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Reviving The Feminine Motifs in The Oral Tradition of 'Little Red Riding Hood': Angela Carter's 'The Werewolf' and Tanith Lee's 'Wolfland'

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ABSTRACT

Angela Carter's 'The Werewolf' (1979) and Tanith Lee's 'Wolfland' (1989) are two late twentieth century rewritings of 'Little Red Riding Hood' which revive the feminine perspective found in its oral version through adopting abject representations. The protagonists of these stories travel into the forest in order to identify with their grandmothers represented in abject forms as werewolves. By combining the grandmother and the wolf in a single image, both Carter and Lee eliminate the figure of the male wolf and they introduce this fluid and plural image as a celebration of genealogical inheritance that emphasizes the maternal bond, the transmission of female skills and female knowledge from the grandmother onto the granddaughter, and the union of the self with the other. Thus, they subvert the male-dominated gendered discourse embedded in the literary versions of the tale by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm by liberating female identity from patriarchal authority.

Keywords: *Abject, Angela Carter, female identity, Kristeva, Little Red Riding Hood, Tanith Lee*

Angela Carter'ın "The Werewolf" ve Tanith Lee'nin "Wolfland" Başlıklı Öykülerinde "Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız" Masalının Sözlü Geleneğinde Bulunan Kadınsal Öğelerin Yeniden Canlandırılması

ÖZET

Angela Carter "The Werewolf" (1979) ve Tanith Lee "Wolfland" (1989) başlıklı öykülerinde, "Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız" masalını, bu masalın sözlü gelenekteki örneğinde bulunan kadın bakışaçısını "abject" temsiller üzerinden vurgulayarak 20.yy sonlarında yeniden yorumlamışlardır. Bu öykülerin kadın kahramanları, kurtadama dönüşmüş olarak temsil edilen "abject" büyükanneleriyle özdeşleşmek için ormana doğru yola çıkarlar. Carter ve Lee, erkek kurt figürünü, büyükanneyi ve kurdu tek bir imgede birleştirerek yok eder. Ayrıca, bu akışkan ve çoğul imgeyi anneyle olan bağı, büyükanneden torununa geçen kadınsal beceri ve bilgileri, öznenin ancak ötekiyle bir bütün oluşturabileceğini vurgulayarak soyağacından gelen bir miras olarak sunarlar. Böylece, kadın kimliğini ataerkil otoritenin elinden kurtararak Perrault ve Grimm Kardeşler'in "Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız" masalında bulunan erkek egemen cinsiyetçi söylemi yıkarlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Abject, Angela Carter, kadın kimliği, Kristeva, Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız, Tanith Lee*

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Introduction:

The story of the little girl with a red hood and her encounter with a wolf in the forest as she is on her way to her grandmother's house is still so popular that it is observed either as a pretext for various forms of narratives or as rewritings that overtly share the common characteristics with the well-known fairy tale for parodic purposes. Jack Zipes, who is a leading scholar in the field of fairy tale and who has profoundly contributed to the recent studies on 'Little Red Riding Hood', comments on this fairy tale as follows: 'there is no end to her story; even though Little Red Riding Hood is constantly mutilated by the wolf and dies, she is always reincarnated in some retold form to mark shifts in our attitudes toward gender formation, sexuality and the use of power'.[1] Aware of the radical potential that can subvert social and cultural constructions of femininity and female identity particularly found in the long-forgotten oral version of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and disturbed with the patriarchal remoldings of this folk tale by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, many feminist writers of the late twentieth century attempted to give this traditional plot a feminist twist in order to attack the gendered discourse and the patriarchal ideology embedded in the literary versions of the oral tale. Angela Carter's 'The Werewolf' (1979) and Tanith Lee's 'Wolfland' (1989) are among these late twentieth century reincarnations of 'Little Red Riding Hood' which expose the patriarchal logic that position female identity as the Other and define female body as the object of male desire. Both writers rewrite Little Red Riding Hood's journey into the forest as a quest for self-identification and adopt abject representations in order to re-form female identity from a feminist lens. That is, they promote an autonomous female subject, a 'subject-in-process' in Kristevan terms, who overcomes the binaries by affirming the (m)other in herself instead of excluding her as it is demanded in the traditional identity formation. In addition, by focusing on the symbolic replacement of the grandmother by the little girl with a feminist agenda both Carter and Lee celebrate the matriarchal roots observed in the oral tradition, 'The Story of Grandmother'. In order to introduce such an approach, Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection provides a fruitful analysis for uncovering the feminist potential of these stories. Then, before analyzing these two postmodern stories in the light of Kristeva's theory of abjection, it is necessary to lay bare the feminine motifs of the oral folk tale in order to show how Carter and Lee adopt and rewrite these motifs with the aim of criticizing the patriarchal versions which have played a considerable role in the education of children for a long time.

The Oral Tradition and the Literary Versions

The source of 'Little Red Riding Hood' is claimed to be found in a French oral folk tale spread by word of mouth for generations in France in the late Middle Ages and the French folklorist Paul Delarue published a study on its different versions, which he called 'The Story of Grandmother', in 1951.[2] Although each of these collected oral

[1] Jack Zipes, 'Preface', *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Routledge, New York, 1993, p. xii.

[2] Jack Zipes, 'A Second Gaze at Little Red Riding Hood's Trials and Tribulations', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, pp. 228-9.

tales presents varying provincial characteristics, they preserve the same plot. It relates the story of a little girl who is sent by her mother to her grandmother's house with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk and who meets 'a *bzou*, a werewolf or devil'[3] in the forest. Arriving at the little girl's grandmother's house before her, the werewolf kills the grandmother and puts some of her meat in the cupboard and a bottle of her blood on the shelf. When the little girl arrives at the house, the werewolf, in disguise of her grandmother, offers the girl her own grandmother's meat as meal and blood as a drink. 'This ritual meal seems to symbolize a physical incorporation of the old lady, who is replaced by younger generation'.[4] Associating not only the werewolf but also the little girl with cannibalism, this oral folk tale focuses on the maternal bond between the little girl and the grandmother through the act of cannibalism. The granddaughter's eating of her grandmother's flesh and blood signifies the passing of female experience and skills of the grandmother onto the granddaughter. After the little girl finishes her meal, the werewolf asks her to lie in bed, take her clothes off, and throw them into the fire by naming every piece she wears. Lying beside him, the girl starts interrogating the werewolf in disguise of her grandmother because she notices the werewolf's animalistic traits. Understanding that she has been trapped by a werewolf, she tricks him by saying that she urgently needs to relieve herself and the tale ends happily by her escape from the werewolf. Zipes declares:

> *It is obvious from this oral tale that the narrative perspective is sympathetic to a young peasant girl (age uncertain) who learns to cope with the world around her. She is shrewd, brave, tough, and independent. […] [T]he maturing young woman proves she can […] replace an older woman, and contend with the opposite sex.*[5]

As Zipes explains above, by depicting the little girl as a clever one who survives and resists victimization, and by emphasizing the maternal bond through the implication of the girl's inheritance of her grandmother's knowledge, this oral folk tale highlights the female autonomy.

