warrior identity "transcending self to lose the self in the frenzy of battle rage

that marks the warrior” (Sussman, 2012, p.11). Sussman explains the construction of the warrior identity as follows;

The warrior is an individual, but, as with all forms of masculine identity, he derives this identity from the values and structures of the society into which he is born (...) At one pole would be warrior societies in which warriors do not form a separate male group but encompass all males within the society. Every male is a warrior. (2012, p.12)

Sussman (2012) further clarifies that this warrior identity is in pursuit of dignity, prominence, prestige and recognition to be praised among other warriors and to be accepted societally. Accomplishing all of these by the warrior contributes to the personal dignity of the warrior, which functions as “an unwritten code” to avoid being subjected to condemnation and even displacement by the rest of the male community (p.16). Consequently, this warrior identity has additionally given the male the roles of a fighter, a rescuer and a hero of his society, which cannot be rejected. Likewise, masculine attributes in Medieval Europe were identified with chivalry, loyalty and commitment to protecting women. The knights were the main representatives of manhood and they were required and praised primarily for physical strength. For instance, as Houswitschka states, the male body is frequently addressed in Thomas Malory’s Arthurian legend, and the knights’ moral rectitude on both bodily and devotional levels proves essential to preserve masculinity. The depiction of masculinity in *Le Morte d’Arthur* exemplifies chivalric ideals and alternates between powerful masculine scenes and trepidation (2015, p.75). Similarly, according to Mirrer, the characteristics and attitudes that were desirable for males in medieval society are clearly expressed in the literary works of medieval Castile. These works accentuate aggressive behaviour, romantic confidence, and challenging rhetoric as traits of real males, defining masculinity through aggression, coercion, and the use of harsh language in place of biological factors (1994, p.169). In addition, Weissenberg sheds light on the non-chivalric side of the society and points out that “[t]he norm for laymen in the Middle Ages was to marry and raise a family. They secured their livelihoods through landholding and farming, or mercantile enterprise and other worldly activities” (2013, p.112). Upon these historically evolving definitions of manliness as the dominant authority, physically strong and emotionally restrained excluding aggressiveness, new definitions of masculinity and new roles for men were introduced throughout the transition period, leading to the Industrial Revolution, which aggravated the appearing problem of gender stereotyping. As Sussman states, the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century witnessed a new kind of masculinity; middle-

class economic man as a result of the industrial and economic revolution and elaborates on this new masculine identity as follows;

Man was redefined as “economic man.” Manliness as service to the common good in war and in peace was replaced by an ethos grounded not in community but in individual self-interest motivated by rational calculation of economic gain. For both the owners of the factories and its workers, manliness was performed through working hard, making money, and accumulating the commodities so easily produced by the machine. (2012, p.81)

Therefore, the revolutions that took place may be indicators of how achievement in the economy through working hard displaced the importance of the muscular power of the previously praised warriors and knights. The literary works of the time also well reflected this new definition of masculinity as “economic man” in the narrative form of the time. In his examination of Victorian literature and art, Sussman articulates the representation of the newly emerging male identity with these words; “(...) industrial manhood defines manliness as success within the male sphere, the new arena of commerce and technology in which sexual energy is transmitted into constructive labor” (as cited in Mcknight, 2015, p.52).

The historical evolution of how masculinity and manhood have been defined through certain attributes meeting the needs of societies proves that there has been a deliberate emphasis on the inherent authority, and physical competencies along with the psychological, emotional and financial capabilities of the men with prescribed traits to be accepted as “real men”, which inevitably resulted in patriarchal hegemony. All of these traits and roles prescribed for men, as Jourard emphasizes, are “impoverished”, “unhealthy” and “lethal”, which led to Men’s Liberation Movement in 1975 (as cited in Messner, 1988, p.256). In this initial wave of research, the advantages, disadvantages and challenges of being a male as well as the dominant social position of men were the central topics. The 1980s witnessed a broader investigation into the construction and practices of masculinity defined within social contexts such as schools, workplaces, and sports and since then research into men and masculinity has broadened significantly (Bhatti, 2022, np.). This investigation of all the changes in society over time, as well as the definitions and perceptions of masculinity, reflected particularly in the literary works, has also scrutinised fairy tales which have long been functioning as a mirror of societies, within the scope of the field. Although fairy tales are frequently seen as a genre that stereotypes women, especially by the impact of feminist movements, they also reveal social and cultural roles that have been placed on men. The masculine stereotypes that are prevalent

in traditional fairy tales and how Dahl subverts them in his rewritings are examined in the following section.

2.2. ANALYSIS OF HOW MALE STEREOTYPES ARE SUBVERTED BY DAHL

As it has been mentioned with references to numerous sources in the previous sections of the thesis, rigid gender roles and stereotypes related to femininity and masculinity have been constructed within traditionally male-dominated social and cultural systems throughout history and these roles have been difficult to challenge and change over time. Both historical overviews of female and male stereotyping evidently show that literary works of certain periods have contributed to perpetuating the representation of these roles and reinforcing their effects. Among these, fairy tales have been at the heart of the scholarly discussion in regard to feminine ideals and stereotyping. Moreover, as the previous literature review may also reveal, fairy tales like other literary genres, convey prescribed and idealised masculine attributes, roles and stereotypes through the portrayal of the male characters. However, as Jorgensen emphasizes, “[i]n fairy-tale scholarship, too, masculinity has often been treated as an afterthought” (2018, p.338). Since this thesis aims to present the perceptions of masculinity and femininity in classical tales in a panoramic and complementary approach, this section of the chapter contributes to the field by analysing how men are portrayed in traditional fairy tales and Dahl’s *Revolting Rhymes*, providing relevant textual evidence to support the argument of this thesis.

When examined from the perspective of masculinity studies, it may well be proved that traditional fairy tales also feature a wide range of male stereotypes from powerful and influential princes to active and strong huntsmen as well as merciful, virtuous, and good-hearted dwarfs. In contrast, Roald Dahl’s *Revolting Rhymes* subverts common male stereotypes by challenging the long-established definitions of manliness through his characterization and plot twists. It lays the groundwork for a more in-depth examination of how classic fairy tales contribute to the unquestioned understanding of masculinity and how Dahl’s versions revolt against these constructed male roles and stereotypes. The section starts with a critical examination of the interwoven themes, particularly dominance and power in relation to authority, activeness as the rescuer, the problem solver, and the protector, romanticized courtesy as the lover, commitment and virtuousness as the breadwinner by comparing the portrayals of princes, huntsmen and

boys presented both in classic tales and Dahl's rewritings. It aims to show how Dahl subverts these themes through his portrayal of characters and plot twists as a male author.

