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ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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(İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI)

THE REPRESENTATIONS OF DUALITIES IN CHILDREN'S FANTASY LITERATURE: C. S. LEWIS' *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA* AND PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS*

Doktora Tezi

Mürüvvet Mira PINAR DOLAYKAYA

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Tez Savunması Tarihi

21 Şubat 2020

T.C.
ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'ne,

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Seda PEKŞEN danışmanlığında hazırladığım "THE REPRESENTATIONS OF DUALITIES IN CHILDREN'S FANTASY LITERATURE: C. S. LEWIS' *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA* AND PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS* (Ankara, 2020)" adlı doktora tezimdeki bütün bilgilerin akademik kurallara ve etik davranış ilkelerine uygun olarak toplanıp sunulduğunu, başka kaynaklardan aldığım bilgileri metinde ve kaynakçada eksiksiz olarak gösterdiğimi, çalışma sürecinde bilimsel araştırma ve etik kurallarına uygun olarak davrandığımı ve aksinin ortaya çıkması durumunda her türlü yasal sonucu kabul edeceğimi beyan ederim.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS…………………………………………………………….…i

TABLE OF CONTENTS………………………………………………...……iii

ABBREVIATIONS……………………………………………………………..v

INTRODUCTION…………………………………………………………...1

CHAPTER I: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. A Definitional Crisis: Fantasy Literature……….…………………….. 9

1.2. Encounters between Fantasy and Children's Literature………………….. 27

1.3. Duality and Dualistic Narrations in Literature…………………………… 49

1.4. Dualistic Narrations and Children's Literature.………………………….. 59

CHAPTER II: DUALISTIC REPRESENTATIONS IN C. S. LEWIS' *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA*

2.1. C. S. Lewis as a Writer of Children's Literature……………………….…70

2.2. Adulthood and Childhood in *The Chronicles of Narnia*…………………..77

2.3. Natural and Urban Spaces in *The Chronicles of Narnia*…………………. 96

2.4. Spatial Dualities: Home and Away in *The Chronicles of Narnia*………. 111

2.5. Gendered Binaries in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.……………………….. 125

2.6. Physical/Bodily Dualities in *The Chronicles of Narnia*………………… 140

CHAPTER III: DUALISTIC REPRESENTATIONS IN PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS*

3.1. *His Dark Materials*: Radical Children's Fantasy Literature…………..… 160

3.2. Un/stereotyping Childhood and Adulthood in *His Dark Materials*……. 167

3.3. Restructuring the Binary of Nature and City in *His Dark Materials*…… 188

3.4. The Subversion of Home and Away Duality in *His Dark Materials*…... 204

3.5. Contesting the Gendered Binaries in *His Dark Materials*……………… 220

3.6. Blurring the Distinctions between Body and Soul in *His Dark Materials* 239

CONCLUSION……………………………………………………………………….. 256

BIBLIOGRAPHY…………………………………………………………………. 263

ÖZET……………………………………………………………………………. 276

ABSTRACT……………………………………………………………………….. 277

ABBREVIATIONS

LWW	*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
PC	*Prince Caspian*
VDT	*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*
HHB	*The Horse and His Boy*
SC	*The Silver Chair*
MN	*The Magician's Nephew*
LB	*The Last Battle*
NL	*Northern Lights*
SK	*The Subtle Knife*
AS	*The Amber Spyglass*

INTRODUCTION

“Children’s fiction draws in the child,
it secures, places
and frames the child.” (Rose 2)

Fairy tales, animal stories, and folkloric narratives, which are the ancestors of modern children’s fantasy literature, are children’s first encounters with the rich and immense world of literature. Beautiful princesses, handsome princes, scary dragons, naughty talking animals, and ugly witches as the stars of naive bedtime stories undoubtedly may have many pedagogical functions. Children’s first literary experiences indeed help expand their imagination, contribute to their reading habits, and also introduce them to a cultural heritage. More important than this, however, children’s stories become children’s first teachers along with their parents, playing a significant role in their academic, psychological, and societal development on the path to becoming responsible, sensitive, and “moral” individuals.

A keen child-listener of “Little Red Riding Hood” learns that forgetting his/her parents’ warnings may cause many troubles including being devoured by a wolf. S/he finds comfort in the tales of “Snow White” or “Cinderella” as they see that subservience, patience, kindness, and goodwill are eventually rewarded sometimes with wealth and sometimes with an endless happiness. On the other hand, the simple yet in-point fable of “The Ant and the Grasshopper” teaches the child to be hardworking and disparages idleness and laziness startlingly showing that it can even lead to hunger. It is in this simple cause and effect pattern that these entertaining children’s stories create assumptions in children’s minds as to what is good and bad, beautiful and ugly, right and wrong, moral and immoral. Even though these distinctions, which appear to be central in children’s literature, seem to be harmless and expectedly normal, they actually convey profound moral messages, moral standards, and unexamined assumptions,

which even parents cannot recognize at once. As Seth Lerer, a noteworthy children's literature critic writes, "the child was made through texts and tales he or she studied, heard, and told back" (*Children's Literature* 1). This is because these earliest literary pieces are imbued with ideological viewpoints, belief systems, as well as cultural, social, and even spatial norms. They eventually fulfil their role in making and building the child by determining his/her view of the world, social structures, and human relations.

The prototypes of children's fantasy literature such as fairy tales, fables, and folkloric stories, despite the geographical differences or different plot arcs, all revolve around the battle between evil and good forces. Children need oppositions, polarized ideas, and distinctions to grasp a definite message or a certain moral a narrative is structured on. Specifically, the earliest examples of children's literature seem to be not allowing any obscurity and blurriness when it comes to the moral message. Good characters and evil characters are easy to distinguish, and moral and immoral actions are noticeable. Therefore, children's minds are not bothered with complications and uncertainties listening to or reading specifically these early literary texts.

Modern children's fantasy literature also inherits its dualistic nature from these earliest sources. In fact, even the most complicated plot structures in children's fantasy books still draw on oppositions and comparisons between dualistic concepts and the ideas related to these dualities. However, different from the simplistic plot arcs that we see in fairy tales and folkloric stories, modern children's fantasy books refrain from presenting morals and messages readily to their readers. Instead, they engage with the dualistic representations in the most subtle and symbolic ways to develop an argument and celebrate a moral stance. Modern children's fantasy books have been complicating plot structures and characterization, and they have been experimenting playfully and freely with the archetypal fantasy elements and motifs especially since the mid-

nineteenth century. They intertwine contemporary elements often with medievalist settings, bring together supernatural and realistic elements, and create extremely adventurous and entertaining stories, which are interwoven with ideological imprints almost in every line. In this context, dualistic representations, that is to say comparisons and contrasts between different characters, spaces, and objects, lead to inferences regarding good and bad, moral and immoral, appropriate and inappropriate. In modern children's fantasy books, such inferences might not be stark and easy to detect by the child reader, nevertheless, this subtlety actually makes children's fantasy books powerful apparatuses in transmitting ideological messages and value systems without spoiling the entertaining quality, naivety, and the simplicity of the text.

Developed around a conventional and conservative didactic function, children's fantasy literature has utilised dualistic representations in the service of dominant ideologies and normative value systems for too long. Nevertheless, as it is the case with all forms and genres of literature, children's fantasy literature is also prone to social, economic, cultural, philosophical as well as literary transformations experienced in time. Since the mid-twentieth century, children's fantasy literature has been engendering extremely radical texts, which put into scrutiny the conventional didacticism pertaining to the genre. These relatively subversive texts show that the old archetypal and conservative hierarchies fail to give a true picture of contemporary societies that are marked by fluidity, instability, and diversity. Accordingly, they dismantle and restructure traditional hierarchies between dualistic patterns and offer relatively complex, alternative, and arguably more inclusive dualistic representations. In doing so, they point at the changing relationship between children/childhood and literature, and they provide the child with world-images which are more compatible with the social, economic, political, and religious transformations.

It would not be wrong to say that the recognition of the literary value of children's literature in academia, the acknowledgment of its ideological and educational functions added with postmodern problematization of grand narratives have reinforced such subversion in this new age. In the light of these developments, children's fantasy literature now continually invites their adult readers and critics to critically engage with both the canonical texts of children's literature and its radical delineations. The critics of children's fantasy literature thus delve into relatively complex ideas underlying the dualities, and they contemplate on what they stand for and to what message or argument they serve. Even though the excavation of the ideologies lurking under the seemingly innocent and entertaining stories breaks the magic, it simultaneously shows the power of children's literature in organizing not simply children's but also an entire society's mind-set. A critical look into children's literature thus reveals the fact that children's fantasy literature may serve as an effective vehicle that helps protect and maintain the continuity of the dominant value systems, morals, and power relations in a society.

Such subversive applications and interpretations also render children's fantasy literature an extremely versatile and multi-layered genre, which is open to re-visitation, restructuring, and redirection. Most importantly, they display children's fantasy literature as a fruitful space for problematizing and reorganizing normative value systems. To this end, this study aims to display the multi-layered and multifunctional quality of children's fantasy literature through the analysis of the dualistic representations in C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. This study focuses specifically on these series on the basis that they are written from entirely divergent points of view. Even though both writers depend on the conventional elements of fantasy literature such as archetypal and mythological imagery as well as archetypal characters such as witches, animal characters, and old wise men, they eventually achieve to convey messages, which are entirely contrary and different

from each other. Lewis and Pullman's views of socio-political and economic issues as well as such controversial subject matters as gender, religion, and morality inform their fiction; therefore, their writings for children contain different ideological sub-texts. Specifically, Lewis' high esteem for Romantic ideals, his admiration of medieval literature as well as his devotion to Christianity determine the moral direction of his fantasy series. Nevertheless, Philip Pullman is informed by social, cultural, literary, and economic transformations as a contemporary writer, and he tends to problematize and blur the distinctions and hierarchies between dualistic concepts and ideas. His fiction arguably belongs to the present times, which is marked by incredulity to grand narratives such as patriarchy, religion, and anthropocentrism. Therefore, this dissertation explores Lewis' Narnia books as an example of conservative children's fantasy literature, which treats dualistic patterns in line with conventional didacticism and confirms normative gendered, spatial, and physical binaries. It reads Pullman's *His Dark Materials,* on the contrary, as an example of radical children's fantasy literature, which disrupts the conventional power relations between binary pairs, thereby critiquing normative assumptions regarding a variety of issues related to gender, religion, and morality.

Therefore, this dissertation looks into how each series engages with the dualistic relationship between manhood and womanhood, childhood and adulthood, public sphere and domestic sphere, urban space and nature, nature and culture, monstrosity and beauty, spirituality and physicality as well as body and soul. It examines to what extent each series complies with or subverts the conventional attributes of these dualities with reference to their experimental, unique, and innovative implementations of fantasy. In this regard, this study also draws attention to how binaries central to Western culture and literature are produced by a patriarchal, anthropocentric, and Christian mind-set, which tends to affirm its power through subordination and marginalization of the other.

It accordingly searches into alternative dualistic representations in children's fantasy literature, which contest dominant ideologies and power relations. Therefore, this dissertation also aims to show how children's fantasy literature may challenge its own tradition and history, providing its child-readers with alternative value systems and societal relations that transgress the norms.

The intent of this dissertation is not to map out all of the dualistic patterns employed in Lewis and Pullman's children fantasy series. One can indeed find a variety of dualistic patterns in each series, which can be analysed in different ways and contexts. Lewis and Pullman's works can also be analysed it terms of their engagement with temporal dualities, past and present, past and future, animal and human, light and darkness, north and south, east and west, blackness and whiteness. There are actually studies which occasionally refer to how each series treats good and evil in divergent manners, and there are also studies which compare and contrast the series in terms of the authors' conflicting views regarding religion and how they represent these differences in their fiction for children. This dissertation however analyses the most prominent and substantial dualities that contribute to the ideological sub-texts of each series, and it explores them comparatively and collaterally with the aim to show how they contribute to the underlying messages and the arguments each author raises. In doing so, it aims to demonstrate how children's fantasy literature can use similar narrative instruments of fantasy genre, archetypal characters, and leitmotifs in extremely experimental, imaginative, and often radical ways to construct contrasting ideological foundations and arguments.

This dissertation consists of three main chapters. The first chapter of this study is devoted to drawing a theoretical framework for children's fantasy literature. It starts with an exploration of the historical development of modern fantasy literature with references to contradictory and diverging definitions brought to it in line with the

literary mainstreams of the periods. It aims to show fantasy genre's inherently paradoxical and contradictory nature being simultaneously realistic and unrealistic as well as subversive and radical. It continues with an exploration of how fantasy literature and children's literature intersect, and it also traces the development of children's literature as an established and respected genre of literature. The study moves on to the concept of duality, polarization, or binary oppositions with references to philosophers, linguists, and theorists who elaborate on such interrelated concepts, and it also provides a brief survey of the dualistic representations in literary texts produced in different time periods. The first chapter concludes with how dualistic representations may function in children's fantasy literature considering its versatile yet didactic nature. In so doing, it prospects to display how children's fantasy literature exerts its didactic function through representations of various dualities beneath the entertaining and seemingly innocent surface text.

The second chapter analyses Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* in terms of Lewis' representation of dualistic patterns, and it explores how these patterns function in reinforcing the moral message of the series. With references to Lewis' personal life, religious sensibilities as well as his non-fiction on a variety of issues including gender, religion, politics, and literature, the second chapter examines the ways in which Narnia books reflect Lewis' celebration of Christian, patriarchal, and white Anglo-Saxon values through dualistic patterns. The third chapter focuses on the contemporary author Philip Pullman's acclaimed children's fantasy series, *His Dark Materials*, aiming to investigate the same set of dualities in the light of Pullman's critical approach to the normative and conventional hierarchies between binary pairs. With comparative references to Lewis' Narnia books, the last chapter argues that children's fantasy literature might also be exceedingly subversive and radical by challenging not only dominant ideologies but also the conventions of children's fantasy literature. In this

respect, this last chapter explores Pullman's unique and innovative engagement with the elements of the fantasy genre and discusses it as an example of children's fantasy literature, which is compatible with transforming social, economic, religious, and literary conditions. In the light of the comparative analyses of Lewis and Pullman's fantasy series for children, this dissertation aims to negate the disdainful perception of children's fantasy literature as a lightweight, escapist, and merely entertaining form of literature. Instead, it intends to display the power and role of children's fantasy literature in asserting ideas, constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing value systems through the subtlest means.

1. HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. 1. A Definitional Crisis: Fantasy Literature

"*Faerie* cannot be caught in a net of words,
for it is one of its qualities to be indescribable,
though not imperceptible."
(Tolkien 114)

Even though fantasy literature is today an established and world-wide acclaimed genre of fiction attracting the attention of a wide range of audience changing from little children to the learned adults, defining fantasy literature and specifying its generic boundaries have always been challenging due to multifarious reasons. The difficulty of finding an overreaching definition for fantasy literature is contained in the paradoxical nature of the term fantasy *per se*. Having its origins in old French, Greek and Latin, the history of the term dates back to early fourteenth century. Fantasy in English is thought to have its roots in the Old French word "*fantaisie*" meaning "illusionary appearance"; the Latin word "*phantasia*" meaning "vision, imagination", and the Greek word "*phantasia*" meaning "power of imagination; appearance, image, perception" ("fantasy", n.pag.). According to the etymological sources, fantasy is also related to Greek "*phantazesthai*" meaning "to picture to oneself"; "*phantos*" meaning "visible"; "*phainesthai*" meaning "to appear"; "*phaos*" meaning "light"; "*phainein"* meaning "to show, to bring to light" ("fantasy", n.pag.); and "*phantasticus*" meaning "to make visible and manifest" (Jackson 13). In this regard, the etymological origins of fantasy reveal that it is an inherently paradoxical category, bringing together such opposing notions as appearance and imagination, vision and illusion, concrete and abstract in a single word.