Before the folkloric studies which discussed 'The Story of Grandmother' as the source of Charles Perrault's 'Little Red Riding Hood' (1697) and the Brothers Grimm's 'Little Red Cap' (1812) emerged, these two worldwide known literary fairy tales had been regarded as the representatives of folkloric tradition.[6] However, with the advent of research on the origins of Perrault's and the Grimms' tales and the discovery of 'The Story of Grandmother', it is revealed that the characteristics which have been identified as folkloric and archetypal in both literary versions are 'on the contrary relatively recent and unrepresentative inventions'[7]. They transformed this oral folk tale with matriarchal roots into a patriarchal one and constructed it upon a

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[3] Catherine Orenstein, *Little Red Riding Hood Uncloaked: Sex, Morality, and the Evolution of a Fairy Tale*, Basic Books, New York, 2002, p. 68.
[4] Sandra L. Beckett, 'Little Red Riding Hood', *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folk Tales and Fairy Tales Volumes 1-3*, Ed. Donald Haase, Greenwood Press, Westport, 2002, p. 583.
[5] Jack Zipes, 'A Second Gaze at Little Red Riding Hood's Trials and Tribulations', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 229.
[6] Catherine Orenstein, *Little Red Riding Hood Uncloaked: Sex, Morality, and the Evolution of a Fairy Tale*, Basic Books, New York, 2002, p. 70.
[7] Ibid., p. 71.

sexual frame in which the girl is represented as the female object of male desire. It is perceived as a narrative of rape by many critics[8], who have produced considerable psychoanalytical analyses about both popular versions of the fairy tale. The psychoanalytical studies show that the little girl in these versions is portrayed as responsible for the rape by the male predator in the image of the wolf because of her disobedience toward her mother's warning about the danger of talking to strangers. 'Little girl, don't stray from the path or you will meet the wolf and he will eat you'[9] is the moral that reinforces the notion that sexual desire and curiosity may have destructive consequences for the girl-child. Zipes highlights the sexual frame as follows:

> *As every reader/viewer subconsciously knows, Little Red Riding Hood is not really sent into the woods to visit grandma but to meet the wolf and to explore her own sexual cravings and social rules of conduct. Therefore, the most significant encounter is with the wolf because it is here that she acts upon her desire to indulge in sexual intercourse with the wolf, and […] she willingly makes a bargain with the wolf, or, in male terms, 'she asks to be raped'.*[10]

The little girl's curiosity in sexuality is punished at the end of Perrault's version by death. In the Grimms' version she is devoured by the wolf, but a male hunter, a paternal figure, rescues her alive with her grandmother by cutting out the wolf's belly and then filling it with stones in order to prevent him from chasing them. Such an end implies that the 'girl receives her identity through a man, and […] without male protection she will destroy herself and reap chaos in the world outside'.[11] This is how 'the initiatory tale of the oral tradition became a cautionary tale'.[12] Both rewritings of the oral folk tale are shaped by patriarchal ideology and they reveal socially and culturally constructed gender roles strictly demarcated by the male dominated society. Moreover, the cannibalistic meal that signifies the maternal bond between the grandmother and her granddaughter is absent in these tales. The oral

> *story shifts and recenters around two characters, the girl and her grandmother rather than the girl and the wolf. The monster in the affair would be rather the girl – the wolf is only going about his business as a wolf. As for the grandmother, she would be the principal victim of the adventure, perhaps even the heroine of the story […] It looks as though our authors, the very ones who studied versions from oral tradition, not knowing how to undo the weight of the written tradition, have thereby become deaf to the oral tradition. Fascinated by the wolf, they have forgotten the grandmother.*[13]

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[8] These critics and their studies are as follows: Erich Fromm *The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales and Myths* (1951), Bruno Bettelheim *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1975), and Alan Dundes *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook* (1989).

[9] Yvonne Verdier, 'Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition', *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy- Tale Studies* Vol. 11, Nos. 1-2 Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1997, p. 101.

[10] Jack Zipes, 'A Second Gaze at Little Red Riding Hood's Trials and Tribulations', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 239.

[11] Ibid., p. 236.

[12] Sandra L. Beckett, 'Little Red Riding Hood', *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folk Tales and Fairy Tales Volumes 1-3*, Ed. Donald Haase, Greenwood Press, Westport, 2002, p. 584.

[13] Yvonne Verdier, 'Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition', *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy- Tale Studies* Vol. 11, No. 1/2 Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1997, p. 105.

Perrault and the Grimms disregarded the role of the grandmother figure as pivotal to their tales and they did not adopt the theme of female initiation that indicates a hereditary replacement of the younger generation replacing the old one. Observing this exclusion of the feminine aspect, Carter and Lee base their stories on this theme of initiation particularly by portraying the grandmother as a werewolf and they foreground this abject representation as a subversive element in their stories.

Julia Kristeva's Theory of Abjection

Kristeva deconstructs the binary mechanisms at work in the traditional identity formation that expels the female as the other to the self. 'Traditional psychoanalytical theories marginalize femininity by abandoning the female in the pre-Oedipal stage and privilege masculinity and announce the Oedipal identity as universal. By defining the female as lack, absence and incomplete, psychoanalysis constructs a site of excess for women'.[14] However, Kristeva's theory of subjectivity rests upon her definition of 'subject-in-process', a state which promotes a fluid subjectivity that respects no hierarchical boundaries between the subject and the other. Since in conventional psychoanalytical theories the Oedipal process necessitates a separation between the child and the mother in order to form strictly demarcated borders to gain access to the symbolic order, Kristeva's presentation of a plural subjectivity that merges with the (m)other emerges as a radical approach to identity formation.

Kristeva is interested in the extreme, the excessive and the transgressive because she claims that subjectivity is shaped in the light of excessive experiences and representations. In her opinion, 'subjectivity originates in crisis and, significantly, *remains* in crisis'.[15] Abjection, in this sense, is one of those crises which manifest 'extreme conditions of the subject that nevertheless define the subject in crucial ways'[16] by annihilating the boundaries between the self and the other. In *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Kristeva defines abjection as follows:

> *What is abject is not my correlative, which, providing me with someone or something else as support, would allow me to be more or less detached and autonomous. The abject has only one quality of the object – that of being opposed to I. If the object, however, through its opposition, settles me within the fragile texture of a desire for meaning, which, as a matter of fact, makes me ceaselessly and infinitely homologous to it, what is abject, on the contrary, the jettisoned object, is radically excluded and draws me toward the place where meaning collapses.*[17]

The abject is what is excluded, rejected and jettisoned by the subject in order to demarcate its borders between 'self' and 'other', but at the same time it is the constitutive part of the subject because subjectivity constructs its borders in response to the abject. Therefore, '[t]he abject is not excluded "radically enough" to establish a faithful differentiation between subject and object; yet, the abject is excluded "clearly

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[14] Selen Aktari, *Abject Representations of Female Desire in Postmodern British Female Gothic Fiction* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Middle East Technical University, 2010, p. 66.
[15] Megan Becker-Leckrone, *Julia Kristeva and Literary Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2005, p. 30.
[16] Ibid., p. 30.
[17] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, Columbia UP, New York, 1982, pp. 1-2.

enough" to constitute a rudimentary position'.[18] It hovers above the borders of the subject and 'simultaneously beseeches and pulverizes'[19] it by reminding it of the archaic non-differentiated stage when 'I' and the 'object' are one.