To begin with, there is no obvious or exaggerated evidence of emphasis on physical appearance in the representations of male characters in contrast to the emphasis on beauty, which is one of the most prominent markers of female characters in classic tales. According to Jorgensen, critics reach the consensus that "[t]he attractiveness of heroes is not as important as the attractiveness of heroines" (2018, p.341). The explicit and excessive emphasis on physical features of masculinity in traditional tales is replaced by implicit and internalized domineering and authoritarian attitudes and deeds. Although physical attractiveness does not seem to be the defining characteristic of the male in the traditional tales, the legitimacy of dominancy and exerting power to maintain the authority stereotypes the male as the hero, the rescuer, the protector and the breadwinner of the tales through his deeds. Stone states that "[h]eroes succeed because they act, not because they are. They are judged not by their appearance or inherent sweet nature but by their ability to overcome obstacles, even if these obstacles are defects in their own characters" (as cited in Jorgensen, 2018, p.341).

One way as indicator of sustaining the authority for an "active" male is marriage since "it is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" whom he himself chooses (Austen, p.1). To illustrate, in *Snow White*, the female protagonist, who comes back to life when the soldiers stumble while carrying her coffin, hears the prince utter these; "You will stay with me (...) Come with me to my father's castle. You shall be my bride" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.93). They get married at the end of the story. Similarly, in *Cinderella*, it is told that the "prince proclaimed, with a flourish of trumpets, that he was going to marry the woman whose foot fit the slipper" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.41). In addition, the male protagonist of *Jack and the Beanstalk* tale has a similar ending in the classic story; "Jack and his mother became very rich, and he married a great princess, and they lived happily ever after" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.144). While all these stories ending in marriage demonstrate that the male characters can marry whomever they want, the fact that the female characters are not even asked for their opinions on this issue shows that the institution of marriage is established with male authority and celebrates male superiority. However, Dahl's versions do not use the marriage institution as a means of glorifying the male characters and demonstrating the functionality of their authority. On the contrary, in his rewritings,

in which men are not seen as obliged to seal their fate with marriage, and in which men are even deprived of the privilege of being the sole decision-makers in marriage, Dahl subverts the theme of fulfilling authority through marriage and liberates the man as skilfully as he liberates the woman. To exemplify, in his version entitled “Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs”, in contrast to the marriage theme at the end of the original tale, an unexpected twist is encountered, and the absent presence of the prince is seen. The story ends not with the marriage of the prince and Snow White, but with Snow White choosing the life she wants. Similarly, Dahl’s version of “The Jack and the Beanstalk” does not have a marriage theme at the end, rather it ends with Jack becoming “an instant millionaire” (Dahl, 1982, p.20). However, Dahl does not completely eliminate the theme of marriage and chooses a different ending for the prince in Cinderella in his rewriting “Cinderella”. When the prince learns that he has to marry the step-sister who switched Cinderella’s slippers with hers, he reacts; “The prince screamed ‘No!’” (p.9). The stepsister is insistent; “But she screamed ‘Yes! It fits! Whoopee!’ / So now, you’ve got to marry me!” (p.9). Not wanting to marry either of the stepsisters, the prince kills them both. Upon witnessing the cruelty of the prince, Cinderella then marries “a simple jam-maker” (p.12). The fact that the themes of marriage in these three stories differ from each other shows that the relationship between marriage and authority is subverted by Dahl. In a way, he demonstrates that fairy tales do not necessarily end in marriage by giving both men and women the freedom to choose their partners as well as the freedom not to marry.

Another theme that is explored in relation to the theme of marriage is courtesy because, as Jorgensen notes, “[m]ale characters are rewarded for acts of kindness” (2018, p.342) which is another prescribed male attribute: the stereotype of the gentleman devoted to his love. Traditionally in fairy tales, depictions of courtesy are revealed through the characterization of the princes. For instance, in the fairy tale “Cinderella”, when Cinderella arrives at the ball, the courtesy of the prince begins to be portrayed as follows; “He offered his arm to help her out of the coach, escorted her to the ball” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.36). Mesmerized by Cinderella’s beauty, “[t]he prince, never left her side and whispered sweet things in her ear all night long” (p.39). This theme of courtesy is also reinforced by the depiction of the prince’s devotion to his love; “(...) the prince was not able to eat a thing because he couldn’t take his eyes off her” (p.38). His devotion is so strong that when Cinderella drops one of her slippers and disappears, the love the prince feels is recognized even by those around him; “(...) they were sure that he was very

much in love with the person to whom the slipper belonged” (p.39). A very similar commitment is apparent in the classic tale of *Snow White*. When the prince runs into the dwarfs and the coffin in which Snow White is placed, he begs the dwarfs to give him Snow White as a present with these words; “Make me a present of it, for I can’t live without seeing Snow White. I will honor and cherish her as if she were my beloved” (p.93). When Snow White comes back to life, the prince expresses the greatness of his love as follows; “I love you more than anything else on earth” (p.93). These romanticised and exaggerated manifestations of courtesy and commitment are another theme that Dahl subverts through characterization and plot twists. In addition to the absence of a romantic prince with an overemphasized courtesy in deeds in Dahl’s version of “Snow White”, the characterization of the prince in the “Cinderella” story may be perceived as subversion of the male stereotype as the gentleman. In his version of Cinderella, the prince is portrayed as aggressive, violent and abusive. After he is informed by the step-sister that he has to marry her, he loses self-control and begins to attack to murder the step-sister which is told as follows;

‘Off with her head!’ the Prince roared back.

They chopped it off with one big whack.

This pleased the Prince. He smiled and said,

‘She is prettier without her head.’

Then up came Sister Number Two,

Who yelled, ‘Now I will try the shoe!’

‘Try this instead!’ the Prince yelled back.

He swung his trusty sword and smack. (Dahl, 1982, p.11)

In addition to this brutal portrayal, Dahl takes one step further in characterization and employs an obscene use of language for the prince; “‘What’s all the racket Cindy cried. / ‘Mind your own bizz,’ The Prince replied. / (...) The Prince cried, ‘Who’s this dirty slut? / ‘Off with her nut! Off with her nut!’” (p.11-12). As the textual evidence reveals, Dahl challenges the traditional stereotype of the prince image by employing a subversive characterization.