The multifarious and sometimes contradictory etymological roots of fantasy are highly revealing of numerous conflicting definitions put forth so far by both the writers

and critics of fantasy literature. Fantasy literature denies a unified definition regarding its scope, its nature, its function as well as the underlying purposes behind it. M. O. Grenby contends that fantasy literature is a genre that is "extensive, amorphous and ambiguous [and] resistant to attempts at quick definition" mainly because "it can incorporate the scary and the whimsical, the moral and the anarchic" as well as many other modes into a whole (144). As Rosemary Jackson puts it, fantasy's "association with imagination and with desire [primarily makes] it an area difficult to articulate or to define" (1). On the one hand, its affinity with imagination renders fantasy literature erroneously all encompassing. As Jackson underscores, "[i]n this general sense, all imaginary activities are fantastic, all literary works are fantasies" (13). On the other hand, its engagement with disrupting and reshaping the images and appearances of the real world broadens its scope to such a great extent that it necessitates to include such earliest forms as myths, romances, fables, epics, utopias, legends, fairy tales and folk tales within the genre. Most significantly, however, fantasy's relationship with the real world makes it a controversial and intricate form of literature. Fantasy literature, despite transcending the reality by taking flight from the conventional ways of representation, paradoxically engages in a constant act of showing and bringing to light the very issues related to our world.

Fantasy and fantasy literature being overly intricate subject matters have given way to definitions which most of the time contradict or odd out other definitions. Those who have attempted at formulating a definition have predicated either on its content or structural qualities, thereby articulating or completely leaving out certain features. However, a survey of the key texts that are aimed to define fantasy literature can still reveal the particular characteristics of the genre. It is only after 1940s that the English word 'fantasy' has come to be used for designating a fictional genre, which we today know as modern fantasy literature, nevertheless, fantasy as a literary mood has started to

be ardently elaborated much earlier than this time. The eighteenth-century literature, which saw an increasing interest in prose genres and witnessed the emergence of the novel genre, was marked by its realistic tendency in its characterization and setting. Even though the era was overly critical of the use of fantasy elements in literature, the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century literary critics were not entirely indifferent to a literary production, which was dealing with the supernatural in ways different from the earlier literature about the fantastical. For instance, in "The Pleasures of the Imagination" included in an issue of *The Spectator* in 1712, Joseph Addison provides one of the earliest elaborations on fantasy as a distinct mode of writing with reference to John Dryden:

> There is a kind of writing wherein the poet quite loses sight of Nature, and entertains his reader's imagination with the characters and actions of such persons as have many of them no existence but what he bestows on them; such as fairies, witches, magicians, demons, and departed spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls *the fairy way of writing*, which is, indeed more difficult than any other that depends on the poet's fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own invention. (qtd. in Wolfe, "Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 7)[1]

Even though Addison, as Gary K. Wolfe puts it, does not refer to fantasy novel in any means but to poetry and drama, his exploration helped bring into the fore fantasy as a kind of writing which diverges from the realistic tradition of the period and engages with invention rather than representation ("Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 7).

Addison's discussion on fancy and imagination was furthered a century later in 1817 by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria*. Coleridge's "distinction between fancy and imagination" as different faculties, in Wolfe's words, "set the stage

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[1] John Dryden uses his famous expression, "the fairy kind of writing", in his preface to his dramatic opera, *King Arthur: or the British Worthy.*

for the critical debate that would occupy much of the nineteenth century and that arguably surrounded the birth of the modern fantasy narrative" ("Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 9). In *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge defines imagination as "the living power and prime agent of all human perception and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" (n. pag.), whereas he defines fancy as "a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space" (n. pag.). For Coleridge, imagination obviously relates to literary creation, which engages in a constant act of representation and reproduction. Nevertheless, his definition of fancy pertains more appropriately to fantasy literature, which differs from other literary modes in its transgression of spatial and temporal constraints.

These earlier explorations on fancy and imagination helped distinguish fantasy literature not only from the realistic tradition but also from the earlier fiction based on the supernatural. Yet, the Romantic Movement, which flourished in the late eighteenth century and dominated the literary arena until the mid-nineteenth century, became the fundamental stimulator that accelerated the rise of fantasy as an established and distinct literary form. The Romantics such as William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge invigorated a celebration of fantasy privileging emotion over reason, imagination over rationality, and stylistic freedom over literary formalism of the eighteenth century. The growing interest in fairy tales and folk tales mainly through Grimm Brother's fairy tale collection, the Romantic fascination with the medieval culture added with a search for alternative literary styles resulted in a break away from the realistic orientation of not only the eighteenth-century novel but also the Victorian literature.

In the wake of these innovations, modern fantasy literature as we know it today as well as its criticism started in the late nineteenth century especially with the fantasy books of William Morris (1834-1896) and George MacDonald (1824-1905), who are

now considered to be the fathers of modern fantasy literature.[2] These Victorian fantasists did not quite use the term fantasy to denote their literature. Having found their inspiration in the earlier fiction dealing with the supernatural such as myths, fairy tales, romances, epics, and legends, they titled their books after these forms.[3] Nevertheless, the Victorian fantasists were still aware of their literary styles as unique and divergent from these earlier forms. Hence, their novels were, most of the time, accompanied by critical essays on fantasy mainly as an attempt at explaining the nature of their craft.

Even though the Victorians indulged in writing and reading fantasy books, "critics in the major English journals remained sceptical of the uses of the fantastic in works of fiction" at the time (Wolfe, "Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 9). For instance, in "Some Remarks on the Use of Preternatural in Works of Fiction", which appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1818, the anonymous author disparages the use of fantasy elements in fiction. S/he writes that fantasy elements "should be sparingly used, in order to avoid monotony, and prevent the disgust which is always sure to be felt, when they are no longer regarded with astonishment" (650). Likewise, in "On the Supernatural in Fictitious Composition" (1827), Walter Scott suggests that fantasy elements in fiction should be "rare, brief, indistinct" and literature should be characterized by "philosophical reasoning and moral truth" (qtd. in Wolfe, "Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 10).[4] Published in 1853, the anonymous writer of "The Progress of Fiction as an Art" (supposedly George Elliot) similarly disdains fantasy in

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[2] Some of William Morris' (1834-1896) fantasy books are *The Wood Beyond the World* (1894), *Child Christopher and Goldilind the Fair* (1895), and *The Well at the World's End* (1896). George MacDonald's notable fantasy books include *Phantastes* (1858), *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871), *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), *The Princess and Curdie* (1883), and *Lilith: A Romance* (1895).

[3] Published in 1863, Charles Kingsley's children's fantasy book is entitled *The Water Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby.* George MacDonald similarly uses 'fairy tale' to refer to his fiction in "The Fantastic Imagination" and he also titles one of his fantasy novels as *Lilith: A Romance* (1895). Similarly, Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820) is subtitled *A Romance.*

[4] Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820) takes place in a medieval setting, a characteristic of modern fantasy fiction utilised also by such famous fantasists as William Morris, George MacDonald, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien.

an age characterized by scientific thought and writes that "a scientific and somewhat sceptical age has no longer the power of believing in the marvels which delighted our ruder ancestors" (qtd. in Wolfe, "Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 10-11). As these various marginalizing views on fantasy point out, fantasy was not a proper and sufficient mode for the nineteenth-century novel, which not only valued and promoted morality as the Victorian demeanour but also strived to draw a picture of the society through overly realistic representations. Even though fantasy literature was thought to fail in meeting the literary standards of Victorian literature, a bulk of fantasy novels written at that period still helped prepare a basis for modern fantasy literature to establish itself as a full-fledged and respectable genre in the upcoming century. [5]

Despite the Victorian hostility towards fantasy, one of the earliest critical elaborations on modern fantasy literature was written in this period by George MacDonald - "one of the Victorian era's leading fantasists" who became a major influence on C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, the acclaimed fantasist of the next century (Wolfe, "Fantasy from Dryden to Dunsay" 9). Included in *A Dish of Orts* (1893), MacDonald's "The Fantastic Imagination" explores fantasy as a serious form of literature and shows MacDonald's attempt to define fantasy as different from earlier genres that include supernatural elements. Even though MacDonald still uses the term fairy tale in his essay, he puts emphasis on the fact that "the tale may have nothing to do with any sort of fairy" ("The Fantastic" n. pag.). In doing this, he heralds a new and unique kind of writing which is, despite being fairy, not fairy-tale-like in the traditional sense.

MacDonald brings back the discussion on imagination and fancy, and he offers his own view on these interrelated concepts, which affirms and clarifies Coleridge's

[5] Some of the notable Victorian fantasists are Charles Kingsley, Lewis Carroll, Lord Dunsany, George Meredith, William Morris, Christina Rosetti, John Ruskin, Bram Stoker, and Oscar Wilde.

formulation to a great extent. MacDonald writes that "[w]hen [literary forms] are new embodiments of old truths, we call them products of the Imagination; when they are mere inventions, however lovely, I should call them the work of the Fancy" ("The Fantastic" n. pag.). MacDonald's understanding of fantasy derives not simply from an engagement with the supernatural but from the invention of other worlds in fiction. As for the creation of other worlds in fiction, he maintains that "man may, if he pleases, invent a little world of his own, with its own laws" ("The Fantastic" n. pag.). For MacDonald, writers find delight in creating other worlds, however, the believability and the credibility of these fictional other worlds depend on the introduction of a new order. According to MacDonald, other worlds invented in fiction hold on as long as they abide by a law of their own:

> His world once invented, the highest law that comes next into play is, that there should be harmony between the laws by which the new world has begun to exist; and in the process of his creation, the inventor must hold by those laws. The moment he forgets one of them, he makes the story, by its own postulates, incredible. To be able to live a moment in an imagined world, we must see the laws of its existence obeyed. Those broken, we fall out of it. ("The Fantastic" n. pag.)

For MacDonald, the fantastic world is marked by its internal consistency. Despite its fairy, hence unrealistic and unlikely nature, a fantastic world offers a sense of integrity to the reader as long as its internal structures achieve a harmony. MacDonald also reveals his own views on the function of fantasy literature. He explains the principal aim of the fantasist as "not to give [the reader] things to think about, but to wake things up that are in him; or say, to wake him things for himself" ("The Fantastic" n. pag). MacDonald's formulation shows fantasy as a kind of writing which - unlike myths, fairy tales, folktales, and the Biblical plays of the Middle Ages - does not expose an

explicit moral message to the reader, namely a single deduction defined by the author. According to MacDonald, everyone reads and should read fantasy "after his own nature and development" and identify himself/herself with the story in multifarious ways ("The Fantastic" n. pag.). Addressing the fantasists, MacDonald argues that "a man may then imagine in your work what he pleases, what you never meant!" ("The Fantastic" n. pag.). As a result, fantasy books, for MacDonald, prove successful if they prompt various ideas in the reader, stimulate imagination, and empower interpretive faculties transcending the author's intention. MacDonald's relatively brief yet intense approach to fantasy introduces key features of modern fantasy literature that continue to characterize the genre even today. "The Fantastic Imagination" challenges the contentious attitudes towards fantasy literature and strips it off moralistic constraints. It offers the use of fantasy elements in literature as a liberating force. Most significantly, it introduces world making as the primary element of fantasy literature, which would become central to modern fantasy literature under the titles of secondary world fantasy and high fantasy.

Almost fifty years after MacDonald's "The Fantastic Imagination", J. R. R. Tolkien ignited the theory of fantasy once again in his acclaimed essay "On Fairy-Stories" in 1938. Despite its misleading title, Tolkien's essay explores the use of fantasy in literary history, its possible origins, and the functions of fantasy literature. Like his predecessor fantasist and fantasy-theorist MacDonald, Tolkien also defines fairy-story in spatial terms recognizing the creation of alternative worlds as key to fantasy literature. With an aim of preventing any confusion, Tolkien indicates that "fairy-stories" are not "stories about fairies or elves, but stories about Fairy - *Faerie* - the realm or state in which fairies have their being" (113). A good and gripping fairy-story, Tolkien suggests, is characterized not primarily by its inclusion of supernatural creatures such as elves, dwarves, witches, trolls, giants, or dragons but mainly by its

narration of "the adventures of men in the Perilous Realm or upon its shadowy marches" (113). Tolkien's view of *Faerie* - Perilous Realm - ties in with MacDonald's formulation of other worlds, and better yet, it expands MacDonald's ideas within a more substantial theoretical frame. Claiming that fantasy worlds must adhere to a set of laws, Tolkien explains the craft of the fantasist, whom he calls "sub-creator", as follows:

> He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true", it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken, the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside. (132)

Fantasy literature, throughout the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth century, was seen as the opposite of reason and rationality dealing with unworldly things. Accordingly, it was considered to be insufficient to touch upon the concerns of the real world. Therefore, it was marginalized and kept out of the canon. Tolkien's perception of the secondary world as one founded on truth, coherence, and laws of its own was an effort to evade these derogatory views against fantasy literature. For Tolkien, fantasy literature's success depends on creating a consistent world order which, despite being an alternative to our world, never severs its ties with real human concerns. Even though fantasy literature deals with agents and actions that are not likely to exist in our known reality, it does not "destroy or even insult Reason" (Tolkien 144). Contrarily, fantasy literature proves better if reason perceives the truth in its entirety and transfers it into fantasy.

In addition to offering his own definition, Tolkien also explains four main functions of fantasy literature: Fantasy, Recovery, Escape, and Consolation. Tolkien uses Fantasy in the sense that it represents human desire to create and imagine things

that do not exist in the real world. He utilises the term Fantasy, as the primary function of fairy-stories, to refer to "the Sub-creative art" and "quality of strangeness and wonder in the Expression, derived from the Image" (139). Recovery, another function of fairy-stories, refers to "regaining of a clear view of" things, that is, to see familiar things from a different perspective so that one can evaluate a situation from a more objective angle (Tolkien 146). Tolkien offers Escape as the third function of fantasy literature. Contrary to the disdainful ideas against escapism, Tolkien suggests that

> Escape is one of the main functions of fairy-stories, and since I do not disapprove of them, it is plain that I do not accept the tone of scorn or pity with which "Escape" is now so often used: a tone for which the uses of the word outside literary criticism give no warrant at all. (147-148)

According to Tolkien, fantasy literature helps one find relief from the struggles of the real world, and it also offers a satisfaction of desires such as escape from death and conversation with other living things. Last but not least, Tolkien discusses Consolation as one of the main functions of fantasy literature. Tolkien argues that fantasy literature provides one with the sense of consolation by ensuring a happy ending after representing its hero going through a series of ill-events. He coins the term *eucatastrophe* to define a happy ending which is specific to fairy-stories. Contending that a fairy-story requires a "sudden joyous turn" in the end, Tolkien claims that "the *eucatastrophic* tale is the true form of fairy-tale, and its highest function" (153). Even though Tolkien's formulation of fairy-story has occasionally been dismissed "as simplistic and naive", his extensive and formulaic approach to fantasy has "proved a central influence for many authors and a few critics" in the following decades (Bechtel 150). Tolkien's influence on the studies of fantasy literature has been so notable that fantasists embracing Tolkien's approach and critics who "tend to model their definition

of fantasy on Tolkien's own" are named as Tolkienians in the following decades (Bechtel 149).