In traditional theories of identity, the self is constructed as a proper and stable subject through excluding what is unstable, improper, disorderly and 'other' to oneself and it achieves a unitary subjectivity as a result of this recognition of the boundaries between 'self' and 'other'. 'However, the abject, as is revealed above, is the ambiguous, the state of being in-between, the refusal of the boundaries and the revolt against this unitary subjectivity. It evokes disgust and fascination simultaneously because of its potential to annihilate the boundaries between subject and object. [20]

Kristeva highlights the role the maternal body plays in the process of subjectivity. The infant attempts at defining its borders by its physical instincts and drives even before Lacan's mirror stage, a phase when the infant, between 6 and 18 months, recognizes its image in the mirror. The infant, which has perceived its mother as a continuation of its body and has experienced a blissful union with 'shared smiles, crying, and the abstract rhythms, sounds and touches' in the 'semiotic chora' that knows 'no interior or exterior'[21] and no difference between self and (m)other, starts to develop its borders through excreting, spitting out and vomiting its mother's milk, and even through rejecting its mother's embrace in this stage. However, 'it is so difficult to identify the mother's borders: he was once in her and now here he is outside her'.[22] Thus, the infant is torn between two needs: on the one hand, it yearns to become one with the maternal body; on the other hand it knows it has to break up with this blissful union in order to become a self. This stage, residing between the chora and the mirror stage, is associated with the abject in Kristevan development of subjectivity.[23]

Abjection in Carter's 'The Werewolf' and Lee's 'Wolfland' is foregrounded through the representations of the grandmothers as werewolves as was indicated before. The ambiguity and the hybridity of werewolves, observed in their half-human and half-animal traits, render these grandmothers abject and their capability of metamorphosis threatens their granddaughters with the collapse of their subjectivity by its very potential to annihilate the boundaries of the self. Since the initial abjection in Kristeva's theory takes place by expelling the (m)other, the abject werewolves, by their archaic and mythological connotations, reflect this maternal abjection. That is, they remind the subject of her initial loss of the abject mother.

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[18] Stacey K. Keltner, *Kristeva: Thresholds*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2011, p. 45

[19] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, Columbia UP, New York, 1982, p. 5.

[20] Selen Aktari, *Abject Representations of Female Desire in Postmodern British Female Gothic Fiction* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Middle East Technical University, 2010, pp. 55-56.

[21] Megan Becker-Leckrone, *Julia Kristeva and Literary Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2005, p. 28.

[22] Noellë McAfee, *Julia Kristeva*, Routledge, New York, 2004, p. 48.

[23] Selen Aktari, *Abject Representations of Female Desire in Postmodern British Female Gothic Fiction* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Middle East Technical University, 2010, pp. 54-5.

The Werewolves as Abject Figures

In 'Shape-Shifter from the Wilderness: Werewolves Roaming the Twentieth Century', Andrea Gutenberg informs that the werewolf's 'habitual transgression of basic rules of civilized behavior, rooted in its association with cannibalism, uncontrolled violence and/or sexual excess' poses a threat to 'the integrity of the human subject' and violates the boundaries between the self and the other with its ambiguous appearance as half-human and half-animal.[24] In her opinion, the werewolves' gender is also indeterminable. She states that although they have been solely treated as masculine figures by many researchers and critics due to their connection to the night, violence, physical strength and aggression which are associated with virile qualities, their ability to change shapes is a characteristic which is attributed to the female body observed in pregnancy. Gutenberg quotes from Maud Ellmann: '[I]t is curious that wolf men undergo their metamorphoses in the full moon, smitten by a monthly mania for blood. In this sense, a werewolf is a man with monthlies, a wolf woman, in effect; and the myth of lycanthropy bespeaks the ineradicable ambiguities of gender'.[25]

Since the female is rendered abject in the symbolic order due to her relation to the semiotic and due to her gendered body excluded because of its association with fluidity, the werewolves' identification with the maternal, the fluidity of the female body and the marginal render them abject figures. The werewolf is 'always on the border between the presymbolic realm and the symbolic order, struggling desperately for separation from the other but always ultimately failing'.[26] It is this potential of transformation into a form capable of annihilating the impermeable boundaries that makes the werewolves repulsive and disgusting but simultaneously fascinating for the one who is exposed to this metamorphosis. This is the reason why, Gutenberg claims, we are all fascinated with 'Little Red Riding Hood' and its versions not only 'because of its feminine, motherly appeal in conjunction with its masculinity'[27] but also of its signification of our own initial attempts at establishing borders between ourselves and the (m)others.

Moreover, the association of the werewolf with cannibalism also renders it an abject figure. Cannibalism depicts the human body as food and 'as one of the central taboos of our culture, […] if we are to follow Julia Kristeva's account of disgust, are central cites of abjection'.[28] Since abjection is a primordial attempt of the infant to separate from the (m)other, cannibalism becomes the act of eating and merging with the other and it destroys the self and other dichotomy. Through cannibalism the subject falls into the maternal realm where there are no boundaries between the subject and the object. As Russell West argues: '[T]he cannibalistic taboo reformulates

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[24] Andrea Gutenberg, 'Shape-Shifters from the Wilderness: Werewolves Roaming the Twentieth Century', *The Abject of Desire: The Aestheticization of the Unaesthetic in Contemporary Literature and Culture,* Eds. Konstanze Kutzbach and Monika Mueller, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 2007, p. 149.

[25] Ibid., p. 150.

[26] Ibid., p. 153.

[27] Ibid., p. 153.

[28] Russell West, 'Abject Cannibalism: Anthropophagic Poetics in Conrad, White, and Tennant – Towards a Critique of Julia Kristeva's Theory of Abjection', *The Abject of Desire: The Aestheticization of the Unaesthetic in Contemporary Literature and Culture*, Eds. Konstanze Kutzbach and Monika Mueller, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 2007, p. 235.

and displaces an archaic eating of a maternal Other, from which the self was once indistinguishable'.[29] Its representation transgresses the limits of the symbolic order and therefore becomes a threat to the integrity of identity. Thus, with its representation in the realm of abjection, cannibalism becomes a powerful metaphor for subverting the established norms of society.[30]

Carter's and Lee's werewolf grandmothers serve to initiate the abjection process of the heroines and enable them as subjects-in-process who embrace the abject (m)other. When the heroines of both stories confront the abject in the form of the grandmother-wolf, they will be reminded of the maternal abjection, the realm in which they try to exclude and hold onto the (m)other simultaneously. Their self-identification with the (m)other will connect these postmodern stories to their folkloric and matriarchal roots.