Other than the stereotypes revealed within the themes of marriage and courtesy, several other male stereotypes are constructed through the representatives of “activeness” performing their assigned roles adhering to the masculine traits in the traditional tales.

Masculinity roles, which are not explicitly defined, are implied and embedded in these tales through the deeds fulfilled by male characters because within the traditional perceptions of masculinity, “men are presumed to be more ambitious and task-oriented in their work” (Blackstone, 2003, p.337). With this emphasis on activeness, stereotypes such as the rescuer, the problem solver, the protector and the breadwinner have been constructed and maintained. This is exemplified in the classic tale of *The Little Red Riding Hood*, a story “depicting a conflict between a weak, vulnerable protagonist and a large, powerful antagonist” as Tatar notes (2002, p.18). The two male figures, the wolf and the huntsman, are representatives of the two common stereotypes; the wolf as the predator, whose physical superiority is not elaborated but implied, and the huntsman as the rescuer, whose activeness is proved through his bravery and heroic achievements. Moreover, the wolf depicted as “a wicked beast” is even shown to measure his own craftiness through his actions of preying after he runs into the little girl on her way to her grandmother with the following words; “[t]he wolf thought to himself: ‘That tender young thing will make a nice dainty snack! She’ll taste even better than the old woman. If you’re really crafty, you’ll get them both’” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.21). He proves his physical superiority and thus his craftiness through his action of gobbling the grandma “right up” as the poor little girl (p.23). Nevertheless, the huntsman, who is a stereotyped presentation of “patriarchal protection”, appears to rescue the impotent female characters devoured by this mighty wolf;

He pulled out his musket and was about to take aim when he realized that the wolf might have eaten Grandmother and that he could still save her. Instead of firing, he took out a pair of scissors and began cutting open the belly of the sleeping wolf. After making a few cuts, he caught sight of a red cap. He made a few more cuts, and a girl leaped out (...) (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.25-26)

By describing in detail how these poor and victimised female stereotypes are rescued by the huntsman, both his heroic achievements and problem-solving competency are implicitly highlighted by referring to his activeness. As an indicator of his masculine glory, “[t]he huntsman skinned the wolf and took the pelt home with him” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.25-26). Contrary to this implicit emphasis on activeness, Dahl’s rewriting of the story offers a similar meaningful absent-presence² previously mentioned to explain

² Absent-presence is defined as “The symbolic erasure of a particular sociocultural group (e.g. females, gay people, or ethnic minorities) in a text, genre, or medium, or in a particular social context.” (Oxford Reference, n.d).

the absence of the prince character in his version of *Snow White*. Rather than depicting the huntsman as a rescuer, hero, and problem solver with a detailed narration of how he deals with the wolf, Dahl employs a modernized twist with an absence of the rescuer, liberating the male character from the long-established patriarchal duty and commitment to preserving the authority through heroic activeness. As for the “wicked beast” of the traditional tale, Dahl illustrates the portrayal of the wolf in a humorous way to subvert the physical superiority in the following lines; “He dressed himself in coat and hat. / He put on shoes and after that / He even brushed and curled his hair” (1982, p.38).

The same emphasis on male agency serving authority in the original fairy tales is also prominent in the *Snow White* tale with the characterisations of the huntsman and the dwarfs. The huntsman, who is assigned the task of killing Snow White by her stepmother, mercifully decides not to kill the young girl whose beauty has impressed him. Instead, by narrating how he hunts a boar, his role as a problem solver, and his physical competency to kill a wild animal in cold blood are both implicitly pointed out with the following lines; “Just then, a young boar ran in front of him, and the huntsman stabbed it to death. He removed the lungs and liver” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.83). However, in Dahl’s version of “Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs”, he is not depicted as an emotionally reserved or cold-blooded huntsman. Dahl does not prefer to provide an absent-presence of the huntsman this time, but rather he employs a challenging characterization to subvert the traditional stereotype with an emphasis on his emotions even if his strength is also mentioned and he offers a more practical solution to replace the depiction of killing the boar;

The knife was poised, the arm was strong,

She cried again, ‘I’ve done no wrong!’

The Huntsman’s heart began to flutter.

It melted like a pound of butter

(...) Later, the Huntsman made a stop

Within the local butcher’s shop,

And there he bought, for safety’s sake,

A bullock’s heart and done nice steak. (Dahl, p.24).

Dahl’s representation of the huntsman, who is physically strong but is characterised by his emotionality and practical intelligence to devote less effort to finding fake proof rather

than by his agency, challenges the traditional huntsman, who is skilled enough in killing a wild animal in a matter of minutes without emotional revelation.

Another illustration of stereotyped male characters with a traditional and patriarchal emphasis on activeness is the dwarfs in the classic tale of *Snow White*, which is also subverted by Dahl. In the original tale, the dwarfs are introduced to the audience as follows; “It was completely dark outside when the owners of the cottage returned. They were seven dwarfs who spent their days in the mountains, mining ore and digging for minerals.” (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.85). When the seven dwarfs return to their little cottage, they find Snow White asleep in their house, much to their surprise. However, “[t]he dwarfs [are] so delighted to see her that they [decide] not to wake her up and to let her keep sleeping” (p.86). When the day dawns, the seven dwarfs and Snow White finally meet. When Snow White tells them what has happened to her, they have the following prerequisite for Snow White to stay and live with them; “If you (...) keep everything neat and tidy, then you can stay with us, and we’ll give you everything you need” (p.87). The following textual evidence demonstrates that after Snow White gladly accepts this prerequisite, a patriarchal family structure is revealed as compatible with the norms and expectations of the patriarchal society; “Snow White kept house for the dwarfs. In the morning they would go up to the mountains in search of minerals and gold. In the evening they would return, and dinner had to be ready for them” (p.87). The depiction of the dwarfs is based on how virtuous and diligent they are to contribute to the functionalist view of men as the breadwinners in a patriarchal context. As also put forward by Blackstone, “[t]he traditional view of the masculine gender role, therefore, suggests that men should be the heads of their households by providing financially for the family (...)” (2003, p.337). In addition to the breadwinner role, the dwarfs also represent the patriarchal protection for Snow White in their public sphere, repeatedly warning her not to let anyone in the home. Their patriarchal protective role is reinforced later in the story as rescuers, as they save Snow White’s life twice upon the stepmother’s murderous attempts. This stereotyped male representation in the traditional story is completely subverted by Dahl’s depiction of the seven dwarfs. In his version, the seven dwarfs are introduced to the audience as follows;

With seven funny little men,

Each one not more than three foot ten,

Ex horse-race jockeys, all of them.