Nevertheless, the theory of fantasy literature has taken a more structuralist turn in the second half of the twentieth century especially with the publication of Tzvetan Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* in 1970. Considered to be "the most important and influential critical study of fantasy in this post-Romantic period" and also "the first serious scholarly attempt to comprehensively define the genre", Todorov's book brings a formalistic approach to fantasy literature in a manner which is overly divergent from that of MacDonald and Tolkien (Jackson 5; Bechtel 142). Todorov defines fantastic firstly by underlining what it is not, namely in terms of its difference from such adjacent concepts as supernatural, uncanny, and marvelous. In doing so, he strives to avoid any confusion that might stem from the use of these terms interchangeably. First of all, Todorov regards supernatural as a separate literary category that might characterize a wide range of genres including fantasy literature. According to Todorov, supernatural cannot be regarded as the first and foremost requirement for fantasy literature as it would render Homer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Goethe fantasists which they are obviously not. Thus, he underlines the fact that even though fantasy literature might include supernatural elements, supernatural does not single-handedly qualify a text fantastic.

Todorov further points out the difference between the uncanny, the marvelous, and the fantastic situating the fantastic between the former two. For Todorov, in the uncanny "the laws of reality remain intact and permit an explanation of the phenomena described" (41), whereas in the marvelous "new laws of nature must be entertained to account for the phenomena" (41). In the narrowest sense, while the uncanny tends to explain the seemingly supernatural within the boundaries of the natural, the marvelous acknowledges and normalizes the existence of the supernatural. According to Todorov,

"the fantastic hovers between the two, between actual reality and some reality which is not actual" (Sandor 343). For Todorov, the hero's hesitation as to the actuality of the supernatural lies at the core of the fantastic. Hence, he argues that once the hero's uncertainty is eliminated, the fantastic effect is lost.[6]

Todorov suggests three fundamental requirements for "pure" Fantastic to be. Firstly, the reader's hesitation as to bringing a supernatural or natural explanation to seemingly supernatural situations should be sustained until the end of the narration. Secondly, the main character in the text should share the same hesitation to the extent that the reader should identify with this character. Thirdly, the text should deny an allegorical or a poetic reading as this kind of reading destroys the pure fantastic (Brooke-Rose 150). Todorov's idea of hesitation and uncertainty is, in fact, in close relationship with Tolkien's formula of an ideal fairy-story. Both put great emphasis on the continuity of the reader's belief as well as the consistency and cogency of the narrative. Nevertheless, Todorov was a structuralist, thus, his approach to the fantastic was extremely formulaic, dealing with the structural differences between different categories of the fantastic more than its contextual, ideological, and social facets.

Indeed, Todorov makes things more complicated by propounding two additional sub-categories of the fantastic, which occur "according to the explanation received, or rather, according to when the explanation is received, i.e., the length of the hesitation" (Brooke-Rose 151). In "Historical Genres/Theoretical Genres: A Discussion of Todorov on the Fantastic", Christine Brooke-Rose explains these sub-categories as follows:

[6] Even though Todorov opts for the term "fantastic" throughout his book, he actually refers to the genre "fantasy literature" as we know it today. Contemporary scholars tend to examine "fantastic" and "fantasy" as two different categories. Fantastic literature has a broad scope including horror stories, ghost stories, myths, legends, and similar genres which incorporate the supernatural in various degrees. Fantasy literature, however, refers specifically to texts which create an alternative world image. This new world created in fantasy literature could be a different version of the real world, or it might be an entirely different one into which characters enter through a portal.

> If the supernatural eventually receives a natural explanation, we are in the Fantastic-Uncanny; if the events are not supernatural but strange, horrific, incredible, we are in the Uncanny (with the accent on the reader's fear, not on his hesitation). On the other side of the line, if the supernatural has to be eventually accepted as supernatural, we are in the Fantastic-Marvelous; if it is accepted as supernatural at once, we are in the Marvelous (with no accent on wonder). (152)

Todorov's formulation of the fantastic has been overly influential and a point of reference in the theory of fantasy in its bringing a rather sophisticated and formalistic approach to fantasy genre. Nevertheless, it is simultaneously considered flawed and insufficient by many theorists of fantasy literature including Rosemary Jackson, Christian Brooke-Rose, and Brian Attebery. For instance, Brooke-Rose considers Todorov's approach "unsatisfactory, from a practical […] point of view" excluding many texts out of fantasy and "apply[ing] only to the nineteenth-century texts" (152-153). Finding Todorov's resistance to allegorical reading also contradictory, Brooke-Rose regards fantasy literature as "a modern development […] of medieval allegory" enabling its critic and reader to read it "on several and often paradoxically contradictory levels" (156). In a similar vein, a defender of Tolkienian fantasy, Attebery in *Strategies of Fantasy* accuses Todorov of "confus[ing] matters greatly" and claims that his formulaic definition has no "bearing on the kind of fantasy" they are discussing at the time (20). Even though Jackson finds Todorov's theory highly valuable in "its encouraging serious critical engagement" with fantasy, she similarly recognizes its shortcomings (5). For Jackson, "Todorov's *The Fantastic* fails to consider the social and political implications of literary forms" focusing merely on its structural qualities (6). These various criticisms directed at Todorov's approach show that fantasy literature cannot be evaluated without taking into consideration the political, economic, and

cultural circumstances of the time and place that produce it in the first place. Even though fantasy literature offers at once an escape from the real world through alternative social, cultural, political and economic orders, it still contemplates upon our own reality and circumstances through symbolic renditions by creating a kind of defamiliarizing effect.

Therefore, contrary to Todorov's structuralist and formalist approach, such twentieth and early twenty-first century critics as Colin Manlove, Eric Rabkin, Maria Nikolajeva, and Ursula K. Le Guin have preferred to bring forth definitions which not only differentiate fantasy literature from other forms but also focus on its thematic concerns and its relationship with the real world. Among a medley of definitions, Colin Manlove brings a clearer and more inclusive one to modern fantasy literature in his well-acclaimed book, *Modern Fantasy: Five Studies*. Manlove writes of fantasy literature as "[a] fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of supernatural or impossible worlds, beings or objects with which the reader or the characters within the story become on at least partly familiar terms" (10-11). Manlove, with an aim of underlining the relationship between fantasy and reality, argues that fantasists "enlist their experience and invention into giving a total vision of reality transformed: that is, to make their fantastic worlds as real as our own" (*Modern Fantasy* 12). In *The Fantastic in Literature* (1976) Eric Rabkin similarly draws attention to fantasy literature's relationship with reality, and he argues that "the study of the fantastic provides new tools for the analysis of world-view" (74). For Rabkin, fantasy literature can uncover "the alternative perspectives of a writer, or, by extension, his culture" (79). Very much in line with the postmodern problematization of reality, Rabkin contends that fantasy literature provides the fantasist with a space where different perspectives are contradicted and any single and fixed reality is rejected (qtd. in Bechtel 144). In so doing, he reveals fantasy literature as reverberating the

multiplicity and subjectivity of reality - an idea dominating the second half of the twentieth century.

In “Fairy Tale and Fantasy: From Archaic to Postmodern”, Maria Nikolajeva, a contemporary critic, illuminates the basic distinctions between fantasy literature and other related literary forms. She draws attention to fantasy literature as an eclectic genre which

> borrows traits not just from fairy tales, but from myth, romance, the novel of chivalry, the picaresque, the gothic novel, mysteries, science fiction, and other genres, blending seemingly incompatible elements within one and the same narrative. (“Fairy Tale” l39)

For Nikolajeva, fantasy literature incorporates these forms into its own being, however, it remains to be unique in terms of its position in the historical context and its capability to serve multiple functions. Nikolajeva argues that “fairy tales have their roots in archaic society”, myths “have close relationships with their bearers”, and folktales “are displaced in time and space” (“Fairy Tale” 138). Nevertheless, literary fairy tales and fantasy literature “are products of modern times” (“Fairy Tale” 138). While literary fairy tales are marked by “sacral purposes”, modern fantasy literature is a versatile genre and can be used for a variety of functions determined by its author: “instructive, religious, philosophical, social, satirical, parodical, or entertaining” (Nikolajeva, “Fairy Tale” 139). Nikolajeva’s descriptive formulation accounts widely for fantasy literature that we read and analyse today. Even though modern fantasy literature inherits certain literary motifs and tropes from these related genres, especially from the fairy tale tradition, it is innovative and revolutionary in terms of the space it allows for the fantasist and the reader to explore issues related to the modern world and the individual from a critical perspective.

In "From Elfland to Poughkeepsie", Le Guin defines fantasy literature in the simplest terms as a "game played for the game's sake" and an "escapism of the most desirable kind" (84). Le Guin's view of fantasy as a game and an escapist form is similar to the Tolkienian approach to a great extent. According to Le Guin, fantasy is a game, which is yet "played for very high stakes" ("From Elfland" 84). It is a multi-layered form, simultaneously realistic and dream-like, and also dangerous for it deals with the "subconscious mind" just as psychoanalysis does (Le Guin, "From Elfland" 93). Accordingly, Le Guin writes of fantasy literature as follows:

> It is a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence. It is not anti-rational, but para-rational; not realistic, but surrealistic, superrealistic, a heightening of reality […] Fantasy is nearer to poetry, to mysticism, and to insanity than naturalistic fiction is. It is a real wilderness, and those who go there should not feel too safe. And their guides, the writers of fantasy, should take their responsibilities seriously. ("From Elfland" 84)

According to Le Guin, fantasy literature offers a sense of escape from every-day life but it still takes its subject matter from real world and from our repressed desires and fears. In this respect, what differs fantasy literature from the other literary forms becomes its "style", that is to say the writer's vision, his/her understanding of the world, his/her voice as well as how s/he writes and speaks ("From Elfland" 94).

Although the theory of fantasy literature has also gained its distinct and respectable place in literary theory, it is still evolving through constant acts of additions, extensions, modifications, sometimes refutations and corrections. Nevertheless, it would not be wrong to say that much of our present understanding of the fantasy genre has been formed around these divergent ideas. Despite being contradictory and conflicting, a medley of definitions has contributed to the formation of a theoretical framework for

fantasy literature, and they also have helped designate its generic features. Thus, fantasy literature, in a nutshell, can be defined as a literary genre which distinguishes itself from the adjacent forms in its treatment of supernatural elements in an organized, coherent, and rational manner. The generic boundaries of fantasy literature are ambiguous as it tends to overlap and intersect with other literary genres. It is equivocal, multifunctional, and most importantly has a dual nature being simultaneously unrealistic and realistic. Even though it disrupts our sense of reality, it finds its source in the real world and the human *per se*. Thus, its unrealistic way of representation ironically functions as a means of problematizing, contemplating on, promoting, and occasionally subverting various issues related to the real world.

In addition to its resistance to a unified definition, fantasy literature also resists a quick and a single categorization. The critics of fantasy literature offer their own classifications, which rarely make an agreement. This inconsistency not only stems from fantasy literature's close relationship with such literary genres as fairy tale, folktale, myths, epics, gothic, science fiction, utopia, dystopia, and even detective fiction (as some critics still analyse these forms under the category of fantasy), but it also arises from the fact that modern fantasy literature has itself branched into numerous sub-genres during its brief history.[7]

Nevertheless, one of the central and conspicuous issues that arises when defining fantasy literature, categorizing it as well as designating its generic boundaries is fantasy literature's inherent relationship with childhood and children. Besides "overlap[ping] with other major genres, notably the fairy tale and the adventure story", fantasy literature "intersects also with any other kind of children's books" (Grenby 144).

[7] Low fantasy, high fantasy, secondary world fantasy, animal fantasies, children's fantasy literature, subversive fantasy, gaslamp fantasy, time travel (time-shift) fantasy, historical fantasy, toy fantasy, medieval fantasy are some of the sub-genres of fantasy literature. While some of these terms are used interchangeably, sometimes the characteristics of these sub-categories can overlap in a single text.

Therefore, fantasists and critics of fantasy literature often seem to be coming back to the subject of children and childhood at some point of their discussion. Fantasy literature has actually been associated with children and childhood since its emergence in the nineteenth century. Even though the history of modern children's literature has started with writers adopting realistic mode in the first place, children's literature has also come to be associated with fantasy genre. For instance, the earliest fantasy books written by such writers as George MacDonald and William Morris as well as literary fairy tales by Grimm Brothers, though not addressed to children in the first place, were associated with children at the time.

Being left out of the canon until almost seventy years ago, children's literature and fantasy literature have both been at the margins. Thus, children's fantasy literature has been exposed to a layered literary exclusion, and it has been dismissed as an escapist occupation despite its popularity among readers and fantasists. However, with children's literature and fantasy literature each being accepted and appreciated as serious and established forms of literature, literary critics have started to pay immense attention to children's fantasy literature and its functions. The studies that reveal the political, social, cultural, and most particularly the ideological implications of fantasy literature have especially increased the scholarly interest given to children's fantasy literature. Thus, a study on children's fantasy literature requires not only an exploration of the reasons behind this inherent relationship, but it also necessitates an examination of the key functions of children's fantasy literature as well as its relationship with the real world.

1. 2. Encounters between Fantasy and Children's Literature

"To throw a book out of serious consideration
either because it was written for children,
or because it is read by children,
is in fact a monstrous act of anti-intellectualism.
But it happens daily in academia."
(Le Guin, "The Monsters" 85)

To find an overarching and coherent definition for 'children's literature' and also to situate its emergence and development in a historical context can be as challenging as to define 'fantasy literature'. As pointed out by M. O. Grenby, "texts have been read by children from the earliest periods of recorded history to today, across all continents" (1). The history of children's literature can be traced to songs, nursery rhymes, fables, lullabies, folktales, and oral fairy tales, which were enjoyed by both adults and children. Children were "provided with a wide range of reading material" in the Medieval Period and Renaissance, as well. (Grenby 2). They were permitted or encouraged to read "books produced primarily for older readers […] as well as texts designed especially for them" (Grenby 2-3).

In the Medieval Era, children were generally offered educational and didactic Latin books especially prepared for them.[8] There were also some vernacular fables such as that of Aesop, Babrius, Phaedrus, and Alcuin of York and vernacular "didactic courtesy books" which listed "maxims concerning the rules of etiquette" (McMunn and McMunn 23).[9]As Meredith Tilbury McMunn and William Robert McMunn highlight, these Latin text books and didactic books of the Middle Ages were "primarily works of

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[8] Aelfric (c. 955- c.1010) wrote especially for children. His *Grammar* and *Colloquy* were textbooks that were aimed to help the young learn Latin and prepare for life. His *The Ecbasis Captivi* was "an eleventh century Latin frame tale intended on one level to serve as a warning to young novices against attempting escape from the monastery" (Adams 12).