'The Werewolf'

Carter's 'The Werewolf' is a three-paged story written in short and simple sentences which have the characteristics of a short folk tale that is orally composed in order to be easily spread by word of mouth. This narrative style makes 'The Werewolf' stand closer to the oral version rather than to the literary ones. Besides, although the granddaughter's cannibalistic meal is absent from Carter's rewriting of the tale, in Delarue's words, this 'cruel and primitive' motif 'belonging to the ancient form of the tale', has its impact on Carter's story.[31] The ending of the story puts forward how the little girl in collaboration with the townspeople kills and replaces her grandmother in a savage way. This replacement is a representation of this cannibalistic ritual found in the folk tale.

The setting is a northern country whose inhabitants lead '[h]arsh, brief, poor lives' in 'cold weather' with 'cold hearts'[32] and interpret the natural phenomenon they observe in the forests in a superstitious sense. For 'these upland woodsmen, the Devil is as real as you or I. More so; they have not seen us nor even know that we exist, but the Devil they glimpse often in the graveyards'.[33] In order to chase the Devil away, the townspeople offer it food and they believe that 'the Devil holds picnics in the graveyards and invites the witches; then they dig up fresh corpses, and eat them. Anyone will tell you that. Wreaths of garlic on the doors keep out the vampires'.[34] Such figures introduced at the beginning of the story establish the folk belief characterized by superstition, legend, and ritual.

The devils and witches in this story form an abjected group and they signify the desire to merge with the other, not only with their already-otherized representations but also with their act of feeding on the corpses do they become a frightening threat to this community's life. Wisker claims that '[a]mongst the horror tropes with which

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[29] Ibid., p. 240.
[30] Selen Aktari, *Abject Representations of Female Desire in Postmodern British Female Gothic Fiction* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Middle East Technical University, 2010, pp. 225-6.
[31] Yvonne Verdier, 'Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition', *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy- Tale Studies* Vol. 11, No. 1/2 Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1997, p. 103.
[32]Angela Carter, 'The Werewolf' , *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories,* Vintage, London, 2006, p. 126.
[33] Ibid., p. 126.
[34] Ibid., p. 126.

contemporary readers are now familiar and somewhat at ease, incest and cannibalism are the least acceptable. Both spring from a desire to be, merge with or ingest the Other, as a projected version of self'.[35] In this respect, such a threat embodied by the abject is immediately eliminated by the stable and proper subject, who strictly preserves its boundaries in order not to lose itself in the other. Since the townspeople represent the members of socio-symbolic order, in order to demarcate their boundaries of subjectivity they condemn the witches as other to themselves and perceive these abject figures as potential threats to their oppressive system of order. Below is a scene that depicts how the proper subject jettisons its abject other and resists merging with it.

> *When they discover a witch – some old woman whose cheeses ripen when her neighbours' do not, another old woman whose black cat, oh, sinister! follows her about all the time, they strip the crone, search for her marks, for the supernumerary nipple her familiar sucks. They soon find it. Then they stone her to death.*[36]

After presenting such an introduction that lists the abject figures of this northern town, the narrator suddenly announces the intertextual relation of the story to Perrault's 'Little Red Riding Hood'. The mother says to her daughter: 'Go and visit grandmother, who has been sick. Take her the oatcakes I've baked for her on the hearthstone and a little pot of butter'.[37] The 'good child' obeying her mother's wish sets on a journey to her grandmother's house in the forest with her mother's warnings in her ears: 'do not leave the path because of the bears, the wild boar, the starving wolves. Here, take your father's hunting knife; you know how to use it'.[38] In the frame of the literary versions of 'Little Red Riding Hood', the forest represents the unconscious, the space of unrepressed desire; the wolves signify the male sexual aggressivity and their cannibalism is associated with sexual devourment. In such a context, the little girl's father's knife becomes a symbol of the father's attempt at protecting her little daughter's chastity. However, it should be noted that Carter's little girl is not portrayed as an inexperienced and spoilt child who knows nothing about the ways of the world as she is in the literary versions of the tale, but she is rather depicted as a strong grown-up girl who has learned to fight with the beasts that represent male predators.

> *The child … knew the forest too well to fear it but she must always be on her guard. When she heard that freezing howl of a wolf, she dropped her gifts, seized her knife and turned on the beast.*
>
> *It was a huge one, with red eyes and running, grizzled chops; any but a mountaineer's child would have died of fright at the sight of it. It went for her throat, as wolves do, but she made a great swipe at it with her father's knife and slashed off its right forepaw.*
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> *The wolf let out a gulp, almost a sob, when it saw what had happened to it; wolves are less brave than they seem. It went lolloping off disconsolately between the trees as well as it could on three legs, leaving a trail of blood behind it. The child wiped the blade of her*

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[35] Gina Wisker, 'Demisting the Mirror: Contemporary British Women's Horror', *Contemporary British Women Writers,* Ed. Emma Parker, D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, 2004, p. 159.
[36] Ibid., p. 126.
[37] Ibid., p. 126.
[38] Angela Carter, 'The Werewolf' , *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories,* Vintage, London, 2006, p. 127.

knife clean on her apron, wrapped up the wolf's paw in the cloth in which her mother had packed the oatcakes and went on towards her grandmother's house.[39]

When the girl is attacked by the wolf on her way, she feels no fear and she slashes off the wolf's right paw courageously with her father's knife protecting herself from a symbolic sexual devourment as is perceived in the quotation above. However, she is traveling through the forest, the realm of the unconscious, in order to face the other in its archaic and initial form. Her boundaries are threatened and she had cleverly managed to fight back the wolf, the abject other, and does not let her boundaries dissolve. This scene indicates that Little Red Riding Hood has already become a part of the symbolic order who strictly constructs her boundaries in order to remain separate from the other.

However, the story does not end here. When the child reaches her grandmother's house, she finds her grandmother in bed very sick suffering from high fever. As she takes out the cloth from her basket to make her grandmother's forehead a cold compress, the wolf's paw falls onto the floor. To the child's surprise, '[i]t was no longer a wolf's paw. It was a hand, chopped off at the wrist, a hand toughened with work and freckled with old age. There was a wedding ring on the third finger and a wart on the index finger. By the wart, she knew it for her grandmother's hand'.[40] Carter subverts the representation of the wolf as male predator and combines two abject figures, the wolf and the witch, with the grandmother in a single body of metamorphosis and establishes the link between her story and 'The Story of Grandmother' of the oral tradition. By depicting a werewolf-witch, half woman and half animal, Carter grants her story to its archaic and folkloric roots. She disrupts the conventional figure of the wolf in 'Little Red Riding Hood' as masculine evil and she underlines the maternal aspect of the werewolf figure by identifying the wolf with the grandmother. Then, when the little girl realizes that her grandmother is the wolf she has fought in the woods, she cries out so loud that the neighbours come for help. 'They knew the wart on the hand at once for a witch's nipple; they drove the old woman, in her shift as she was, out into the snow with sticks, beating her old carcass as far as the edge of the forest, and pelted her with stones until she fell down dead'.[41] Lau comments on this scene as follows: 'In her moment of exposure, Granny no longer embodies the transsexuality of her werewolf persona but becomes simply witch, categorically "some old woman," like those described at the outset of the story'.[42] Thus, at the end of her story, by the grandmother's portrayal as a witch, a characteristic associated with getting older, Carter underlines the female initiation pattern found in 'The Story of Grandmother'.