*These Seven Dwarfs, though awfully nice,
 Were guilty of one shocking vice
 They squandered all of their resources
 At the race-track backing horses. (Dahl, 1982, p.26)*

Dahl's characterization of the seven dwarfs does not adhere to the traditional perception of virtuous, hardworking and protective men. Instead, he emancipates the male characters from these traditional expectations of the patriarchal society, depicting them in need of financial support without functioning as the breadwinner. Therefore, through his characterization, Dahl takes the whole agency aspect from the dwarfs, but still describes them as being "funny" and "awfully nice" (Dahl, 1982, p.24-26) although they are gamblers and they do not fulfil any financial achievements through working hard and virtuously.

Another traditional fairy tale, in which the theme of male activeness/agency through economic achievements is used to define masculinity, is "Jack and the Beanstalk". It narrates the story of a youngster named Jack, who slips into the role of the breadwinner as his mother is a "poor widow" who has nothing more than a cow, the milk which they live on. According to Blackstone, "[b]ecause men are expected to be the primary breadwinners for their families, women often find themselves to be in poverty if their marriages dissolve" (2003, p. 337). Although there is not a divorce in the story, the marriage dissolves upon the death of the father figure, and that is the reason why the mother figure is introduced as in need of income. In the story, Jack takes over the responsibility of the breadwinning as their cow "(...) Milky-white gave no milk" one day (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.133). Jack decides to Exchange Milky-white for a few magic beans, which sprout into a huge beanstalk that takes Jack to the house of an ogre. Becoming "a cunning trickster" step by step; Jack steals "a bag of golden", "a hen that lays golden eggs" and "a golden harp" from the ogre with great courage as the ogre is very dangerous. He has a cannibalistic nature which is shown in the story with the statements of the ogre; "Fee-h-fo-fum, / I smell the blood of an Englishman, / Be he alive, or be he dead / I'll have his bones to grind my bread" (as cited in Tatar, 2002, p.136). Jack's gallantry and agency bring him economic achievements as the breadwinner of the family. Representing the traditional male stereotypes, he becomes the hero, the problem solver and the financial provider of the family due to his intelligence, activeness and bravery. However, these roles defined by the patriarchal viewpoints in the traditional tales

are what Dahl subverts through his twists in the characterization and plot that he employs in his rewriting of the tale. Dahl's version of "Jack and The Beanstalk", opens with the same financial concern and exchange of the cow for "one lousy bean" (Dahl, 1982, p.15). After he has a similar quarrel with his mother, she throws it into the rubbish dump and there, the bean sprouts into a beanstalk; "The little bean began to sprout / By morning it had grown so tall, / You couldn't see the top at all" (Dahl, 1982, p.15). Upon realizing that "[e]ach single leaf is solid gold", the mother figure commands Jack as follows; "Don't stand and gape, you little clot! / Get up there quick and grab the lot!" in contrast to the self-made representation of the young boy in the traditional version (Dahl, 1982, p.16). However, Dahl employs a subversive characterization in his version and portrays Jack in the following lines with a departure from the original tale in terms of bravery;

*Jack was nimble, Jack was keen.
He scrambled up the mighty bean.
Up up he went without a stop,
But just as he was near the top,
A ghastly frightening thing occurred
Not far above his head he heard
A big deep voice, a rumbling thing
That the very heavens ring. (Dahl, 1982, p.16).*

Although Jack is shown to be active in fulfilling the task given by his mother, he does not display an act of courage to continue climbing up the beanstalk. Upon hearing "Fee Fi Fo Fum I smell the blood of an Englishman" (p.16), he is shown by Dahl to be emotionally expressive contrary to the traditional male stereotype that is brave and emotionally reserved in the following lines;

*Jack was frightened, Jack was quick,
And down he climbed in half a tick.
Oh mum! he gasped. Believe you me
There's something nasty up our tree!
(...) A giant with a clever nose!
(...) He said he smelled an Englishman! (Dahl, 1982, p.17)*

In this scene of the story, Dahl employs a humorous twist and presents a typical mother-and-son argument with an emphasis on the authority of the mother figure and a childish protest of the young boy. The mother, ignoring how scared her son is of the giant, states straightforwardly that the giant smells him because he doesn't take a bath; "I've told you every single night / To take a bath because you smell, / But would you do it? Would you hell!". Jack is quick and witty in his response; "Well, if you're so clean / Why don't you climb the crazy bean" (Dahl, 1982, p.17). The mother takes up the challenge and climbs the tree, and she is eaten up by the giant. Although the audience may expect a heroic return from the young boy to rescue his mother, Jack decides to take a bath in order to steal the giant's gold; "He rushed indoors and grabbed the soap. He scrubbed his body everywhere. He even washed and rinsed his hair/ (...) Jack waited till the Giant slept,/ (...) And gathered so much gold, I swear/ He was an instant millionaire" (Dahl, 1982, p.19-20). Dahl's representation of the young boy challenges the traditional one in terms of the lack of courage and activeness he displays at the beginning of the story and also his emotional expressiveness to refuse to function as the courageous hero to confront the giant. This lack of courage and bravery is also evident in the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. While in the traditional tale, the third pig acts as the trickster to outsmart the wolf to protect himself, Dahl's version of the story portrays a pig that is courageous enough to ask for help when needed. In his story, the male pig phones Little Red Riding Hood and asks for help; "He dialled as quickly as he could / The number of Red Riding Hood. / (...) Pig cried, 'I need your help, Miss Hood! / 'Oh help me, please! D'you think you could?'" (Dahl, 1982, p.46). Although in the patriarchal viewpoint, it is not common for male characters to ask for help from the female characters, Dahl subverts this long-established patriarchal notion that male characters are the heroes, warriors, fighters or the rescuers of their societies, which has also been proved by the literature review in the previous section.