[9] Medieval courtesy books were aimed to prepare children for different roles they would play in society as men or women (McMunn and McMunn 23).

instruction, rather than entertainment" and they were rather different from children's literature as we know it today (23). Even though children were exposed to various texts and oral literary forms during the Middle Ages, the notion of children's literature would not be a matter of discussion until a few centuries later.

Children's literature was not yet to be established as a separate category during the Renaissance, either. As in the Middle Ages, children in Renaissance were provided with instructional books that were aimed to educate them about religion and proper conducts.[10] Even though the Middle Ages as well as the Renaissance saw both oral and printed literary material read by children, the critics and historians of children's literature have been sceptical about including these texts within the canon. Indeed, a literature for children has been thought to be non-existent until the early eighteenth century based on two main reasons. Firstly, the scholars of children's literature argue that "there can be no medieval children's literature because a conception of childhood as we know it did not exist in the Middle Ages" (Adams 1). This idea, led by French historian Philippe Aries' *Centuries of Childhood* (1960), has become a point of reference for most of the scholars and historians of children's literature who aim to rationalize the lack of children's literature almost until the early eighteenth century.[11]As pointed out by McMunn, "[c]hildren in medieval society were thought to be essentially the same as adults, except that they were smaller and less experienced. A child's world was that of the adult in miniature" (21). Accordingly, the rise of modern children's

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[10] The most significant examples of books specifically written for younger audience during Renaissance are Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Book Named the Governour* (1531) and Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (1570) which were treatises on the education of young people.

[11] In *Centuries of Childhood*, Philippe Aries explores the development of the concept of childhood by tracing its depiction in various mediums such as art and literature. With a specific focus on the Middle Ages, Aries clearly states that "in Medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist" (128). Aries adds that "[t]he idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children" (128). He argues that an awareness regarding "the particular nature of childhood […] which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult" was lacking during the Middle Ages (128). Even though his argument has become influential in the studies of children's literature, some critics still reject his ideas arguing that children have always been regarded as separate from adults even in archaic times. For detailed information on opposing ideas, see Gillian Adams' "Medieval Children's Literature: Its Possibility and Actuality."

literature has been considered to be in close relationship with the emergence of the modern concept of childhood in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Secondly, children's literature is thought to be non-existent before the early eighteenth century based on the argument that the earlier periods did not produce a fictional literature for the child audience that is similar to what we identify with children's literature today. Until the late seventeenth century, children were offered only educational texts whereby they could learn religious, moral, and social values. Even though they were used to fables, romances, epics, riddles, heroic poems, and folk songs, these literary forms were not produced with children in mind. They were addressed to a general audience of adults and children at the same time without taking into consideration the particular needs and expectations of children as their audience.

It is only towards the end of the seventeenth century that "children's literature began to be widely understood as a separate product […] when Puritan authors realised how effective it could be in furthering their campaign to reform the personal piety of all individuals, adults and children alike" (Grenby 4). Even though children came to be recognized as a distinct group of readership, children's books written by the Puritans were also exceedingly far from those that would be written in the following centuries. They were morbid and considerably inappropriate for children in terms of tone and content.[12]

A child-oriented, considerably secular, and imaginative literary production, which integrates instruction into fiction, has started in the early eighteenth century. The emergence of children's literature in the modern sense is attributed to the development of the concept of childhood in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries mainly

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[12] For instance, James Janeway's *A Token for Children* (1672) which is "a classic example of a Puritan children's book" narrates the "Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children" (Grenby 4). Grenby contends that Puritan children's books, despite the morbidity in them, were actually found entertaining by the children of the period (5). He also adds that not all of the Puritan children's books were exceedingly terrifying like James' writing (5). John Bunyan's *A Book for Boys and Girls* (1686), for instance, was considerably lighter in tone (5).

as a result of the writings of John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) followed by *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) caused a breakthrough in the way children were perceived at the time. Locke's perception of the human mind as *tabula rasa* (a blank slate) when they are born has bred the importance that should be given to the written materials offered to children during their education. Locke considered books a crucial part in the social and academic development of children. Accordingly, he offered his own formulation of an ideal book for children. For Locke, an ideal book would entertain the child, "reward his pains in reading", and yet would not "fill his head with perfect useless trumpery, or lay the principles of vice and folly" (226). Locke's formulation obviously excluded much of the conduct books, religious books, and other instructional books of the previous ages, which exposed children to overt didacticism. Instead, it projected a literature, which integrated various lessons into an entertaining plot line.

Published almost a century later in 1762, Rousseau's *Emile, or On Education* underlined the importance of children's education once again through the story of its fictional character Emile's growth. Rousseau's work, which brings together the philosophy of education and the bildungsroman tradition, became influential in recognizing childhood as an important phase in one's psychological, academic, and moral development. It also indirectly contributed to the emergence of modern children's literature which blends instruction, entertainment, and fiction into a whole. As a result of the Enlightenment thought and the importance given to the education of children, children's literature started to be recognized in its modern sense in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a form of literature which is designed specifically for children with the aim of instructing and entertaining them by taking into consideration the particularities of childhood.

The eighteenth century, which recognized children as designating a separate group of audience with different expectations, simultaneously witnessed the publication of books directly for children.[13] As Deborah Stevenson points out, "[c]hildren's literature as we now identify it was becoming an established marketing genre in the mid-18th century" (188). The period even saw the opening of publishing houses, which composed and published only children's books. Often regarded as the first publisher of children's literature, John Newbery wrote and published *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* in 1744, which would shape much of the eighteenth-century children's literature. *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* is, in the narrowest sense, a blend of morality, folkloric tradition, rhyme, and formal education served in the same pot. It is motivated to teach its child readers appropriate manners as well as certain skills such as reading and writing by incorporating fiction and entertainment into it.[14]

The earliest examples of modern children's literature that were written in the early eighteenth century followed a realistic tradition like the novel genre of the era. Children had read or listened to stories about supernatural since the archaic times in fables, romances, epics, fairy tales, and epics. Nevertheless, the eighteenth-century children's literature, which marks the birth of the genre in the modern sense, did not appreciate the use of fantastic elements at all. It instead embraced educational purposes through a realistic mode. Even Rousseau recommended *Robinson Crusoe* for children because of its "plain realism" and his disapproval of "escapes into fantasy fiction"

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[13] The early eighteenth-century children's books include Mary Cooper's *The Child's New Play Thing* (1742), an alphabet book, and *Tommy Thumb's Song-Book* (1744), "the first known collection of English nursery rhymes in print" and Thomas Boreman's *Gigantic Histories* (1742), which describes "historic landmarks of London" for children (Stevenson 188).

[14] The full title of Newbery's book is *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy, and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer; as also A Ball and Pincushion; The Use of which will be infallibly make Tommy a good Boy, and Polly a good Girl. To Which is added, A Little Song-Book, being a New Attempt to teach Children the Use of the English Alphabet, by Way of Diversion.* The lengthy title of Newbery's book is, in fact, quite revealing of the motivation behind the literary production for children during much of the eighteenth century: amusement and instruction. The title of Newbery's book also ties in with the novel tradition of the eighteenth century which is characterized by realistic novels with quite long titles.

(McCulloch, *Children's Literature* 10). Within this context, Sarah Fielding's *The Governess, or the Little Female Academy* (1749) became by far the most important output of children's literature of the period. Revolving around the experiences of a group of female students at a boarding school, Fielding's novel is aimed to educate young girls about certain morals approved by the society of the period. Often considered to be the first full-length children's novel, *The Governess* combines entertaining and instructive qualities into a whole, thereby representing the spirit of children's literature produced at the time.

Pioneered by Fielding's *The Governess*, realistic moral stories characterized the late eighteenth and also the early nineteenth-century children's literature. The outstanding practitioners of children's literature of the period such as Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Maria Edgeworth, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Barbara Hofland wrote moral stories for children that trace the development of their child characters over a number of years (Grenby 63).[15] These stories were yet quite different from the Medieval and Puritan children's literature where moral values and religious principles are dictated to children generally through morbid and terrifying scenes. As Grenby summarizes, the moral stories of the eighteenth century inculcated in children a sense of honour, the importance of obeying adults, being "sensible and prudent, planning for the future and assessing their options rationally" (70). They were accordingly warning children about not being "impetuous, clumsy, temperamental, jealous or selfish" (Grenby 70).

Even though the eighteenth-century children's literature disapproved of the use of supernatural elements in fiction as much as it did in the literature for adults, the

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[15] The moral stories written for children in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century include Anna Laetitia Barbauld's *Lessons for Children* (1778-9) and *Hymns in Prose for Children* (1781), Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life,* Maria Edgeworth's acclaimed children's story "The Purple Jar" in her *Parent's Assistant* (1796), and Barbara Hofland's *The Son of a Genius* (1812) and *The Daughter of a Genius* (1832). The titles of these pioneering children's stories are also quite revealing of the realistic and moralistic tendency adopted by the children's literature writers of the period.

period still witnessed a few animal stories for children such as Dorothy Kilner's *The Life and Perambulations of a Mouse* (1783), Sarah Trimmer's *Fabulous Histories* (1786), Edward Kendall's *Keeper's Travels in Search of his Master* (1798), and Ellenor Fenn's *Cobwebs to Catch Flies* (1783). It should be noted that these animal stories were still in small numbers in the eighteenth century, and they were marginalized texts compared to the popularity and critical appreciation of the realistic children's books.

The realistic tendency of the eighteenth-century children's literature was in close relationship with the *zeitgeist* of the period which was marked by reason and rationality. In the eighteenth century, the aristocratic power was being replaced by a mercantile one, the bourgeois was rising in power and technological and scientific developments were taking place. In such a social environment, there was absolutely no place for fairies or magical creatures. Accordingly, children's books served as a means to prepare children for the hardships of the real life. They were anticipated to endow children with certain qualities that can help them develop into responsible, moral, cautious, and hardworking individuals to survive in a competitive environment. Therefore, the realistic children's books of the period as well as its criticism openly stood against the inscription of the supernatural in children's literature. In *The Governess*, the tutor Mrs. Teachum, for instance, advises her female students not to be carried away by the stories about high-flown things such as giants and magic (Fielding 84). She maintains that her study aims to inculcate in girls the "Simplicity of Taste and Manners"- characteristics associated with the eighteenth-century children's literature (Fielding 84). Likewise, even though Sarah Trimmer herself wrote stories that present animals as characters with human attributes such as *Fabulous Histories*, she palpably despised the use of fantasy in children's fiction in her review of *A Collection of Entertaining Stories*:

> This collection consists of the histories of Little Jack Horner, Cinderella or the Glass Slipper, Fortunates and other tales, which were in fashion

> half a century ago, full of romantic nonsense. […] We cannot approve of those which are only first to fill the heads of children with confused notions of wonderful and supernatural events, brought about by the agency of imaginary beings. (qtd. in Prickett 7-8)

Although modern children's literature started in the eighteenth century in line with the realistic tradition which attacked fantasy, the nineteenth-century literature was abundant in fantasy books for children. Considered to be the First Golden Age of children's literature, the nineteenth century, in fact, produced children's books in varied forms and modes. The "wish to educate" and the "wish to amuse" were still two contrary impulses of children's literature especially under the influence of Victorian mannerism (Manlove, *Fantasy* 167). However, the instructive quality of children's books was made less stark, in other words, latent by means of complicated plot structures, the stylized narratives, and the portrayal of round characters that go through psychological, social, and economic changes in the course of the narration.

The nineteenth-century children's literature introduced various new sub-genres to the tradition. On the one hand, the period generated the early classics of school stories such as Harriet Martineau's *The Crofton Boys* (1841), Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), F. W. Farrar's *Eric, or, Little by Little: A Tale of Roslyn School* (1858).[16] On the other hand, the period saw domestic tales or family stories for children such as Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1886), or acclaimed American children's literature author Lousia May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868), *Good Wives* (1869), and *Little Men* (1871). In accordance with the Victorian values and codes, these family stories premeditated domesticity especially for their female child readers.

[16] The rise of the school stories during the nineteenth century is undoubtedly a result of the increase in the number of children attending schools. They were written in the realistic mode in order to represent the experiences of the period's children in school environment and the process of their transition into adulthood.

Pioneered by the eighteenth-century adventure stories for adults such as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), adventure stories for boys dominated children's literature during much of the nineteenth century.[17] Adventure stories such as Fredric Maryat's *The Children of the New Forest (*1847), and Harriet Martineau's *The Peasant and the Prince* (1856), R.M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858), and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) placed child characters at the centre of adventurous and exceedingly dangerous events. The adventure stories of the era were largely inspired by the actual imperialistic expeditions conducted at the time. However, presenting detailed descriptions of exotic places, animals, and native tribes, they still fluctuated between realistic tradition and fantasy literature. In this sense, the adventure stories may have contributed to the transition from realism to fantasy in children's literature. They actually generated certain motifs, patterns, and plot arcs that would characterize modern children's fantasy literature. Most significantly, adventure stories established the motif of child-heroism that children's fantasy literature would depend on during the nineteenth century and afterwards.

The most notable contribution of the nineteenth century to the development of children's literature has probably become the rise of fantasy tradition in its modern sense. Taking into consideration the fact that children's literature emerged strictly in realist terms, the birth of children's fantasy literature was quite revolutionary at the time. The emergence of children's fantasy literature was an outcome of a variety of social, economic, and cultural changes the society of the period was going through. For

[17] As Grenby maintains, it is "open to question whether adventure is a distinct and demarcated literary genre" (172). Adventure can be intertwined with other sub-genres of children's literature and can also be made use of in any literary mode whether it be realistic or fantastic. Yet, the most significant contribution of adventure stories to children's literature has been its emphasis on the heroism of child characters.

Colin Manlove, the appeal to fantasy during the nineteenth-century England was a result of two main reasons, which were

> the early, rapid and disorienting Industrial Revolution in England, which created a strong current of nostalgia for a vanished past that readily translated into longing for a child's supposedly innocent world; and the pervasive effect of the English Romantic stress on the spiritual value of childhood and the child-like imagination, particularly in Wordsworth. (*The Fantasy* 166)

The emergence of children's fantasy literature was indeed in close relationship with the Romantic Movement. The spokesmen of Romanticism such as "Wordsworth, Coleridge and others, proposed subject matter to which children should be exposed, but more importantly, suggested a new way for adults to speak to children" (Thacker and Webb 17). On the one hand, the Romantic Movement increased the visibility of children in literature bringing to the fore the child experience and the childish voice juxtaposed against the corruptive and exploitive adult world. On the other hand, it promoted the use of fantastic elements in literature with the aim to revitalize the folkloric tradition as an attack against and relief from the real world that was becoming more and more mechanic, severe, and polarized. As a result of this dual response, "Romanticism, with its interest for […] folklore and […] the child as innocent and untouched by civilization, provided rich soil for the first fantasy stories explicitly published for children" (Nikolajeva, "The Development" 50).