By referring to Yvonne Verdier's profound study, 'Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition', Zipes claims that the oral version is 'a celebration of a young girl's coming of age'[43] as she replaces the older generation, her grandmother, with the

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[39] Ibid., p. 127.
[40] Ibid., p. 127.
[41] Ibid., p. 128.
[42] Kimberly J Lau, 'Erotic Infidelities: Angela Carter's Wolf Trilogy', *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy- Tale Studies,* Vol. 22, No. 1, 2008, p. 83.
[43] Jack Zipes, 'The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood', *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Routledge, New York, 1993, p. 25.

younger one. Although the cannibalistic ritual is not employed by Carter, 'The Werewolf' still embodies what this significant motif symbolizes. Free from the sexual frame of the literary versions, little peasant girl's cannibalistic meal in 'The Story of Grandmother' reveals

> *a matter of self-assertion through learning and conflict. Unlike the literary versions, where the grandmother is reified and reduced to a sex object, her death in the folk tale signifies the continuity and reinvigoration of custom, which was important for the preservation of society […] Whether the story is about initiation, warning, or both, one thing is clear: the folk tale celebrates the self-reliance of a young peasant girl.*[44]

Carter's heroine asserts herself through learning about her grandmother's hybrid identity and she gets experienced. Besides, she asserts herself by conflicting with, that is, by fighting with the grandma-wolf. Thus, Carter depicts her heroine as a self-reliant young peasant girl who struggles to achieve an autonomous self through her engagement with the abject. Moreover, the death of the witch grandmother also implies continuity of generations and customs as can be perceived in the ending of 'The Werewolf': 'Now the child lived in her grandmother's house; she prospered'.[45] Although the cannibalistic meal is not embedded in Carter's version, the replacement of the older generation by the younger generation is presented by the granddaughter's inheriting her grandmother's house. Symbolically, she is to inherit her grandmother's skills, experience and knowledge as well. Thus, by leading an autonomous life and by becoming a self-aware woman ready to integrate herself in society with this awareness, the little girl takes a step forward in becoming a subject-in-process which will continue to serve her providing an identification with the other and by achieving a place in the symbolic order as well.

'Wolfland'

Lee's 'Wolfland' can be approached as a sequel or a complement to Carter's story. Lee provides a much more emphasized feminist approach in her story by concluding it with an explicit celebration of Kristevan subject-in-process and the abject in order destroy the patriarchal ideology promoted by Perrault's and the Grimms' fairy tales. She also starts retelling 'Little Red Riding Hood' by sending the little girl into the forest to her grandmother's house for a visit and portrays the grandmother in 'Wolfland' as the abject werewolf herself. The grandmother in Lee's story has transformed into a werewolf in order to survive her husband's violent abuse in marriage. Her name, Anna the Matriarch, explicitly indicates that she has thrown down the patriarchal ideology her husband represents and she does not conform to the rules of the symbolic order any longer. Lee adopts the element of replacement of the grandmother by the granddaughter, the older generation by the younger one, found in the oral tale in a Victorian gothic tale atmosphere. She preserves the folkloric roots of 'The Story of Grandmother' particularly by reconstructing the maternal bond through Lisel's exposure to the abject and through her inheritance of Anna's matriarchy, Wolfland, and of her transmogrification into a werewolf in order to renounce male oppression.

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[44] Ibid., pp. 24-5

[45] Ibid., p. 128.

Lisel is a sixteen year-old-girl whose mother died while giving birth to her and she is raised by his indifferent father who 'let[s] her have her own way, in almost everything', but, in fact, it is her eccentric maternal grandmother living 'in a great wild château in the great wild forest' who controls her life 'like a puppet-master from behind the curtain of the forest'.[46]Although Lisel has never met her grandmother, Anna has a say in every aspect of Lisel's life. Being an 'exceedingly rich' woman, Anna sends her orders to Lisel with 'sumptuous gifts'[47] and Lisel, being content with every present she receives, dreams of inheriting her grandmother's possessions one day. Having experienced an early and unfortunate separation from her mother, Lisel is portrayed as a proper member of the symbolic order at the beginning of the story with patriarchally constructed conventional images of a young woman whose interest lies in her materialistic benefits, in how she looks in expensive clothes and in how she spends her time with dancing, skating and breaking young men's hearts.

When Lisel is summoned by Anna 'into the uncivilized northern forest, to the strange mansion in the snow'[48] to meet her, she reluctantly sets on the journey to visit her grandmother. Anna expresses her demand with a letter attached to a nice present of 'swirling cloak of scarlet velvet [...] which was lined with the finest and heaviest red brocade. A clasp of gold joined the garment at the throat, the two portions, when closed, forming Anna's personal device, a many-petaled flower'.[49] The red cloak is absent in the oral versions and it is an element added to the plot by Perrault and then adopted by the Grimms as well. As was discussed before, the psychoanalytical interpretations of 'Little Red Riding Hood' provide that the little girl's travel to the forest is about the discovery of her sexuality. In relation to this perspective, Erich Fromm interprets the red cloak as a symbol of menstruation blood, an indication that the heroine is on the verge of puberty. He claims that the mother's warning is a foreshadowing for the loss of the little girl's virginity symbolized by the wolf's devourment at the end of the tales.[50] Bruno Bettelheim also falls in with Fromm's interpretation. By using the Grimms' 'Little Red Cap' as his main source, Bettelheim interprets the red cloak of the little girl as follows:

> *All through 'Little Red Cap', in the title as in the girl's name, the emphasis is on the color red, which she openly wears. Red is the color symbolizing violent emotions, very much including sexual ones. The red velvet cap given by Grandmother to Little Red Cap thus can be viewed as a symbol of a premature transfer of sexual attractiveness, which is further accentuated by the grandmother's being old and sick, too weak even to open a door. It suggests that not only is the red cap little, but also the girl. She is too little, not for wearing the cap, but for managing what this red cap symbolizes, and what her wearing it invites.*
> *Little Red Cap's danger is her budding sexuality, for which she is not yet emotionally mature enough. The person who is psychologically ready to have sexual experiences can*

[46] Tanith Lee, 'Wolfland', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 122.
[47] Ibid., p. 122.
[48] Ibid., p. 123.
[49] Ibid., p. 122.
[50] Erich Fromm, *The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales and Myths,* Grove, New York, 1955, p. 240