Based on the literature review and textual evidence presented throughout this chapter, it may be concluded that Dahl challenges the traditionally established male stereotypes and implicit definitions of masculinity through his subversive characterization and unexpected plot twists. He subverts particularly the themes of dominance and agency to achieve authority in his rewritings. He offers alternative visions of male roles and embraces different types of masculinities rather than traditionally imposed and stereotyped vision of manhood that is prevalent in classic fairy tales. With the absent-presence of some characters such as the prince in "Snow White" and the

hunter in “The Little Red Riding Hood”, he liberates the male from the traditional obligation of being the hero and the rescuer. With considerable changes in characterization and plot, he emancipates men from the patriarchal norms of being the authority, the active and emotionally reserved male, the kind and romantic lover, the breadwinner, and the problem solver. He celebrates a diversity of distinctive masculinities who are free to express their emotions, to stay inactive or passive, to marry or not to marry, to show or not to show courtesy, to be merciful or brutal, and to be virtuous or immoral. In short, Dahl revolts against the traditionally stereotyped and idealized male to lessen the burden of patriarchal expectations and norms by providing more fluid attributes of masculinity that value singularity.

CONCLUSION

Scholarly research has long focused on the concept of children's literature as a distinct study field. Although children's literature is defined as "books written for children" and simplified by those outside the field of research, the literature review has proved that its effort to exist as a separate research field has continued for many years. It has been observed that pioneers such as Hunt, Nodelman, and Reynolds have laid the groundwork for understanding the concept of children's literature, including its content, scope, and boundaries. However, the literature review has also proved that despite the efforts of these scholars, many critics and writers remain hesitant to recognize children's literature as a distinct research field for many reasons, which have been elaborated at the beginning of this study. It has been evidently shown that among these reasons, one has surpassed the others in being discussed more critically over the years. As presented in the Introduction, the fact that the works falling into the category of children's literature are written by adults has been triggering a valuable amount of discussions among critics and as the literature review demonstrates, it has become the subject matter of many foundational types of research into the field. It has been observed that these critics address the issues that the works written by adults consist of mere assumptions about children and childhood rather than reflecting the real world of children; that these works consist of adult experiences, ideals, wishes and desires, their own child and childhood perceptions, their own constructions of meaning and content, which cannot ideally reflect a child and childhood as they are. Most importantly, it has been concluded that these works are full of hidden ideologies that construct children and childhood in a way that adults require, affecting their values, judgments, ways of thinking and beliefs and preventing them from perceiving the world as children do; imposing an adult perspective on them. This point of view turns into a quite justifiable argument when the history of children's literature is examined. The history of children's literature, which is thought to be relatively short by many, but actually dates back to the oral tradition, shows sufficient proof of these ideological examples, which adults began to use after discovering the power of children's literature to be taken advantage from in formats that served their purpose. Based on the literature review in this research, it would not be wrong to assert that through its historical development, as it evolved over time from storytelling to present-day book form, children's literature started to garner more attention and interest from adults upon the distinction of childhood and its recognition as a separate developmental age. In addition

to this increasing recognition of childhood as a separate life phase, the historical account elaborated in this study shows that the invention of the printing press and all other technological developments, as well as industrialisation, paved the way for children's literature studies to gain unprecedented momentum and the production of children's books increased. Consequently, children's books, which were supposed to serve as a communication tool between adults and children, began to be used for purposes such as teaching attitude and behavioural codes, religious values and beliefs, and education as proved by the literature review. However, it has been shown that they inevitably became embedded sources of adult ideologies, politics, portrayals of idealized childhood, rigid religious teachings, and whatever doctrines the adult mind presupposes for the purported well-being of the child. Moreover, not only the authors of the works but also publishing processes, publishing houses, editors, and families/caretakers as well as educational institutions that deliver the books to the children served as a filter and reinforced the ideological ab/use of children's literature. Therefore, within the scope of this thesis, it has been observed that children's literature is susceptible to manipulations by adults for the sake of fulfilling the specific ideological agenda of the period it exists in. Nevertheless, it has been observed that continuous research into the field by those who have attempted to establish it as a separate field has never denied the manipulability of children's literature. Rather, it has been implied that denying the existence of children's literature due to the difficulty even in providing a precise definition is similar to an act of denying the existence of children and childhood studies at all. According to Bator, the act of defining itself may have an impact on changing this ambiguous characteristic of children's literature stating that "[l]iterature for children will remain largely a critically uncharted and confusing territory if its limitations are not defined" (as cited in Nodelman, 2008, p.139). Furthermore, what these critics have tried to establish is the fact that even if children's literature is produced by adults for certain purposes, doing more research in the field provides an opportunity to fully comprehend it, contributing much to a positive change and development of children's literature in this sense. These studies, which have been carried out to better determine the definition, historical development and framework of children's literature, and which have been explained by giving relevant references in this study, have revealed that children's literature is a very effective tool in terms of serving predetermined purposes. In other words, the ideological use of children's literature and the impacts of ab/using it on children and society as a whole cannot be ignored academically. To this end, the research carried out within the scope of this thesis

has reached the evidence about the gender structuring feature of children's literature, and has shown that this feature is strengthened mostly through fairy tales, which have their origins in storytelling.

Considering the origins and the historical development of fairy tales, it may well be concluded that traditional fairy tales have long been attributing a variety of gender roles and creating gender stereotypes to facilitate the perpetuation of them for a constructed societal system. Ensuring the continuity of these gender roles and stereotypes through traditional fairy tales has been revealed as the subject of much research in the fields of education, sociology and literary criticism. These studies, which were previously mentioned in this study, have drawn a conclusion that this ideological use of fairy tales in an attempt to convey gender-structured knowledge has no beneficial contribution to children in terms of gender development; and also causes women and men not to discover their potential to realize themselves as individuals in social life. In most renowned traditional fairy tales, such as *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, and *Little Riding Hood*, these gender stereotypes have proved to cement the attributed gender roles within the society. As illustrated throughout this study, fairy tales regularly reflect the disparities between men and women, which are typically drawn in line with gender roles. The impact of fairy tales on gender roles frequently constitutes the primary values and beliefs that adults instil in their offspring as shown in the relevant literature review. Generally, male characters are shown as saviours, heroes, adversaries of villains, or defenders of women. They are often portrayed as particularly strong and determined figures, exhibiting protective and shielding behaviours towards women. Female characters, meanwhile, are usually depicted as victims of villains and are often seen aiding male characters. They are routinely depicted as weak, defenceless, and loyal within a subordinate status. As for men, the necessity of maintaining hegemony, meeting traditional expectations of being physically strong enough to be a real protector, and never showing weakness to ask for help, fortify the status quo. This hidden agenda causes children to gain predetermined perceptions of how society operates, resulting in preserving the long-established inflexible definitions of masculinity and femininity.