As such, children and fantasy were celebrated as a reaction against not only industrialism but also the literary formalism of the period. Children had read and listened to texts about supernatural beings and events long before the nineteenth century, however, neither they were recognized as the actual recipients of these texts nor these stories were appropriate for children in general. The earlier literary forms

engaging with supernatural elements such as epics, folk stories, romances, and fables were already originally addressed to the adults of upper classes. Even fairy tales, which stimulated the birth of children's fantasy literature, used to serve as a source for amusement "among adults in French aristocratic salons in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (Manlove, *The Fantasy* 166). However, specifically "fairy stories […] become respectable - for antiquarians, for poets, and even for children" in the early years of the nineteenth century. (Prickett 8). They began to be used by adults as delightful cautionary tales to instruct children not only about the importance of being docile, well-behaved, and respectful but also about the potential dangers awaiting them if they happen to misbehave. Accordingly, in this period the Grimm Brothers "did take more care to refine the style and make the contents of the tales more acceptable for a children's audience or, really, for adults who wanted the tales censored for children" (Zipes, *When Dreams* 75). The Grimm Brothers' refinement of fairy tales for children stimulated the rise of children's fantasy literature, and it also established the conventional association between children and fairy tale tradition.

While the Grimms' tales were still re-appropriated versions of anonymous oral stories, the Victorian writers created entirely original plots and characters. At this juncture, fairy tale tradition, fairy tale patterns - along with a hint of medievalism - became rather influential in the creation of the early examples of modern children's fantasy literature. The Victorian fantasists such as George MacDonald, Charles Kingsley, Lewis Carroll, John Ruskin, and William Makepeace Thackeray took fairy tales as models for the fantasy books they addressed directly to children. It should be noted that the birth of children's fantasy literature, in fact, went hand in hand with the rise of the modern fantasy literature in the nineteenth century. Children's literature was identified with fantasy so highly that the earliest examples of modern children's fantasy literature such as Kingsley's *The Water-Babies* (1863), Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*

(1865), and MacDonald's Princess series - *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), *The Princess and Curdie* (1883) as well as *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) were simultaneously regarded as the prototypes of modern fantasy literature.[18]

In an age of various socio-economic, philosophical, scientific, and cultural changes, the motivations behind the production of children's fantasy books were also varied. For example, in *The Water-Babies* (1863), Charles Kingsley provides "a theological allegory", presents his support of the evolutionary theory, and he also delivers his criticism of child labour and social inequality which characterizes the Victorian society (Prickett 140).[19] In his Christmas books, Charles Dickens utilises the fantastic form to deliver his criticism of the social circumstances of the era and to put emphasis on such issues as social inequality and the importance of education. By contrast, Lewis Carroll was inspired largely by his own experiences and relationships in creating his fantasy world. He creates a dream-like state in his famous children's fantasy books *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871), where he inverts not only "the actual speech of individual characters" but also the whole scene, and the society he belongs to (Prickett 130).[20] Edward Lear (1812-1888), one of the masters of Victorian nonsense literature along with Lewis Carroll, on the other hand, projects his interior world and psychological quandaries into his fiction by making use of stylistic qualities made available by fantasy. George MacDonald rejuvenates the oral stories and relishes the act of creation itself highlighting the imaginative and creative faculties of the human mind. In this respect, during the

[18] The birth of children's fantasy literature in its modern sense is commonly attributed to "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" written by German author E.T.A Hoffmann in 1816. The story revolves around its female child protagonist Marie Stahlbaum, the nutcracker, and "his quest for the princess in the fairy land" (Nikolajeva, "The Development" 50).

[19] As Prickett indicates, Kingsley's socially conscious writing for children became rather successful at its time in terms of drawing attention to certain problems in society (150). The Chimney Sweepers Regulation Act, for instance, became the law within a year of the publication of *The Water-Babies* (Prickett 150).

[20] In writing his Alice books, Lewis Carroll is thought to be inspired by the daughter of Dean of Christ Church, Alice Liddell with whom Carroll is known to have spent so much time together.

nineteenth century, children's fantasy literature proved to be a versatile genre, and it made possible for the writers to convey their divergent personal and social concerns through implicit and symbolic ways.

As the above examples point out, children's fantasy literature dealt with rather serious subject matters that were related either to society or their authors' personal experiences in the nineteenth century. It never severed its ties with the real world and real-world issues despite disrupting conventionally realistic representations. Child characters' experiences, adventures, and external and internal conflicts were used as symbolic embodiments that can give way to multiple and occasionally controversial interpretations. As a result, as Prickett argues, "[t]he worlds of children and adults which had seemed in the eighteenth century to be growing farther and farther apart had suddenly begun to come together again" due to the emergence of fantasy which incorporates adult problems into its being (Prickett 8). In this regard, children's literature continued to be instructive, however, it also provided a space where ideologies that are related to adult life can be intertwined with entertaining content, and serious social and political criticism can be delivered.

Realism continued to be the dominant literary mode during the nineteenth century. The use of fantasy elements in literature for adults was still considered unliterary, failing to meet the literary standards of an era marked especially by social realism. The nineteenth-century literature prescribed for the novel genre the portrayal of characters that are accordant with the socio-economic circumstances of the period. Hence, fantasy at the time was thought to be the appropriate mode of writing only for the books read by and to children. The anonymous writer of "Some Remarks on the Use of Preternatural in Works of Fiction" (1818) not only unappreciated the use of supernatural in fiction, but s/he also associated it with children by devaluing both of them. S/he condemned the supernatural as "a childish idea founded on the mechanical

operation of causes which have never been proved to exist" (649). The association between fantasy and children, which was rooted at this period, resulted in the marginalization of both fantasy and children's literature. Fantasy literature was regarded as childish, that is to say not valuable and serious, and children's literature was similarly associated with fantasy - lightweight, engaging with unworldly beings, and detached from real life hence impractical.

Still, one of the most notable contributions to children's fantasy literature took place in the nineteenth century. MacDonald, Kingsley, and Carroll each wrote the very early examples of secondary world fantasies for children. The secondary worlds they depicted were rather varied ranging from fairy realms to the underwater world and from the real world intertwined with magic to a mirror world that presents an inverted reality. These various created worlds helped establish the idea of a coherent alternative world in fiction, which would be one of the leitmotifs of fantasy literature especially in the second half of the twentieth century.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, children's literature was already an established genre of literature as well as a profiting market. In the *fin de siecle* England, which was marked by cultural modernism, children's literature was not only branching into sub-genres and adopting various literary modes but it was also fusing different forms and genres in a single text. There were, for instance, time shift fantasy, picture books, secondary world fantasy, portal fantasy, animal fantasy, toy fantasy as well as modern literary fairy tales written specifically for children. The fantasists of the era were informed by the technological and scientific developments, as well as the new perceptions brought to psychology that gave way to cultural modernism. Hence, they wrote fantasy novels for children on various subject matters representing not only the literary developments of the period but also the ongoing social changes and historical events. They mainly focused on psychologies of their child characters, gave priority to

the children's perception of events, and became more experimental with the treatment of time and space. Although didacticism remained at the centre of children's literature, it became more latent, and childhood turned into a sphere where adults looked back at with a nostalgic feeling amidst the social and cultural chaos.

Children's fantasy books written during the *fin de siècle* England were rather diverse in terms of their technical and thematic concerns. In this respect, they represented the spirit of this period of transition. For instance, the early fairy stories of Edith Nesbit (1858-1924) such as *The Book of Dragons* (1900), *Nine Unlikely Tales* (1901), *Five Children and It* (1902), and *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904) are fairly "comic in character" (Manlove, *The Fantasy* 175). However, her secondary world novels such as *The Story of the Amulet* (1906), *The Enchanted Castle* (1907), and *The House of Arden* (1908) deal with "deeper themes, concerning the nature of time and magic, and of the Reality" (Manlove, *The Fantasy* 175). Unlike Nesbit, who casts medievalist settings for his children's fantasy books, J.M. Barrie creates a playful secondary world - Neverland - in *Peter Pan* (1911). Barrie's narrative fuses various literary modes and genres with each other such as fantasy, realism, adventure story, and secondary world fantasy whereby it blurs the distinction between the real world and the dream world. Revolving around a boy who resists growing up, it explores the concept of childhood making possible numerous psychological and Freudian interpretations.

In addition to secondary world fantasies, the transition period also engendered various children's stories about anthropomorphized animals. Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), and A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) not only allowed an allegorical space for a layered interpretation but also offered a pastoral setting to escape from the pervasive effects of

the political conflicts experienced at the time.[21] Even though children's literature is considered to be interrupted during the first half of the twentieth century because of the two world wars, fantasy books as well as animal stories written for children during this period have still achieved to earn their place among the children's classics. More importantly, they have reinforced the link between fantasy and children, which seems to prevail even today.

With the end of the Second World War, a new period began for children's literature, which is referred to as the Second Golden Age of children's literature. The medievalist scholars such as J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis created secondary worlds that are self-standing with their geographies, landscapes, races, cultures, languages as well as social, economic, and political dynamics that are unique to them.[22] Even though these Oxbridge fantasists were influenced by their Romantic ancestors such as George MacDonald and William Morris, they "mediat[ed] the fantasies of earlier generations" in their own ways and gave modern fantasy "its medievalist cast" (James 63) They brought together adventure story, school story, bildungsroman as well as anthropomorphized animal stories and gave children's fantasy literature its contemporary form to a great extent. Despite the mixed criticisms they received at the time of their publication, Tolkien's *Hobbit* and Lewis' Narnia books have proved to be the most influential models for modern children's fantasy literature.

The twentieth-century children's fantasy literature utilised the Medieval imagery, the Romantic ideals, and the tenets of Victorian fantasy, but it also featured its

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[21] It should be noted that the animal stories written in the early twentieth century are rather different from the earlier fables and fairy tales in terms of their tone. They are mainly domestic, delightful, and less didacticism-centered stories in which naive animal characters find themselves in comic situations, amuse their readership through nonsense wording but still achieve to convey the value of friendship, helpfulness, and kindness.

[22] The fantasists of the Second Golden Age of children's literature including J. R. R. Tolkien, Christopher Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams formed a literary group called "Inklings". They discussed each other's texts and the fantasy genre itself. Inklings aimed not only to defend fantasy literature against underestimating criticism but also to negate the perception of fantasy as childish.

own conventions. For instance, the eighteenth and nineteenth-century individualism was replaced by the idea of collectiveness, cooperation, and the importance of the welfare of an entire community. It also became more experimental in terms of the creation of alternative world images. While some of them are set entirely in an alternative world like Tolkien's *Hobbit*, some of them feature real-world children entering into an alternative land through a portal as in Lewis' Narnia books, Alan Garner's *Elidor* (1965), and J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007). Occasionally, the real world is presented as intertwined with magic in children's books. In this case, children are depicted as fighting against an evil force or a supreme power which puts the world in a chaotic situation (i.e. Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, Roald Dahl's *Matilda* and *The BFG*). As the given examples point out, the fantasists have acted rather freely while constructing fantasy worlds for children especially since the mid-twentieth century. They have experimented with characterization, setting, and themes in line with their ideological views, biographical backgrounds as well as concerns about modern-world problems (i.e. climate change, environmental problems, and changing family structures). The conservativeness of the earlier examples of children's fantasy literature has been replaced by radical children's fantasy books that are "self-critical, responsive to changes in the world beyond itself, and questioning of literary and political authority" (Butler 227). The fantasists such as Ursula K. Le Guin and Philip Pullman have started to contest the fantasy tradition that is written from a Eurocentric, male-centred, and overly Christian perspective and tended to revise the underlying meanings of the *de-facto* conventions and images prevalent in the earlier examples of the genre.

From the twentieth century onwards, children's fantasy literature has also started to attract critics and adult readers because of its ideological and subversive force. Indeed, the critics and writers of fantasy literature of the twentieth century have rejected the general assumption that children's literature and fantastic mode are less valuable

than adult's literature and realistic mode. For instance, in "The Ethics of Elfland", G. K. Chesterton claims that he learned all he knew from the fairy tales he was told to as a child in the nursery:

> My first and last philosophy, that which I believe in with unbroken certainty, I learnt in the nursery. […] The things I believed most them, the things I believe most now, are the things called fairy tales. They seem to me to be the entirely reasonable things. They are not fantasies: compared with them other things are fantastic. (85)

Chesterton indeed found more than entertainment in fairy tales. The fairy tales in the nursery taught him precious lessons that would affect and designate his entire life. Fairy tales created in Chesterton a certain way of looking at life which was confirmed by the facts he later encountered (87). Even though Chesterton wrote fantasy books mainly for adults, he came to scrutinize the link between children's fantasy literature and real life even before Tolkien and Lewis. Contrary to the general assumption, he considered children's fantasy literature the most reasonable literary form: "Well, I left the fairy tales lying on the floor of the nursery, and I have not found any books so sensible since" (102).

One of the most significant contributions to recovering children's fantasy literature from its marginalized position was made by C. S. Lewis about fifty years later. In "On Three Ways of Writing for Children", Lewis accepts that the most suitable literary mode for children's literature is fantasy: "[w]ithin the species 'children's story' the sub-species which happened to suit me is the fantasy or (in a loose sense of that word) the fairy tale" ("On Three Ways" 58). However, he adds that the association between fantasy literature and childhood is "accidental" and caused mainly by the disapproval of fantasy genre by the mainstream literature:

> in most places and times, the fairy tale has not been specially made for, nor exclusively enjoyed by, children. It has gravitated to the nursery when it became unfashionable in literary circles, just as unfashionable furniture gravitated to the nursery in Victorian houses. ("On Three Ways" 61)

Like Chesterton, Lewis is also very much concerned with the relationship between reality and fantasy. He condemns those who regard children's fantasy literature as dealing with unworldly things and severing children from the real world. Instead he sees children's fantasy literature "the best art-form for something you have to say" and the best space where one can learn about life ("On Three Ways" 57). Thus, he writes that

> [children's fantasy literature] is accused of giving children a false impression of the world they live in. But I think no literature that children could read gives them less of a false impression. I think what profess to be realistic stories for children are far more likely to deceive them. I never expected the real world to be like the fairy tales. I think that I did expect school to be like the school stories. The fantasies did not deceive me: the school stories did. ("On Three Ways" 63-64)

In his articles entitled "On Juvenile Tastes" and "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said", Lewis expands his defence of children's fantasy literature. He resists the general assumption that children and adults have different tastes in literature. He bases his argument on the fact that mythological stories, folktales, and fairy tales which children "read were once the delight of everyone" ("On Juvenile"76). For Lewis, adults and children might enjoy literature of a variety of modes, styles, and genres at all ages, because as he writes, "The Fantastic or Mythical […] can give us experiences we have never had and thus, instead of 'commenting on life', can add to it" ("Sometimes Fairy Stories" 74).

Tolkien was also on the same page with his life-time friend and colleague, Lewis regarding the relationship between fairy tales and children. In "On Fairy-Stories", Tolkien considers the association between children and fairy-stories merely an "accident" (130). For Tolkien, children do not like or understand fairy-stories more and better than adults. Taste for fairy-stories is "exclusive" and "innate", and "does not decrease but increases with age" (130). In this context, Tolkien not only resists the association between children and fantasy but he also suggests that fantasy literature requires a special taste for it to be internalized and interpreted - an idea which reveals fantasy genre to be more than an escapist form.