> *master them, and grow because of it. But a premature sexuality is a regressive experience, arousing all that is still primitive within us and that threaten to swallow us up.*[51]

Approaching the red cloak as a symbol of repressed desire and an indication of a forthcoming punishment for experiencing sexuality in the form of being devoured – raped – by the male wolf, Fromm and Bettelheim reinforce the patriarchal ideology enclosed in Perrault's and the Grimms' versions. Verdier draws attention to the theme of puberty and menstruation in 'The Story of Grandmother' as represented by the motif of 'pins and needles', another motif which is absent in the literary versions. In the oral version, the werewolf asks the little girl which road she prefers taking: the road of pins or the road of needles, when they meet in the forest. Verdier consults ethnography in order to understand the meaning of this wordplay and explains it by focusing on the sartorial aspect of the motif. In her opinion, this motif is related to the education of little girls in the northern of France by the

> *sewing apprenticeship, upon arriving at puberty. The pins for dressing up are opposed to needles associated with work and the mending of torn dresses, and also with needles with large holes (worn? Having already served much?) used by old women, by grandmothers […] So we have here a story that takes place between a pubescent maiden and an old menopausal woman'.*[52]

By introducing such an approach, Verdier emphasizes once more the dominant role of the grandmother and the theme of genealogical transmission from the grandmother to the granddaughter found in the folk tale. Lee also displays such a genealogical transmission from Anna to Lisel through the symbolical use of the red cloak. Disturbed by the male-dominated discussions of female sexuality over the motif of the red cloak, Lee unburdens this motif of its sexual overtones by reshaping the image with feminist concerns. By ornamenting the red cloak with the gold many-petaled flower brooch, the emblem of Anna's matriarchy, Lee turns it into a symbol of female strength rather than patriarchally defined female sexuality. In the course of the story, it will be observed that this emblem is derived from a yellow flower growing on Wolfland. This yellow flower has a magical power to transform the one who eats it into a werewolf, a representation of female empowerment in this context. Anna, abused by her husband in most violent ways, is told by a midwife that the yellow flowers grow around her château give a gift to the one who eats it. 'It comes from the spirit, the wolfwoman, or maybe she's a goddess, an old goddess left over from the beginnings of things, before Christ came to save us all'.[53] And when Anna swallows these flowers, she turns into a wolf and kills her husband by tearing out his throat. Her extreme rage is sowed in her by her husband's brutality revealed through by her being raped, beaten, and lashed by him. By transforming into a wolfwoman, Anna destroys the patriarchal oppression she is imprisoned within her marriage. Thus, the red cloak with the flower brooch Lisel wears does not imply a transference of sexual attractiveness from the old women to the young one to be desired and devoured by a

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[51] Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*, Vintage Books, New York, 1977, p.173.

[52] Yvonne Verdier, 'Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition', *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy- Tale Studies* Vol. 11, No. 1/2 Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1997, p. 107.

[53] Tanith Lee, 'Wolfland', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 142.

male predator in this story, but a transference of female empowerment necessarily needed to survive in patriarchal society which threatens the female body with violence, victimizes it as the object of aggressive male desire and entraps it in oppressive marriages. By such an approach, the conventional interpretation of the forest, which hosts destructive male sexual appetite, is also subverted by Lee. Rather than using the woods as a metaphor for her heroine's sexual awakening, Lee underlines the bond between women and nature by embracing the definition of nature as Mother Nature and thus portrays the wilderness as a maternal space. In 'Wolfland', wilderness becomes a metaphorical maternal space for women, which represents a true liberation from the oppressive social and cultural order specifically with its detachment from the symbolic order paradigm.

In the light of these ideas presented above, Lisel's travel into the forest reflects a metaphorical journey to the semiotic 'chora'[54] (the Greek word for womb) where there are no demarcations between the infant and the (m)other. As Lisel gets closer to the estate, she steps in a setting which gradually attains the characteristics of a maternal space and her observation of her surroundings exposes the association of the forest with 'the semiotic chora':

> *There was presently an insidious but generally perceptible change. Between the walls of the forest there gathered a new silence, a silence, which was, if anything, alive, a personality which attended any humanly noisy passage with a cruel and resentful interest [...]. The sled had been driving through the forest for perhaps another hour, when a wolf wailed somewhere amid the trees. Rather than break the silence of the place, the cry seemed born of the silence, a natural expression of the landscape's cold solitude and immensity'.*[55]

As is implied in the quotation above, nature is represented as a womb pregnant with life. It embodies the wolf like a mother embodies her baby. Since the wolf's wailing does not break the silence of the wilderness but it is born of this silence, its harmony with nature suggests the infant's pre-symbolic communication with its mother

> *via babbles, incoherent and rhythmic sounds which seem meaningless within the system of language, but in fact are communicative significations. Kristeva relates this semiotic*

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[54] Noëlle McAfee, in her book *Julia Kristeva*, explains Kristeva's derivation of the term 'chora' from Plato as follows: ' The Greek philosopher Plato (427–347 BC) coined a term on which Kristeva draws. In one of his works titled the *Timaeus*, Plato gives his own explanation for how the universe was created. In the process he uses the word *chora*, meaning both receptacle and nurse, that is, the container and the producer, of what the universe is before and as anything exists. With the term chora, Kristeva describes how an infant's psychic environment is oriented to its mother's body. [...] Plato meant by the term the original space or receptacle of the universe, but Kristeva seems to have something in mind that belongs to each person in particular before he or she develops clear borders of his or her own personal identity. In this early psychic space, the infant experiences a wealth of drives (feelings, instincts, etc.) that could be extremely disorienting and destructive were it not for the infant's relation with his or her mother's body. An infant's tactile relation with its mother's body provides an orientation for the infant's drives. Kristeva often uses the term *chora* in conjunction with the term *semiotic*: her phrase 'the semiotic *chora*' reminds the reader that the *chora* is the space in which the meaning that is produced is semiotic: the echolalis, glossolalias, rhythms, and intonations of an infant who does not yet know how to use language to refer to objects, or of a psychotic who has lost the ability to use language in a properly meaningful way. The semiotic chora may also make itself felt in symbolic communication. (original emphasis 19)

[55] Tanith Lee, 'Wolfland', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 123.

> *language to the 'chora' in which these various drives, the endless flow of pulsions are gathered up and form a pre-linguistic language which is associated with the maternal.*[56]

Since the 'chora' refers to a primordial stage when the infant is one with the (m)other, the wolves of the forest not only do represent the children of the maternal forest, but also the maternal itself. Hearing the wolves' howls, Lisel assures his father's riders, who are taking her to Anna's mansion, that she is not scared of the wolves. Lee dresses her heroine with the courageous spirit of the peasant girl in the oral tale and thus pays homage to the feminine perspective enclosed in it as is perceived in Lisel's first encounter with the abject.