Although researches show that children's literature, especially fairy tales, can reflect and maintain gender-based roles and stereotypes, it has been also observed that it is the existence of children's literature that may reverse this situation. It has been examined that many authors rewrite fairy tales in order to subvert this influence of fairy

tales and to provoke an epiphany on the issue. Within the scope of this thesis, a twentieth-century British author Roald Dahl's work entitled *Revolting Rhymes* has been analysed in terms of his portrayals of femininity and masculinity. As the literature review shows that rewriting classical tales is common for female writers, and thus is considered a feminist tool to reverse the long-established impacts of the patriarchal hegemony from the female perspective. However, as it has been revealed by the relevant critics and scholars mentioned in the previous chapters, it is also significant to take the male perspective to contribute to establishing an egalitarian with a panoramic approach. Sawyer explains the importance of this panoramic approach as follows;

Male liberation seeks to aid in destroying the sex role stereotypes that regard "being a man" and "being a woman" as statuses that must be achieved through proper behavior... If men cannot play freely, neither can they freely cry, be gentle, nor show weakness-because these are "feminine," not "masculine." But a fuller concept of humanity recognizes that all men and women are potentially both strong and weak, both active and passive, and that these human characteristics are not the province of one sex. (as cited in Messner, 1998, p.255)

Considering the analysis of the tales rewritten, it may be well-concluded that Dahl has the same tendency to present "a fuller concept of humanity" as Messner. Dahl subverts the conventional construction of some of the gender stereotypes through his characterization and the plot twists he employs. By challenging the restrictive roles and characteristics that have been established by traditional fairy tales so far, Dahl offers his own way of understanding the world in his unique literary style by rewriting the fairy tales in which females and males are able to find a way to escape from the burdens of the roles attributed so far. In a way, Dahl liberates both female characters from being passive and submissive, and male ones from being superheroes and fulfilling the expectations to maintain the status quo. In Dahl's rewriting, a more inclusive and egalitarian perception of female and male characteristics, from which children and children's literature may benefit. It is demonstrated in the relevant literature in the Introduction that when the characters are not confined by gender stereotypes, children are exposed to a broader range of choices for their own perception of gender identities, which contributes to exploring their potential without being bound by historically restrictive gender norms. Therefore, textual evidence in Dahl's rewritings shows that his rewritings contribute to the continuous endeavour of reconsidering conventional gender roles as well as encouraging egalitarian societies since they blur the sharp boundaries to offer more embracing versions of femininity and masculinity by subverting the traditional themes, roles and features attributed to the

female and male characters.

Based on the literature review and textual evidence, it is evident that representing all of the diversity and complexities of human experience without adhering to the prescribed restricting roles of the stereotyped characters, Dahl paves the way for a reverse in using children's literature to construct and perpetuate rigid gender roles and stereotypes as a male writer in his *Revolting Rhymes*.

APPENDIX

Fig.2: Image of the earliest forms of books for children: Hornbook image (retrieved from www.bl.uk/collection-items/hornbook). With the courtesy of British Library.



Fig.3: Image of the earliest forms of books for children: Chapbooks “*The Groans of the Gallows*” (1846) shows how a chapbook was designed as a single sheet, to be folded, then bound, with the edges of the pages cut to make a complete book.” (Retrieved from www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/chapbooks). With the courtesy of British Library.

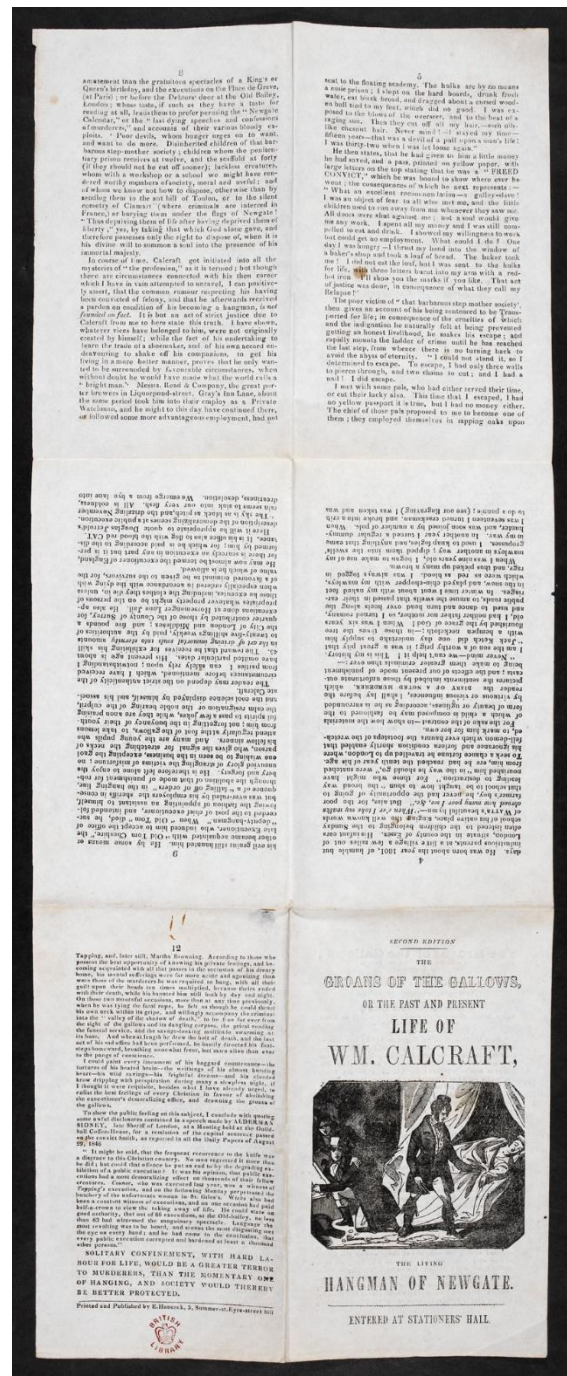


Fig.4: An example for the books written with a Puritan view, *A Token For Children* by James Janeway. (Retrieved from <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/a-token-for-children>) With the courtesy of British Library.