About a few decades after Lewis and Tolkien, Philip Pullman brought a different perception of looking at children's fantasy literature - a perception which might be applied to fantasy genre in general. In Achuka interview, Pullman indicates that his children's fantasy series, *His Dark Materials* "is not fantasy but stark realism […] in psychological terms" ("Achuka" n. pag.). Even though his assertion has drawn mixed criticism, the underlying idea is quite similar to what has earlier been argued by Chesterton and Lewis. What Pullman means is that he takes his subject material from the real world. He "deal[s] with matters that might normally be encountered in works of realism, such as adolescence, sexuality, and so on" (Pullman, "Achuka" n. pag.). Fantasy is present in his fiction only to "support and embody" these matters (Pullman, "Achuka" n. pag.).

Pullman's formulation can be said to define our contemporary understanding of children's fantasy literature. Children's fantasy literature exercises a different kind of mimesis, which is arguably more assertive and disruptive than the realist fiction. Children's fantasy literature is simultaneously conservative and radical. Even though it engages with the real-world problems and issues from a critical perspective, it still achieves to dictate a certain ideological pattern or perspective. Paradoxically, it brings

together a vast amount of unworldly entities, a good amount of entertaining quality, and a latent reference to the socio-economic, political, and religious concerns of the contemporary world and societies. As such, alternative landscapes, medieval settings, or projections of past and future serve as various configurations of present times and the real world. In this respect, children's fantasy literature turns to be more than an escapist form, but a literary genre, which might be freely approached from different perspectives depending on the authors' as well as the readers' intentions and expectations.

Children's fantasy literature is now perceived as a versatile and sophisticated form of literature which denies a single motivation and interpretation. It is no longer considered to be a "low art form concerned with play and desire" because of its inclusion of supernatural elements and its target audience (Casey 115). Instead, children's fantasy literature today has come to a point whereby it is considered a literary discipline with its own history, canon, tradition, and conventions that distinguish it from literary production for adults. Children's fantasy literature has in fact gone through many technical and thematic transformations during its brief history and varied sub-genres have emerged in this process (secondary world fantasy, toy fantasy, animal fantasy, quest fantasy etc.). Nevertheless, certain leitmotifs, plot arcs, and patterns that were established in the early years of the genre have remained central to children's fantasy literature. The Romantic image of the child, the concept of quest, the idea of the maturation of the child hero through his/her journey, and the image of a corrupted (alternative) world continue to characterize children's fantasy literature even today. These motifs and patterns have been revisited, revised, and presented in different manners to serve their authors' intentions or to respond to various circumstances of the periods children's fantasy books are produced within.

Children's fantasy literature is also characterized by its constant engagement with dualistic discourse. Central to children's fantasy literature has always been the

struggle between two opposing concepts. In children's fantasy literature, the conflict is not merely seen in terms of the tension between the hero and an evil force. It permeates into the entire text manifesting itself in various formats. As McCulloch writes, children's literature (not necessarily children's fantasy literature) raises questions about such dualistic concepts as "power and authority", "nationhood and Empire", and "industrialization and urbanization" (*Children's Literature* 44). McCulloch's suggested list of dualities includes few of the dualities children's fantasy literature represents. Children's fantasy literature continuously engages in such dualities as male and female, animal and human, nature and culture, urban and rural, adulthood and childhood, and so forth. Some of these dualities are also seen in literature for adults, whereas some of them are exclusive to children's fantasy literature.

Indeed, children's fantasy literature plays freely with the inscription of dualities as a consequence of its simultaneously instructive and radical nature. Dualities in children's fantasy literature can occasionally complement each other, or they can function as a vehicle to criticise the shortcomings of the other. Considering that children's fantasy literature has engendered its own literary conventions, it might also represent certain dualities in ways different from the literature for adults. It might tend to affirm or subvert meanings that are conventionally attributed to these dualities. Accordingly, dualistic representations might serve different purposes and can probe different ideologies and viewpoints. Therefore, the study of the dualistic structure of children's fantasy literature requires a survey of the ways in which dualities can be represented in literary texts. An understanding of the ways in which children's fantasy books inscribe dualities can be acquired only after an examination of the ideological, cultural, socio-economic functions and facets of dualities in literary history.

1. 3. Duality and Dualistic Narrations in Literature

Oxford Thesaurus of English defines "duality" in two senses: "doubleness" and "dichotomy" (Waite 260). Duality in the sense of "doubleness" refers to "duplexity, ambivalence", that is to say the coexistence of two opposing concepts (Waite 260). Duality as dichotomy, on the other hand, refers to "polarity, separation, opposition, difference" (Waite 260). It should be noticed that even though these two meanings of duality are different from each other, these concepts are, in fact, closely related. In most cases, the terms of duality, dualism, and dichotomy are often used interchangeably. This study explores the concept of "duality" mainly in the sense of opposition and polarization. However, dualities tend to become rather fluid, ambiguous, and permeable in fantasy literature in accordance with its subversive quality. In this respect, this dissertation also aims to reveal how dualities can co-exist and cooperate in different ways in children's fantasy literature.

Even though the concept of duality seems to be equal with antonymy, dualities in literature should be treated with more caution. In literary context, dualities should not be made sense of in terms of their semantically oppositional position but in terms their conceptual antagonism and cultural references of this antagonism. Margery Hourihan similarly writes that a "dualism is more than a dichotomy, for in a dualism one of the two contrasting terms is constructed as superior and the other as inherently inferior in relation to it" (16). In this respect, dualities in literary texts should be explored in terms of their symbolic references, connotations, and ideological functions. Most significantly, they should be explained with regard to their share in the construction of our social and cultural assumptions regarding issues such as gender, morality, religion, and social classes.

In fact, dualistic thought has primarily been a matter of philosophy. Plato and Aristotle introduced it to philosophical discussions in the context of mind and body

duality. The French philosopher Rene Descartes brought the mind and body problem forward once again in the seventeenth century. Cartesian dualism, named after Descartes, regarded mind and body as separate entities by prioritizing the mind as the primary and fundamental part of existence. Even though dualistic thought has been a philosophical question, its exploration in the context of language and literature has come rather late.

The concept of duality is introduced to linguistic and literary studies in the mid-twentieth century through structuralism, which has proven highly influential in modern literary criticism. "[A]n intellectual movement which began in France in the 1950s", structuralism drew a theoretical and scientific framework to the notion of duality and its function in language, literature, and culture (Barry 39). The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's approaches to language paved the way for structuralism, providing one of the earliest studies on dualities in language. In his influential book entitled *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), Saussure argues that the meanings of words in language are *relational,* namely dependent on each other. He accordingly writes that "in language there are only differences […] Difference makes character just as it makes value and the unit" (120-121). What Saussure means by language being referential and consisting of differences in the simplest terms is that black is black because it is not white, or man is man because it is not woman. Likewise, the notion of evil depends on the notion of good, male on female, and day on night. Saussure's perception of language as a structure consisting of differences designates the main principle of the structuralist approach, which defends the idea "that things cannot be understood in isolation - they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures" (Barry 39). As a result, the oppositions, or 'binaries" as the structuralists would call them, define our making sense of language, hence culture. Despite being semantically oppositional terms, binaries are

interdependent constituents. They complement and contribute to the meaning of each other through their oppositional position.

Claude Levi-Strauss took a step further and "related structural elements in myths to structural elements in society that gave rise to them" (Sarland 38). In "The Structural Study of Myth" (1955), Levi-Strauss explores how myths feature binaries, and he argues that "mythical thought always works from the awareness of oppositions towards their progressive mediation" (440). He adds that "the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction" (443). Even though myths, for Levi-Strauss, dwell on the continuous dichotomies, the conflicting concepts explored throughout the narrative finally arrive at a logical place whereby the underlying idea of the text is surfaced. For instance, a literary text that revolves around various depictions of evilness does not mean that there is pure evilness in the world. It interrogates the relationship and transitions between good and evil and finally arrives at a meaning that results from this interrogation. Levi-Strauss accordingly maintains that

> mythology reflects the social structure and social relations; but should the actual data be conflicting, it would be readily claimed that the purpose of mythology is to provide an outlet for repressed feelings. Whatever the situation may be, a clever dialectic will always find a way to pretend that a meaning has been unravelled. (429)

In this respect, an understanding of equilibrium and balance between contrary terms characterises Levi-Strauss's perception of opposition. The dichotomous concepts in literature reflect the human psyche, the culture, the society, and the world which all feature a continuous struggle between oppositions.

A key figure in poststructuralism and deconstruction, Jaques Derrrida, adds yet another dimension to the idea of binary opposition introduced by the structuralists. In his acclaimed study entitled "The Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the

Human Sciences" (1966), he reads binaries with a political and ideological slate. Even though Derrida bases his theory on structuralist outputs, he critiques the idea of the presence of a centre structuralism painstakingly holds on to. He claims that an event that has occurred has disrupted the sense of a fixed centre, and "structurality of structure" allowing structure to play freely ("The Structure" 353). As a result, the view of a decentred structure that is fluid and fluctuating has caused a change in the way structuralism perceived binary oppositions. Derrida's perception of binaries contrasts with Levi-Strauss' perception of oppositions as static and universal. Derrida contends that there is a hierarchical relationship between binary oppositions. Additionally, Derrida criticises Levi-Strauss's ignorance of the changes that the centre continuously undergoes in the course of history. He accordingly writes that "the hierarchy of dual oppositions always re-establishes itself" due to historical events and changes in the philosophical thought (*Positions* 42). Thus, Derrida attacks the arbitrariness of the sign asserted by Saussure and Levi-Strauss, and he explains his understanding of oppositions as such:

> in a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of *vis-a-vis,* but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), or has the upper hand. To deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment. (*Positions* 41)

Derrida's approach to binaries denies coexistence and correlation, and recognizes a hierarchal relationship between binaries, which is apt to change in accordance with the context they are produced and used within. In relation to this, deconstruction of binaries helps lay bare and problematize the relationship between the privileged and devalued pairs of the binary structure. It particularly scrutinizes the hierarchical relationship between oppositions that legitimizes and celebrates the

patriarchal, white Anglo-Saxon, anthropocentric, and Western discourse. Accordingly, it reveals how the logocentric view values man over woman, culture over nature, and white over black. In doing so, deconstruction draws attention to binaries' ideological functions and underlines how strongly oppositions determine people's relationships and perception of societal and cultural matters.

It should be noted that the concept of duality and the concept of binary opposition as formulated by poststructuralism have nuances in terms of their cultural and linguistic connotations. The concept of duality does not necessarily denote a case of marginalization, and it may come to signify co-existence and intertwinement of two polarized concept and ideas, thereby declining any kind of degradation. The concept of binary opposition as elaborated on by Derrida, on the other hand, draws attention to the hierarchies between opposing ideas and concepts pointing at the ideological functions of such hierarchical relationships. It accordingly highlights the construction of superiority and inferiority between the pairs. As this dissertation is going to explore and analyse two children's fantasy series as conservative and subversive texts respectively, it engages in the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of hierarchies between oppositional concepts. Therefore, the distinction between the concepts of duality and binary oppositions may tend to blur. As the textual analyses move from Lewis' work to Pullman's, the divisions contained in the concept of binary opposition may accordingly give way to representations that signify contrariness and interdependence of oppositions at the same time. Therefore, this dissertation makes use of the concept of duality as an umbrella term to refer to the polarized ideas and concepts represented in children's fantasy literature, and it often utilises the concept of duality in the sense of oppositions and polarizations. Therefore, the concept of duality and binary oppositions may often be used interchangeably throughout this study to explore and investigate the changing power relations between oppositional ideas, concepts, objects, and spaces.

It might be argued that dualistic thought, binary oppositions, or dichotomous concepts manifest themselves most significantly in literary texts. Even though their elaboration in the context of linguistics, literature, and culture is a recent phenomenon, literary texts have actually represented dualities since the oral tradition. Oppositions dominate even the earliest literary forms including myths, epics, fairy tales, and folk stories. The heroic epics such as *Beowulf*, *Odyssey*, and *Iliad,* for instance, resort to such dualities as heroism and villainy, loyalty and betrayal, courage and cowardice, whereas fairy tales and folktales dwell heavily upon such dualities as aristocracy and peasantry, evilness and goodness, obedience and disobedience.

As Alan Dundes points out, opposition is "universal" and is valid not only for the human societies all around the world but also for literary genres other than myths and folktales (46). Indeed, dualities have found their representation in literary texts in varied forms and manners throughout the literary history. Dualities in literature have been refigured for the most part in line with the socio-economic, cultural, historical, and religious sensibilities of the era a certain literary text is produced within. Moreover, the generic qualities of literary forms have also played a decisive role in how dualities are featured in literary texts. Literary genres in the course of literary history have typically been associated with their focus on certain dualities and the ideological, cultural, or social implications of these oppositions.

For instance, Medieval literature was widely preoccupied with the struggle between heaven and earth, material world and spiritual world, sinfulness and remorse as a consequence of the Church's overt influence on every segment of society. The mystery, morality, and miracle plays of the period provided an allegorical space to represent the world as a battleground for opposing forces. Likewise, the Renaissance theatre was marked by plays that dwell on dichotomous themes such as loyalty and betrayal, greed and modesty, spirituality and materialism etc. Nevertheless, dualistic

representations went through significant changes towards the eighteenth century, which was characterized by rational thinking. The literature of the Enlightenment Age was marked by its stress on the opposition between reason and emotion, science and intuition, order and chaos, and even realistic writing and the fantastic mode. The novel genre, which was influenced by the scientific thinking and growing industrialism, prioritized formal realism over fantasy, middle-class experience over aristocracy, and similarly the urban space over the natural setting. As a result, it established a hierarchical relationship between those dualities in the service of the Enlightenment thought.

The dualities central to the eighteenth century were yet to change their ideological and socio-economic implications largely in the nineteenth century because of the social, cultural, economic as well as technological transformations. The nineteenth century was an era of contradictions, ambiguities, and controversies because of imperialistic pursuits, social inequalities, and class distinction. Dualistic narratives accordingly became very common in the nineteenth century literature. The literature of the period explored controversial subject matters through dualistic representations by providing comparative scenes between the poor and the wealthy, the working class and the upper-middle class, imperial power and the colonized nations, industrial cities and the idyllic countryside. Under the influence of the Romantic Movement, the nineteenth-century literature disrupted the hierarchical relationship between the dualities as designated by the Enlightenment thought. By contrast, it celebrated nature over culture, intuition over rationality, fantastic elements over realistic representations, as well as childhood over adulthood. William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1789), Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1855) evince the dualistic frame the nineteenth-century literature resorted to. Most significantly, dualistic patterns characterized the Gothic

novel in this period. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) inquire into the dual nature of human beings by revolving around such dualities as good and evil, light and darkness, day and night, as well as ethical and unethical.