Lisel's first encounter with the abject takes place when she is stopped by a black carriage and a dwarf, 'too small to be a man, too curiously proportioned to be simply a child,' gets out of the carriage demanding that she come with him by giving Lisel her grandmother's letter asking her to attend the escort that she has sent for her. Lisel feels apprehension in the presence of such an ambiguous figure, who repulses her with his appearance like a 'small, misshapen, furry dog' but also fascinates her 'at once by the musical quality of his voice, while out of his hood emerged the face of a fair and melancholy angel.'[57] When Lisel reads the letter in which Anna says: 'Beautiful has already told you, I think, that your escort may go home. Anna is giving you her own escort, to guide you on the last laps of the journey'[58], she is stunned by the name, Beautiful. She 'had glanced involuntarily at the dwarf, oddly frightened at its horrid contrariness and its peculiar truth. A foreboding had clenched around her young heart, and, for a second, inexplicable terror'.[59] The abjectness of the dwarf threatens Lisel's boundaries of the self makes her feel terror because the abject collapses all the meaning structures and stable boundaries her self is built upon.

> *[T]he abject 'draws me' the site of meaning's collapse. Thus, if the abject is not the object, the 'I' to which it is opposed is not the stable reference point of accomplished meaning. In place of the phenomenological subject of enunciation, abjection places the one beset by it 'beside himself'. The subject/object relation of meaning breaks down, and in its place emerges unsettling, uncanny affects and thoughts. Abjection resists the coherent, seemingly stable meaning characteristic of the symbolic or intentional experience, which relies on an already constituted subject and already constituted object - or, more simply, a world. Abjection is, in this sense, extraterritorial - literally, outside the world.*[60]

The dwarf, with its ambiguous outward appearance, is an extraterritorial figure that leads Lisel to undergo the affects of the abject. She is terrorized by the hybridity of the dwarf, but simultaneously she has 'intrigued curiosity.'[61] Caught in 'a dreadful dilemma'[62], Lisel cannot decide whether to get on the dwarf's carriage or not. She is on the threshold between the semiotic and the symbolic. However, Lisel, like the

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[56] Selen Aktari, *Abject Representations of Female Desire in Postmodern British Female Gothic Fiction* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Middle East Technical University, 2010, p. 235.
[57] Ibid., p. 125.
[58] Ibid., p. 125.
[59] Ibid., pp. 125-6.
[60] Stacey K. Keltner, *Kristeva: Thresholds*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2011, p. 44.
[61] Tanith Lee, 'Wolfland', *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, Ed. Jack Zipes, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1993, p. 126.
[62] Ibid., p. 126.

peasant girl of the folk tale, affirms the abject with a courageous spirit. She leaves her father's men, representatives of patriarchal ideology, behind in the symbolic order and gets on the black carriage in order to experience the semiotic. Thus, the semiotic and the symbolic are severely separated by this scene and Lisel enters into the semiotic stage in order to construct the maternal bond through the abjection process.

At this point in the story, Lisel, completely torn from the symbolic order, starts to inhabit the maternal space. From this point on she will begin to experience the attacks of the abject gradually and these attacks will render her a subject-in-process, always in the form of becoming. After falling asleep for a while in the dwarf's carriage, Lisel wakes up to the sound of 'a unique and awful choir. The cries of wolves'.[63] A horde of wolves is running alongside the carriage and Lisel terrifies at the possibility of being devoured. She 'yearned for a pistol, or at least a knife'[64] in order to protect herself from the aggressiveness of the wolves. However, she has already left the symbolic order behind, therefore she can hardly find any patriarchal weapon to protect herself. The semiotic provides her with the archaic experience endowed by instinctual reactions and affects.

> *With a shrill how, scarcely knowing what she did, Lisel flung herself at the closed door and the wolf the far side of it. Her eyes also blazed, her teeth also were bared, and her nails raised as it to claw. Her horror was such that she appeared ready to attack the wolf in its own primeval mode, and as her hands struck the glass against its face, the wolf shied and dropped away*[65]

In Lee's version of journey into the forest, the wolf does not represent extreme male sexual desire as it does in Perrault's and the Grimms' versions. On the contrary, it is associated with the maternal because of its close connection with the abject and its symbolical residing place as the semiotic chora. Lisel confronts the abject (m)other and she embraces her in this scene, although she does not know at this stage that the wolf she looks in the eyes of is her own grandmother. Yet Lisel is successful at coping with the annihilation of her boundaries but still shows her affirmative potential to fuse with her (m)other.

At their first encounter, when Anna welcomes Lisel at the head of a long table in her mansion, Anna's abject state is also presented from Lisel's point of view. Lisel notices that her grandmother looks only a little over fifty, although she is eighty one years old. 'But her nails were very long and discoloured, as were her teeth. Grandmother's eyes, on the other hand, were not so reassuring. Brilliant eyes, clear and very likely sharp-sighted, of a pallid silvery brown. Unnerving eyes, but Lisel did her best to stare them out'.[66]

Lisel's observations draw a picture of Anna with wolf-like attributes, particularly underlining the likeness of Anna's eyes to the eyes of the wolf she has seen at the carriage window. When she asks about the wolves chasing them in the woods, she suspects that her grandmother can be a mad woman who likes to fancy herself as a sorceress and believes that the wolves out in the forest protect them from harm. The

[63] Ibid., p. 126.
[64] Ibid., p. 127.
[65] Ibid., p. 127.
[66] Ibid., p. 128.

image of her grandmother as a lunatic woman is reinforced in her mind when she sees her eating raw meat at dinner. What Lisel is experiencing is the attacks of the abject, she is still thinking within the frame of the symbolic order, but it is continuously implied that she has the potential to embrace the semiotic. She lets her boundaries collapse and then reconstructs them anew. This is how she achieves the status of a subject-in-process.

Anna tells her granddaughter that the land her mansion stands upon is called Wolfland. 'Because it was wolves' country before every men set foot on it with their piffling little roads and tracks, their carriages and foolish frightened walls'.[67] This description also contributes to the representation of the forest as the maternal space. It reveals how the wilderness, associated with the female, the abject and the maternal realm, is destroyed by civilization, associated with the patriarchal society, the symbolic order, which constructs its subjectivity through establishing boundaries between self and other. Wolfland is a semiotic space ruled by the matriarchy of the wolves as Anna declares: 'the land is theirs by right.'[68] She tells Lisel that there was a time when Wolfland was ruled by her cruel and oppressive husband, but now it belongs to its primordial owners, women themselves. Thus, Lee subverts the patriarchally defined forest of the literary versions of 'Little Red Riding Hood' by announcing that Wolfland no longer belongs to the oppressive and victimizing male-dominated order. Lisel's grandfather is a typical representative of patriarchal order who abuses her wife by torturing and beating her. Anna warns her granddaughter of the common destiny shared by all women being entrapped by the patriarchal ideology as follows:

> *I tell you, Lisel, because very soon your father will suggest to you that it is time you were wed. And however handsome or gracious the young man may seem to you that you choose, or that is chosen for you, however noble or marvelous or even docile he may seem, you have no way of being certain he will not turn out to be like your beloved grandpère. Do you know, he brought me peaches on our wedding night, all the way from the hothouses of the city. Then he showed me the whip he had been hiding under the fruit. You see what is to be a woman, Lisel. Is that what you want? The irrevocable marriage vow that binds you forever to a monster? And even if he is a good man, which is a rare beast indeed, you may die an agonizing death in childbed, just as your mother did.'*[69]

Anna informs Lisel how marriage vows chain women to abusive and cruel husbands, and make them suffer from domestic violence and educates her granddaughter about being a free and an autonomous woman who should revolt against patriarchal values. Soon Anna the Matriarch reveals that she is a werewolf, a transmogrifite. However, before revealing this Lisel sees her grandmother in her utmost abject state, and this climactic scene will push Lisel beyond her boundaries and embrace her in the semiotic stage.