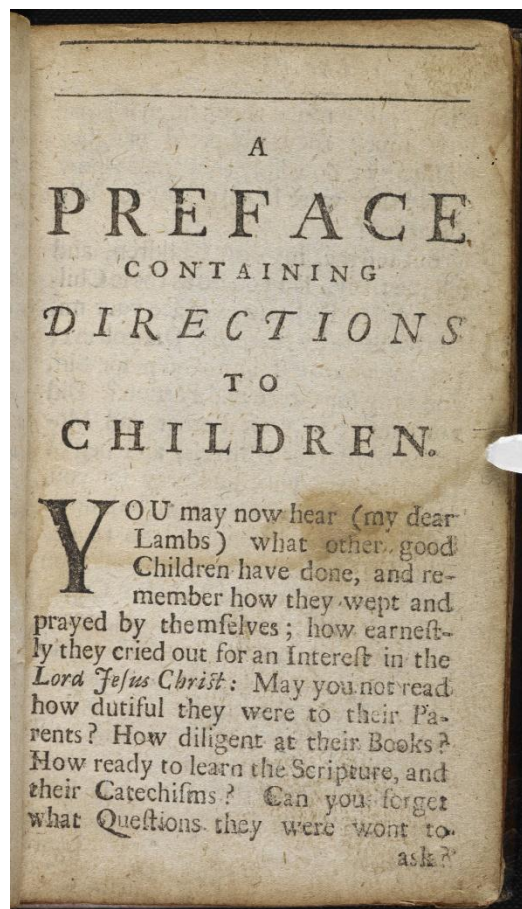
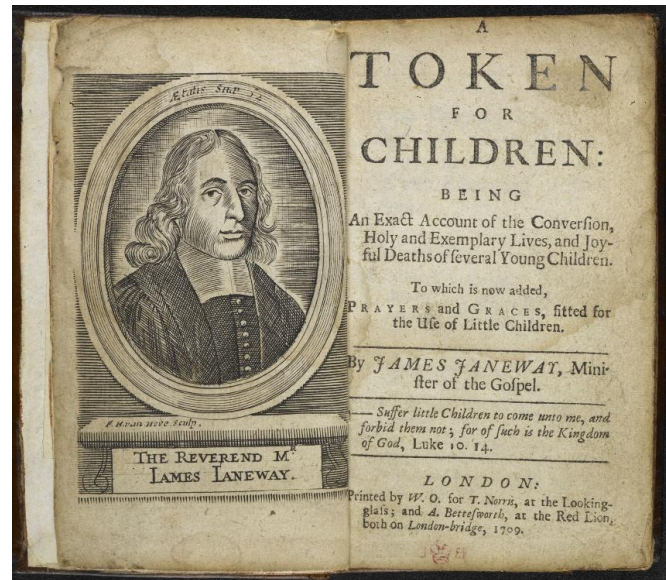


Fig.5: Sample pages from “The first children’s picture book. Orbis sensualium pictus, the first children’s picture-book, originally published in Latin and German in Nuremberg in 1658.” By Johann Amos Comenius (Retrieved from <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/orbis-sensualium-pictus-animal-tales-space>). With the courtesy of British Library.

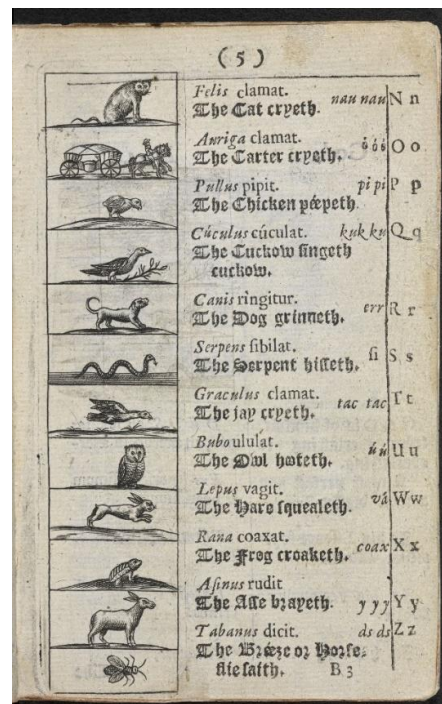


Fig.6: Sample Pages from *A Little Pretty POCKET-BOOK, Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy, and Pretty Miss Polly*, published by John Newbery in 1744. (Retrieved from <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/a-pretty-little-pocket-book>). With the courtesy of British Library.