The dualistic narratives in literature started to be inscribed and explored within a more theoretical frame in the twentieth century especially from the 1960's onwards. Postmodern literature has employed binary oppositions in ways that are comparatively radical and subversive. Influenced by the structuralist and poststructuralist views, postmodern literature's engagement with dualities has actually been a self-conscious act. The recognition of dualities' ideological functions and role in organizing societies has resulted in a literature, which tends to deconstruct and reconstruct the established norms and hierarchies between oppositions. Marked by its criticism of the traditional literary forms, patterns, and domineering discourses, postmodern literature has thus embedded dualities such as actual and fictional, high culture and low culture, traditional forms and popular culture, man and woman as well as nature and culture by transgressing the conventional assumptions. In doing so, it has aimed to problematize and subvert the predominant discourses, which might be political, literary, or cultural.

Since its emergence in the nineteenth century, modern fantasy literature has also provided a fruitful space for imaginative and innovative ways of inscribing dualities into fiction. Fantasy literature's sources in folklore, mythology, and oral forms help it organize its narrative in binary structure through such archetypal oppositions as day and night, beauty and ugliness, sun and moon. Furthermore, such archetypal dualities may also enable a consideration and reconsideration of binaries in the sense of organizers of social relations and assumptions. The themes of heroism, journey, alternative worlds, and the use of supernatural elements provide the fantasists with multiple possibilities for exploring and representing power relations between binary pairs. However, the

suitability of fantasy literature for allegorical and symbolic readings renders it an exceedingly ambivalent and versatile form of literature in terms of the ways in which it might employ dualities.

On the one hand, fantasy literature might comply with the conventional connotations of dualities that reinforce the Western perceptive. It might indeed reiterate and assert the conventional hierarchies between binary oppositions. For instance, the majority of the fantasy books attribute heroism to the men in the service of male hegemony; or, the Christian fantasy narratives serve as a means of strengthening the Orthodoxy. Similarly, non-white characters are almost always absent or appear in lesser roles where fantasy literature tends to preserve the White Anglo-Saxon discourse. On the other hand, the narrative elements of fantasy genre might offer a variety of possibilities for the fantasist to dismantle hierarchies between binary oppositions that are central to Western thought. The dual nature of fantasy literature, which is simultaneously realistic and unrealistic, conservative and radical, indoctrinatory and anarchic, makes it possible for the fantasy genre to engage subversively with the conventional binaries. In Derridean terminology, fantasy literature may deconstruct and decentre the superiority of men over women, culture over nature, colonizer over the colonized, human over animal, and the white over the coloured especially through creating other worlds. In this case, fantasy literature proves to be rather critical and subversive of the ideals the Western society is based on. It offers alternative ways of thinking about our unexamined biases and ideas regarding race, politics, religion, art, literature, and social institutions.

As a result, dualistic representations in fantasy literature may be shaped and moulded in diverging ideological directions. Fantasy literature's engagement with the supernatural, secondary worlds and its allegorical nature can variably bring forth conservative or radically subversive texts regarding norms, ideals, and societal relations.

It should be noted that in both cases, fantasy literature obscures the boundaries between reality and illusion as well as the real world and the fictive world, and it displays human relations and social organizations as founded on differences, discrepancies, and multiple acts of "othering."

1. 4. Dualistic Narrations and Children's Literature

"Children's fiction
sets up the child as an outsider to its own process,
and then aims, unashamedly,
to take the child *in*." (Rose 2)

Dualities arguably find their most profound representations in children's books. Such critics of children's literature as Perry Nodelman, Margery Hourihan, and Roderick McGillis all draw attention to the binary structures in children's books. Nodelman, for instance, contends that "[c]hildren's literature is binary in structure and in theme", and he further considers the use of similar opposing ideas a "distinguishing factor" between children's literature and other types of fiction (*The Hidden Adult* 228; "Interpretation" 19). Recognizing the discursive function of binaries, Nodelman argues that children's books "reach their conclusions by including and then dismissing one of a pair of opposites and celebrating the other" (*The Hidden Adult* 228). Margery Hourihan also provides an exclusive and comprehensive study on how the theory of binary oppositions can be applied to children's literature in *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature.* Hourihan discusses children's literature as a formulaic form repeating similar plot arcs, patterns, and dualities. She considers dualistic narrations essential to hero story, which, she thinks, dominates the Western culture. Taking a more poststructuralist stance, Hourihan writes that "[t]he conceptual centre of a hero story consists of a set of binary oppositions: the qualities ascribed to the hero on the one hand and to his 'wild' opponents on the other" (15). Viewed from Hourihan's perspective, through such "othering", binary pairs in children's literature help affirm and strengthen Western assumptions regarding such issues as gender, nature, and morality. The hero story thus becomes a story about

> superiority, dominance and success. It tells how white European men are the natural masters of the world because they are strong, brave, skillful,

> rational and dedicated. It tells how they overcome the dangers of nature, how other 'inferior' races have been subdued by them […] It tells how their persistence means that they always eventually win the glittering prizes, the golden treasures, and how the gods - or the government - approve of their enterprises. (1)

Viewed from this perspective, the Western hero's capabilities, his various physical and psychological qualities as well as his ethos as represented throughout literary history define what we can call the norm and the ideal. The hero story defines what is good and bad, beautiful and ugly, moral and immoral, ethical and unethical as prescribed by the Western thought, and in doing so it "asserts the natural superiority of the West" (Hourihan 3). Those, who fall short of these ideals and normative qualities of the Western hero, are casted as the other. They are accordingly devalued and considered inferior to their opponent.

The hero story which "dominates children's and young adult literature" becomes much more functional in children's books that serve explicitly didactic purposes (Hourihan 3). Taking into consideration the educational and pedagogical functions of children's literature in the academic and mental development of children, the binary structure of the hero story plays a significant role in the transmission of value systems onto next generations. Exposing children to comparative scenes between binary pairs, children's literature can intrinsically endow children with various assumptions regarding inferiority and superiority, whereby it might ensure the continuation of the power relations between various structures which societies and human relations are constructed upon. As a result, inherently formulaic and archetypal nature of children's literature, hence its reliance on dualistic representations complies well with the primary functions of the genre. On the one hand, the inscription of opposites renders children's books easily memorable, simple to decipher, and entertaining. On the other hand,

oppositions subtly transmit values, morals, and social codes, which children are expected to internalize by adults, parents, and teachers who are authorial figures in children's lives.

Charles Sarland similarly points out that even though children's literature is "still widely assumed to be innocent of concerns of gender, race, power, and so on," it is, in fact, "inevitably infused by ideologies" - which are value systems that determine social, cultural, and moral codes in society (30). As Sarland underlines, children's literature comes from a tradition, which represents certain groups of people, races, nations, and ideas in exceedingly negative terms. Thus, he writes that

> by representing certain groups in certain ways, children's books were promoting certain values - essentially white, male and middle class - and that books were thus class-biased, racist and sexist. [...] Working-class characters were portrayed either as respectful to their middle-class 'betters', or as stupid - or they had the villain's role in the story. Black characters suffered a similar fate. Girls tended to be represented in traditional female roles. (33)

As the above quotation points out, normative ideas regarding such issues as gender, religion, race, and childhood exert themselves in children's literature most evidently through the inscription of contrastive pairs. Drawing on binaries such as man and woman, white and black, good and evil, hero and villain, children's books arguably reinforce paternalist, class-biased, and white Anglo-Saxon discourse. Children's books, which intertwine entertainment with instruction, thus prove to be spaces where children are expected to embrace certain values, ideas, and power-relations that organize the societies.[23]

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[23] Even children's books which are motivated to draw attention to social, economic, and political problems can be said to draw on binaries inculcating Christian, paternalist middle-class values in children. For example, Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* provides a harsh critique

The ideological implications of binaries represented in children's books yet lead to an important central question that preoccupies the critics of children's literature. The question of whose values children's literature conveys to children brings forward the relationship between children as readers and adults as writers of children's books. In her much-acclaimed study on children's literature entitled *The Case of Peter Pan, or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, Jacqueline Rose interrogates this problematical relationship between children and adults as represented in children's literature. She argues that "[c]hildren's fiction is impossible, not in the sense that it cannot be written" but in the sense of the adult hegemony prevalent in every aspect of children's literature. For Rose, "children's fiction sets up a world in which the adult comes first" as "author, maker, giver" and "the child comes after" as "reader, product, receiver" (2). Rose's argument - that children's fiction is entirely controlled by adults - renders children's fiction unequivocally ideological, reiterating an ethos and certain codes of etiquette belonging to the adult world. Even though the writers of children's books take into consideration children's linguistic abilities and various pedagogical paradigms, children's literature continues to embody and reiterate various socio-political and cultural assumptions related to the adult world. Accordingly, children remain to be passive and ineffective recipients ready to admit and internalize what is offered to them.

Christine Wilkie-Stibbs, who examines children's literature as allowing an intertextual space, similarly draws attention to the fact that children's literature repeats

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of social inequality and child labour, which was common in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it simultaneously continues to depict comparative scenes between the middle class and the laboring class, the male sphere and the female sphere, and the idyllic countryside and the industrial city by openly favoring the former side of the list. The novel concludes when its child protagonist completes his moral education and becomes a genteel middle-class man. Likewise, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* also follows a binary structure by exploring the tensions and oppositions between the male sphere and the female sphere, adulthood and childhood, and growing up and remaining as a child. Even though it initially pictures childhood as providing a space for unlimited imagination and freedom from the responsibilities of the adults' world, it comes to affirm the authority of the adults in the end by representing the children as remorseful for leaving their parents and home.

the ideological codes already embedded in much of the adult literature. In tandem with Jacqueline Rose's ideas on the impossibility of children's literature, Wilkie-Stibbs maintains that

> the writer/reader axis is uniquely positioned in an imbalanced power relationship. Adults write for each other, but it is not usual for children to write literature for each other. This phenomenon would effectively make children the powerless recipients of what adults choose to write for them and children's literature an intertextual sub-genre of adult literature. (169)

In line with this, it can be argued that children's literature builds on binaries, dichotomous themes and concepts that already dominate the literature written for a general audience. As Margery Hourihan and Roderick McGillis also argue, "understanding in terms of the relationship of pairs is basic to human thought [and] basic to all literary texts" (Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult* 229). Therefore, dualistic patterns and themes render children's books thematically re-representations and re-visitations of the hero story that works through oppositions and comparisons throughout literary history.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that children's literature diverges from literature for adults in terms of its unique addressee. Indeed, the relationship between adult writer and child reader/character renders children's literature an overtly paradoxical category. The writer and reader axis in children's literature makes it possible to inscribe certain binaries in ways that are self-contradictory and paradoxical. As Nodelman points out, the relationship between the pairs of oppositions fluctuates between "an uneasy and complex ambivalence about the constituent pairs" promoting one side of the pairs over the other in children's literature (*The Hidden Adult* 228). Childhood conventionally denotes a stage when the child can be moulded, taught, and socialized, yet it

paradoxically represents an ideal space, which is wished to be protected as a site for innocence. This ambivalence pertaining to the duality of adult and child thus reveals binary pairs and the power relations between those oppositions as a matter of relativity. Nodelman draws attention to the fact that the binaries of "innocence and experience", or "ignorance and adult wisdom", "childlike wisdom and corrupt sophistication", "freedom and safety", "knowledge and lack of knowledge", "didacticism and utopianism", "home and away from home" all represent versions of a single central opposition despite seeming to contradict each other (*The Hidden Adult* 230). As Nodelman adds, these binary pairs "all seem to derive from the primal scene of children's literature, the adult author in the act of engendering texts for child readers" (*The Hidden Adult* 230).

The ambivalent relationship between adult and child remains to characterize children's literature. However, the ways in which other binary structures are inscribed in children's literature can be argued to have undergone distinct changes in time in line with various socio-historical, intellectual, and cultural transformations that have taken place. In the first place, the image of the Romantic child as it emerged in the nineteenth century can be considered unable to compete with the changing times and social transformations. As Deborah Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb point out, "[t]he fracture of human relations, most often seen in the shifts in family structures, and the power of technology and media, appear to threaten admittedly Romantic conceptions of innocence" in the postmodern era (140). Specifically, from the mid-twentieth century onwards, children's books have been depicting assertive child characters who challenge adults as well as adult expectations, adult values, and adult world that tends to exclude children.

Most significantly, however, the relationship between children's literature and ideology has been put under scrutiny especially since the 1970s. The critics and the writers of children's literature have started to scrutinize the unexamined nature of values

that are featured in children's books. Correspondingly, poststructuralist, postcolonial, feminist, and Marxist readings have resulted in deciphering and then deconstructing the ideological imprints and binary structures in children's literature. As Lissa Paul contends, "[c]ritics who work in feminist theory, postcolonial studies and children's literature all find themselves interested in common grounds: in the dynamics of power, in ideology, in the construction of the subject" (124). Thus, the recognition of children's literature as interwoven with various power structures has caused a retrospective re-reading and re-evaluation of the canon with alternative and comparatively critical lenses. As Tony Watkins indicates,

> books originally denied inclusion in the canon of children's literature, such as Baum's *Oz* books, have later received recognition and have been included. Other books traditionally included in the canon of children's literature, such as Lewis's Narnia series, Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and Kipling's *Jungle Book*, have been criticized on the grounds that the values they contain are too exclusively male and white. (61)

Accordingly, the acknowledgement of children's literature as interwoven with ideologies has also stimulated the production of children's books, which tend to break the conventional hierarchies between recursive binary pairs. As Sarland writes, "in order to promote working-class, anti-racist and anti-sexist values, it was argued that books should be written with working-class, or female, or black protagonists" (34). Indeed, since the mid-twentieth century, children's literature writers have offered new perspectives to rewrite children's books from. Especially under the influence of second wave feminism, Grimm, Andersen, and Perrault fairy tales have been thought to impose on children class-biased, racist, and patriarchal ideologies. Therefore, fairy tales have engendered not only a bulk of critical writing as well as a great amount of revisionist fiction which have questioned and rewritten the hierarchies between such binaries as

man and woman, hero and villain, aristocratic values and middle-class ones, morality and immorality, and beauty and ugliness.[24]

Additionally, children's literature writers have also aimed to respond to various cultural, political, and socio-economic changes by adopting new forms of representation, which are considerably subversive and radical. At this juncture, the fantastic mode, especially secondary-world fantasy, has provided a fruitful space for representing binary pairs in subtle yet simultaneously more powerful and effective ways. Hourihan writes that "fantasy and science fiction are free to invent images of the others which emphasise our qualities by the force of contrast" (3). As such, the concepts associated with inferiority might be embodied in fairly imaginative and extraordinary ways through a reliance on fantasy elements. Such fantasy elements as monsters, witches, animals, and ogres make it possible for the fantasist to elaborate on qualities that are conventionally associated with what is socially (un)acceptable and (un)favourable especially within the boundaries of normative standards. In this respect, children's fantasy literature can become extremely conservative or subversive depending on how a fantasist implements the fantastic. As to the power of fantasy in contemplating on and representing ideologies, Deborah Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb write,

> [w]hile adult literature may deal with social fractures and the interplay of race, class and gender through realism and sensationalism, some of the most challenging children's books make their meaning through playful disruption of the real. (148)

Indeed, such children's fantasy literature writers as Ursula K. Le Guin, Mary Norton, Roald Dahl, and Philip Pullman break away from the conventional assumptions and

[24] Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, Anne Sexton's *Transformations*, and James Finn Garner's *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* (1994) exemplify the ways binaries in children's literature can be re-considered in critical terms.

biases through reliance on fantasy in their children's books.[25] As such, these writers openly resist against the conventional attributes of binaries, and they aim to show that the world is not necessarily white or black but often ambiguous, obscure, and unstable.