Lisel wakes up in the middle of the night in the room reserved for her to the sound of the 'awesome choir of the wolves'[70] again and she 'became aware of a bizarre exhilaration, an almost-pleasure in the awful sounds which made the hair lift

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[67] Ibid., p. 130.
[68] Ibid., p. 130.
[69] Ibid., p. 131.
[70] Ibid., p. 132.

on her scalp and gooseflesh creep along her arms – the same sort of sensation as biting into a slice of lemon - .' [71] The affects Lisel goes through when she hears the sounds of the wolves are the indicators of Lisel's inhabiting the realm of the abject. The howlings symbolically depicted as the spasmodic sounds of the infant addressed to the (m)other make Lisel experience the blissful stage of being one with the (m)other once more. Curious about the sounds she hears coming from downstairs, she leaves her room and descends the stairs.

> *Through the open door [...] glided the wolf she had seen beneath her window. It did not look real, it seemed to waver and to shine, yet, for any who had ever heard the name of wolf, or a single story of them or the song of their voices, here stood that word, that story, that voice, personified.*
> *The wolf raised its supernatural head and once more it looked at the young girl.*
> *The moment held no reason, no pity, and certainly no longer any hope of escape.*
> *As the wolf began to pad noiselessly toward Lisel up the stair, she fled by the only route now possible to her. Into unconsciousness.'*[72]

In her utmost confrontation with the abject Lisel could not hold onto her borders anymore and directly falls into the semiotic totally separated from the symbolic. Her boundaries are violated, and she is absorbed by the power of the maternal. After this experience, Lisel is presented as ready to rule the semiotic. That is, she is prepared to inherit her grandmother's abject state of being a werewolf.

Anna reveals her secret to Lisel as follows: '*I* am the beast you saw last night, and you had better get accustomed to it. Grandmère is a werewolf [...] I'm not mad, but a transmogrifite. Every evening, once the sun sets, I become a wolf, and duly comport myself as a wolf does.'[73] Then, Anna offers Lisel a liqueur made of the yellow flower that grows on Wolfland. Under the spell of the drink, Lisel starts to see pictures from Anna's past in the flames of the hearth as if she were watching a film. She understands that Anna's marriage was one of the most cruel and violent ones. Anna was physically, sexually and psychologically abused by her husband in a most savage way. The pictures Lisel watches relate Anna's life story with Perrault's and the Grimms' 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Anna is presented through these pictures dressed in the red cloak burdened with male-dominated notions of female sexuality and she is victimized as the little girl of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Thus, Lee's story functions subversively in two ways. Whereas Lisel's quest for self-identification and female initiation is treated in the light of the oral tale, Anna's life story is treated in the light of the popular printed versions in order to lay bare the entrapment of women by patriarchal institution of marriage. However, with the motif of yellow flower Lee rewrites the image of wolf through destroying its association with the male threat in the classical versions of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and associates it with the matriarchal power. Anna's killing of her husband is not one of that violence and monstrousness but self-defense and self-determination.

The last scene presents Lisel receiving this matrilineal inheritance from her grandmother. Anna's her granddaughter to receive this matrilineal inheritance as well.

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[71] Ibid., p. 133.
[72] Ibid., p. 135-6.
[73] Ibid., p. 139-40.

Anna offers Lisel a drink made of these yellow to receive the ability. Anna contends that

> *the wolf-magic, once invoked, becomes hereditary, yet dormant. […] I've put nothing on you that was not already yours. Look in a mirror. Look at your hair and your eyes and your beautiful teeth. Haven't you always preferred the night to the day, staying up till the morning, lying abed till noon? Don't you love the cold forest? Doesn't the howl of the wolf thrill you through with fearful delight? And why else should the Wolfland accord you an escort, a pack of wolves running by you on the road. Do you think you'd have survived if you'd not been one of their kind, too?*[74]

Thus, the wolf-magic becomes hereditary and it is understood that Lisel is invited to Wolfland in order to take Anna's place as the mistress of the castle. Thus, making Lisel follow her grandmother at the end of her story, Lee saves Lisel from the subordinate role of wife and mother which might be awaiting her in the future. Lisel does not go through an identity process in order to take her grandmother's place in the symbolic order which presupposes a detachment from the mother. On the contrary, she unites with the (m)other through her grandmother and steps into the abject realm by becoming a wolf. Thus, she becomes a subject-in-process who embraces the other and becomes the matriarch of Wolfland outside the patriarchal order.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by describing the maternal bond as abject through identifying the grandmothers with the wolves, both Carter and Lee promote that one should embrace her or his other in order to get liberated from patriarchal construction of identity. Therefore, their rewritings are much closer to the original folk tale, "The Story of Grandmother", rather than to its patriarchal rewritings. Particularly with the representation of the grandmother as the wolf, they revive the cannibalistic meal found in the oral tale. The granddaughter's eating her grandmother's flesh is an indication of female initiation. In Carter's version, the little girl learns the female skills and attains female knowledge by fighting with her grandma-wolf in the forest and replaces her by inheriting her house. This is an implication of the possibility of her inheriting her grandmother's wolfish qualities in the future. Although Carter's version does not present an explicit representation of subject-in-process in relation with the abject at the end of her story, the granddaughter's starting to live in her grandmother's house show that she has already secluded herself in the semiotic space and taken her place in the maternal genealogical line. On the other hand, Lee provides a more radical ending when her story is compared to Carter's and to other traditional Little Red Riding Hoods. Her overt celebration of the inheritance of transmogrification from the grandmother to the granddaughter shows that the maternal bond can never be discarded. Lee transforms the traditional representation of evil male figure symbolized by the wolf into a feminist one in order to underline the autonomous female power that has the capacity of destroying the oppressive patriarchal order. Lee explicitly conveys that her heroine, Lisel, inherits abject qualities from her grandmother and experiences a fluid identity which transgresses patriarchal definitions of female

[74] Ibid., p. 146.

identity. Both Carter and Lee embrace the union of the self with the other and define a subject-in-process outside the traditional psychoanalytical perception of identity resisting imprisonment in the patriarchally constructed borders of female identity by rewriting 'The Story of Grandmother'.

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