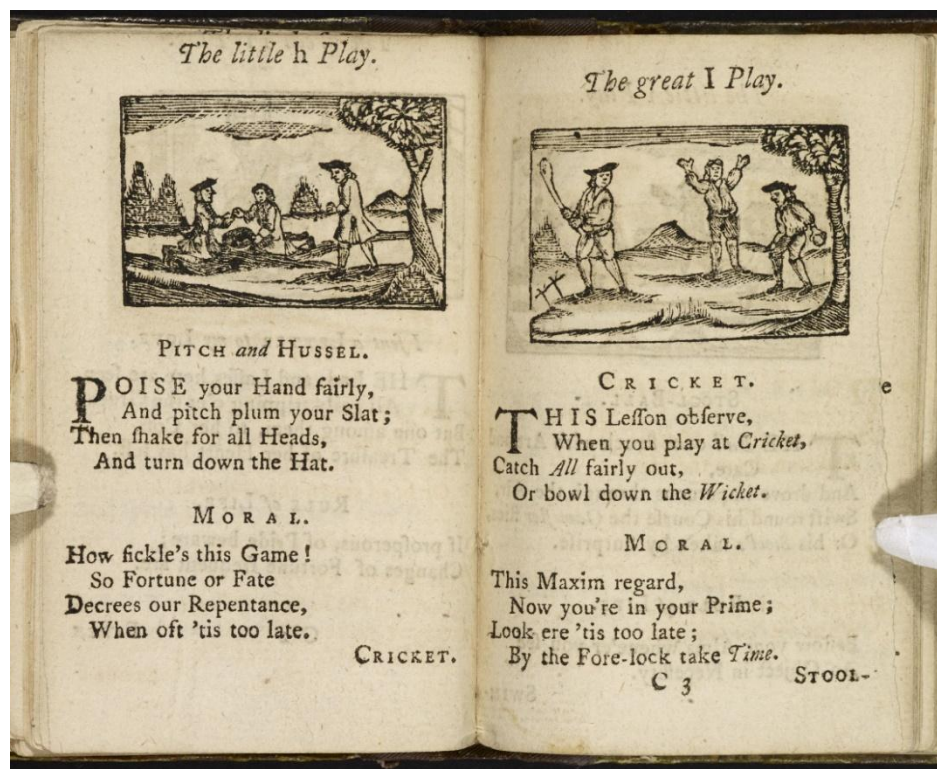
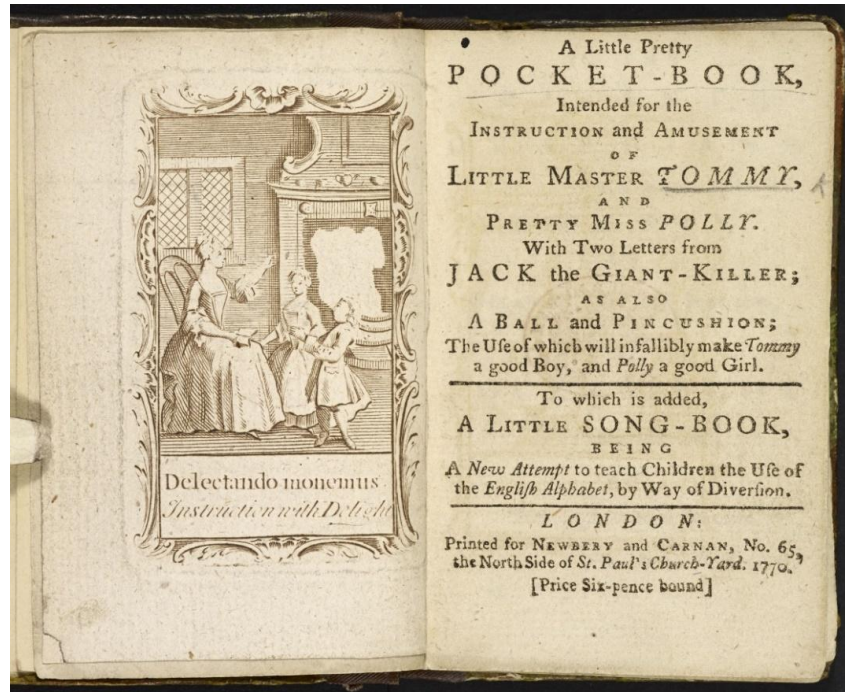


Table.1: Five Ways of Reading

Way of Reading	Definition
Reading for content	Reading for knowledge that is assumed to be residing in the text
Reading to make aesthetic judgments	A tradition in which judgments are made about the literary worth of texts
Reading by textual structures	A study of the literary structures and literary devices used by writers
Reading for social attitudes	A study of the ways in which texts influence reader's social views
Reading as a transaction	A study of the ways in which readers connect their own experiences and feelings to texts

Source: Temple et al.,1998, p.59

Table 2: Stereotypic Sex Role Descriptors (Responses from 74 college men and 80 colleges, 1972)

<i>Competency Cluster: Masculine Pole Is More Desirable</i>	
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Masculine</i>
Not at all aggressive	Very aggressive
Not at all independent	Very independent
Very emotional	Not at all emotional
Does not hide emotions at all	Almost always hides emotions
Very subjective	Very objective
Very easily influenced	Not at all easily influenced
Very submissive	Very dominant
Dislikes math & science very much	Likes math and science very much
Very excitable in a minor crisis	Not at all excitable in a minor crisis
Very passive	Very active
Not at all competitive	Very competitive
Very illogical	Very logical
Very home-oriented	Very worldly
Not at all skilled in business	Very skilled in business
Very sneaky	Very direct
Does not know the way of the world	Knows the way of the world
Feelings easily hurt	Feelings not easily hurt
Not at all adventurous	Very adventurous
Has difficulty making decisions	Can make decisions easily
Cries very easily	Never cries
Almost never acts as a leader	Almost always act as a leader
Not at all self-confident	Very self-confident
Very uncomfortable about being aggressive	Not at all comfortable about being aggressive
Not at all ambitious	Very ambitious
Unable to separate feelings from ideas	Easily able to separate feelings from ideas
Very dependent	Not at all dependent
Very conceited about appearance	Never conceited about appearance
Thinks women are always superior to men	Thinks men are always superior to women
Does not talk freely about sex with men	Talks freely about sex with men

Table.2 (continued).

<i>Warmth-Expressiveness Cluster: Feminine Pole Is More Desirable</i>	
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Masculine</i>
Doesn't use harsh language at all	Uses very harsh language
Very talkative	Not at all talkative
Very tactful	Very blunt
Very gentle	Very rough
Very aware of feelings of others	Not at all aware of feelings of others
Very religious	Not at all religious
Very interested in own appearance	Not at all interested in own appearance
Very neat in habits	Very sloppy in habits
Very quiet	Very loud
Very strong need for security	Very little need for security
Enjoys art and literature	Does not enjoy art and literature at all
Easily expresses tender feelings	Does not Express tender feelings at all

Source: as cited in Basow, 1992, p.5 (see Footnote ³ p.)

³This table has been retrieved from Susan A. Basow's *Gender Stereotypes and Roles*, yet it is mentioned that the table is a result of another study. The original source is noted as follows:

From "Sex Role Stereotypes: A Current Appraisal," by I. Broverman, S.R. Vogel, D.M. Broverman, F.E. Clarkson, and P.S. Rozenkrantz, *Journal of Social Issues*, 1972, 28(2), 59-78.

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INDEX

A

Absent-presence, 73

B

Bravery, 61, 66, 73, 76, 78

C

Childhood, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14,
16, 24, 25, 26, 37, 80, 97

F

Fairy tale, 27

G

Gender, vi, 18, 20, 23, 27, 94, 95, 96,
97, 98, 99, 100, 101
Gender role, 96

Gender socialization, 20
Gender stereotype, 97

I

Identity, 99, 102
Ideology, 96, 98, 101

M

Masculinity, 73, 97, 98, 100, 101

R

Revolting Rhymes, iii, v, vi, 1, 27, 36,
38, 39, 46, 49, 64, 69, 83, 84, 95
Roald Dahl, iii, v, vi, 1, 27, 36, 37, 46,
49, 69, 83, 95, 101

S

Subversion, 102