In the light of these arguments, children's literature can be said to display a dual and often contradictory nature in multiple aspects itself. It proves to be an inherently didactic genre, which simultaneously tends to become transgressive. It is formulaic and conventional reiterating conventional plot arcs, motifs, and norms on the one hand, but also innovatory and progressive responding to cultural, social, and literary transformations on the other. Standing at the juncture of such contradictions, children's literature, despite its not-so complicated plot structures, simple and playful use of language, can be considered texts that can entail ideological inferences, communicate various morals, and reinforce social and cultural assumptions through presentation of dualistic patterns.

Even though studies on binary structures in children's literature focus mainly on the gender binary - man and woman and masculine and feminine - scrutinizing the power relations between genders, children's books may actually offer multifarious dualistic patterns. In *The Pleasures of Children's Literature*, Nodelman and Mavis Reimer indeed provide a list of the most common binaries represented in children's books including "childishness and maturity, nature and civilization, disobedience and obedience, ignorance and wisdom, good and evil" (*The Hidden Adult* 228). In "Interpretation and the Apparent Sameness of Children's Novels", Nodelman similarly writes that children's books "all balance the same set of opposites: home and exile, escape and security, the familiar and the foreign, the strange and the comfortable, fear

[25] For instance, Le Guin brings to the fore the female voice as a reaction against the paternalist discourse in her *Earthsea* series. Pullman resists against a tradition of children's literature, which is imbued with religious undercurrents. Mary Norton, on the other hand, engenders political subtexts through fantasy and explores such serious issues as communism, political hegemony, and Marxism in her famous children's book, *The Borrowers* (1952).

and acceptance, isolation and togetherness, the disorderly and the patterned" (18). Hourihan, who deconstructs the hero story by delving into the binaries in children's books, offers more or less a similar set of pairs: "reason and emotion, civilization and wilderness reason and nature, order and chaos, mind(soul) and body, male and female, human and non-human, master and slave" (17). As such, children's literature revolves around different versions of a similar set of dualities mainly due to its generic conventions and child audience. Nevertheless, the hierarchies between those pairs and their associations are always apt to vary depending on the socio-historical context, authors' personal and cultural background as well as the critical viewpoint adopted by the authors.

Therefore, in the light of these ideas, the following chapters discuss the most commonplace binaries that are recursively represented in children's literature such as adulthood and childhood, nature and city, beauty and deformity, man and woman as well as other interrelated binaries stemming from these basic dualities. They explore the ways in which these recursive binary pairs are presented respectively in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials,* and they aim to show how children's fantasy literature builds on oppositions and contrasts which might entail ideological implications and reinforce, or disrupt normative ideas. Taking into consideration the dual and often self-contradictory nature of children's literature due to the ambivalent relationship between adult and child, the following chapters will give greater importance to how this genre-unique relationship affects and/or subverts the conventional associations of such dualities central to Western culture and literary theory. As such, the following analyses of the series in the context of dualities aim to counterbalance the theory of binaries as conceptualized in poststructuralism, Derridean deconstruction, and the idiosyncratic characteristics of children's literature as a genre. The similarities and differences between the treatment of dualities in these two

children's fantasy series accordingly aim to reveal how changing views of childhood and various social, cultural, religious, and political viewpoints can influence the underlying meanings behind dualities in children's literature despite the utilisation of similar plot arcs, motifs, and patterns characterizing the genre.

2. DUALISTIC REPRESENTATIONS IN C. S. LEWIS' *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA*

2. 1. C. S. Lewis as a Writer of Children's Literature

"I am telling a story of two lives.
They have nothing to do with each other:
oil and vinegar,
a river running beside a canal,
Jekyll and Hyde." (Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* 119)

Born in 1898 in Belfast, Ireland to a well-educated and intellectual middle-class family, Clive Staples Lewis was a man of varied professions and interests (MacSwain 4). He was a writer, literary theorist, theologist, soldier in the First World War as well as an Oxbridge scholar of Medieval and Renaissance literature. Even though Lewis received his education in Greek and Latin, philosophy, and ancient history, he eventually turned to fiction where he found an opportunity to harmonize his educational background and expert knowledge in varied fields. As a result of his wide range of interests, Lewis proved to be a versatile writer writing in a variety of genres and forms including science fiction, poetry, novel, theology, literary theory, fantasy literature as well as children's fiction.

As David C. Downing points out, Lewis already had a reputation as "a critic, scholar, and Christian apologist" even before he started writing children's books (xiv). Lewis turned to children's fiction only in his sixties after writing a bulk of books on theology, literary criticism, science fiction and fantasy novels for adults. Published between 1950-1956, *The Chronicles of Narnia* was the only work of fiction Lewis wrote for children, however, Lewis' worldwide fame came with Narnia books (Jacobs

xvi).[26] The success of the series has made it "the most sustained achievement in fantasy for children by a 20th-century author" as written in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* and earned Lewis the title of one of the greatest children's writers of all times (qtd. in Downing xiv).

Alan Jacobs indicates that writing children's books were very unlikely for Lewis as he was "a bachelor with no children of his own" (xiv). Lewis also did not have many friends in his childhood except his brother, Warren. Nevertheless, Lewis' autobiography *Surprised by Joy,* which provides highlights of his life that gave shape to his literature and worldview, reveals that Lewis' children's literature has actually become a synthesis of his varied interests, his very own childhood memories, and childhood traumas. As Downing maintains, Lewis' large family house in the country (Little Lea) echoes the old and big country houses with dark attics and labyrinthine corridors in Narnia books (Downing 3-4). The childhood games he played with his older brother, the joy he found in the children's books of Edith Nesbit and Beatrix Potter as well as the folkloric stories his nurse told him provided a background for the fantasy quality in the *Chronicles*. Likewise, the Irish landscape he admired and short fantasy stories he wrote as a child about "dressed animals", "knights in armour", and "Animal Land" can be argued to have come back to Lewis as he was constructing his imagined world, Narnia, where talking animals reside (Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* 13). In addition, Narnia books carry the traces of adult Lewis, as well. As Downing argues "[w]hen Lewis took up children's fiction, he did not cease to be Lewis the Christian, Lewis the medieval and Renaissance scholar, or Lewis the literary artist" (xv). Lewis' various literary, academic, philosophical, personal influences, and his religious sensibilities also played crucial roles in the formation of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The different aspects of Lewis' life

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[26] Lewis occasionally wrote letters to his child readers with the purpose of responding to their inquiries concerning Narnia books. Collected in *Letters to Children,* Lewis' letters to children are often regarded as a part of his children's literature besides the Narnia books.

and personality as well as his academic interests melted into a harmonious whole in his children's books indeed.

Even though Lewis is "one of the world's most popular and best-selling authors", he still remains to be a controversial figure drawing mixed criticism especially towards his Narnia books (MacSwain 1). Robert MacSwain considers Lewis to be "both a phenomenon and an anomaly", and he adds that Lewis has become a "subject of intense concern and lively controversy" engendering negative and positive reactions at the same time (1-2). Lewis' Narnia books have been praised for their narrative qualities, imaginative way of world making, round characters, and vivid imagery. In the meantime, they have also received harsh criticism specifically on the basis that they enact Christian myth and propagandize Christian ideology. Nevertheless, Lewis' preoccupation with Christianity has not been the only aspect of the Narnia books that have drawn unfavourable criticism. *The Chronicles of Narnia* has also been criticised for being endowed with racist, misogynist, and moralist subtexts. In this regard, Lewis has been thought to build his children's books on certain values and morals, which arguably represent what is normative.

In fact, this can be related to Lewis' belief in the universalism and objectivity of certain morals, values, and ethics. In *The Abolition of Man*, Lewis conceptualizes his view as "the doctrine of objective value, the belief that certain attitudes are really true, and others really false" (9). For Lewis, this "conception" can be found in "Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, Christian, and Oriental" thought, but he simply calls it "*Tao*":

> This thing which I have called for convenience the *Tao*, and which others may call Natural Law or Traditional Morality or the First Principles of Practical Reason or the First Platitudes, is not one among a series of possible systems of value. It is the sole source of all value judgements. If it is rejected, all value is rejected. If any value is

> retained, it is retained. The effort to refute it and raise a new system of value in its place is self-contradictory. There has never been, and never will be, a radically new judgement of value in the history of the world. (*The Abolition of Man* 8-21)

Lewis considers "[t]raditional moralities of East and West, the Christian, the Pagan, and the Jew" all alike despite small "contradictions" (*The Abolition of Man* 22). Lewis' idea of the universality of morality is of significance in the context of his children's fiction, because he strongly advocates that these traditional values can and should be best taught to children through reading materials. In *The Abolition of Man,* which is subtitled *Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools,* Lewis aptly suggests that literature and texts books should have practical results on children (3). He makes an analogy between a dentist and a writer propounding that a parent would be annoyed if his/her child returns from the dentist with his/her teeth untouched (*The Abolition of Man* 6). According to Lewis, literature similarly should heal and nurture children, and it should also help "train in the pupil those responses which are in themselves appropriate, […] in making of which the very nature of man consists" (*The Abolition of Man* 10).

Lewis' views on the practical ends of literature as argued in *The Abolition of Man* sound self-contradictory when taking into consideration the author's other writings on children's literature. In "On Three Ways of Writing for Children", Lewis openly states, "I don't like stories to have a moral" (68). It is subsequently revealed that what Lewis does not approve in children's literature is, in fact, to bother children's minds with explicit and direct messages. Thus, he further adds:

> Let the pictures tell their own moral. For the moral inherent in them will rise from whatever spiritual roots you have succeeded in striking during the whole course of your life. But if they don't show you any

> moral, don't put one in. […] Anyone who *can* write a children's story without a moral, had better do so: if he is going to write children's stories at all. The only moral that is of any value is that which arises inevitably from the whole cast of the author's mind. ("On Three Ways" 69)

In this sense, Lewis' fiction for children is based on the idea that morals and values should be presented to children through an artistic way of representation, symbolic rendition, and imaginative use of images. Viewed from this perspective, fantasy genre becomes the most appropriate literary form for Lewis to inscribe morals and values he aims to represent. The narrative and stylistic possibilities of the fantasy form enable Lewis to inscribe social and moral codes, which he considers to be universal, more effectively through adventurous plot arcs and imaginary lands.

As Peter J. Schakel also sums up, for Lewis "[i]magination is needed in the moral realm" and imagination serves "to give meaning to morality, to connect its principles to life, to bridge the gap between theory and practice" (164). Especially after his conversion to Christianity, Lewis starts considering "imaginative experiences" to be "an avenue leading toward the spiritual" (Schakel 11). Lewis' imaginative faculties as a writer thus serve him as a means of reflecting primarily religious and spiritual values and secondly socio-cultural concerns and assumptions. Lewis' views on universal morals and values yet take us to another point, which actually constitutes the actual basis of the negative responses he receives. Lewis' perception of right and wrong, good and bad, moral and immoral, and similar binaries proves to be accurate and unchangeable. Although Lewis resists imbuing children's literature with subjective and propagandist ideas and morals, the values he promotes in the *Chronicles* arguably represent his own value system which he has been brought up with and which he has

developed through his own intellectual, religious, and spiritual journey. As Doris Myers states, the Narnia books offer

> in a form attractive to young and adult alike, the whole scope of a Christian life according to the Anglican style of gradual growth rather than sudden conversion, of love of tradition, and of emphasis on codes of courtesy and ethical behavior. (qtd. in Schakel 51)

Written from “a conservative Anglican position” as Emily Brittain says, the *Chronicles* inscribes a set of binaries, which promotes Anglo-Saxon and Christian discourse (49). As a result, Lewis creates a world of absolutes in the *Chronicles*. In this respect, an idea, a concept, or a value that is aimed to be espoused either by a child or an adult reader subsists only in relation to its negative pair in the books. Viewed from this perspective, Lewis leaves no room for obscurity, vagueness, or possibilities in the *Chronicles*. Even when the binaries he inscribes transgress their traditional associations, the value system, which Lewis builds in the series, remains unalterable throughout.

As Schakel also points out, the books “present good and evil as stark opposites, which children have no difficulty in differentiating” (178). The binary pairs as formulated by the poststructuralists as well as oppositional images pertain to the entire books in the series recursively showing up and reinforcing the perspective they are written from in the first place. The binary of the good and evil - the central theme of the series - is accompanied by a wide range of other dualistic concepts and ideas laying bare Lewis’ ideals concerning society, his spirituality, and his understanding of virtue. The binaries inscribed in the series include morality and immorality, childhood and adulthood, spiritualism and materialism, physical deformity and physical beauty, nature and city, manhood and womanhood, interiors and exteriors, fantasy and reality.

Lewis’ utilisation of various comparisons and oppositions throughout the series highlights how children’s books might be driven by moralistic impulses, hence

interwoven with ideological implications. In the meantime, it engenders questions concerning the monolithic view of a value system that denies cultural and social differences and variables. The following sections hence explore and analyse the most significant and recursive binary pairs represented in the *Chronicles*. They discuss the ways in which children's fantasy literature contributes to the moral development of children, naturalizes certain ideologies, and reinforces the readers' unconscious assumptions through the inscription of binary oppositions.

2. 2. Adulthood and Childhood in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

The conflict between adulthood and childhood and various attributes of the dichotomous relationship between adult and child can be considered one of the central themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The novels juxtapose adulthood against childhood in multifarious ways throughout, paradoxically using each one to highlight and promote certain features of the other. The adult and child duality, which is central to Narnia books as well as children's literature in general, is rooted in Romantic thought and its celebration of childhood over adulthood, adult world, and adult pursuits. The pioneers of Romanticism such as William Blake and William Wordsworth celebrate childhood as the most blessed, innocent, pure, and precious phase in one's life in their poems and articles. They promote bringing back childhood memories as a great source of inspiration, and they accordingly consider adulthood being afflicted with materialism and moral corruption. In tandem with their ideas about childhood, the Romantics depict children in close relationship with nature, hence closer to God. When they situate children in urban settings, they display them as abused and exploited by adults.

The Romantics' fascination with childhood has exceedingly contributed to how the English have perceived and represented children and childhood in literature. However, most significantly, "the image of the romantic child has been a key point of reference for the birth of children's literature since the beginning of the nineteenth century" (Thacker and Webb 13). In line with the Romantic thought, children in children's literature have come to represent adult desires such as "freedom from responsibility", "the idyll they have lost", "the savage they fear", and also "the future they seek to shape" (Manlove, *The Fantasy* 166). As Miles A. Kimball similarly contends, "[t]his literary trope, arising especially from Blake and Wordsworth, clearly provides an intertext for much of the children's literature since the mid-nineteenth century", and it depicts "childhood as a static space close to nature and somehow

separated from the adult world" (50). As a result, childhood finds its place in children's literature as an ideal space, which is not interrupted by the responsibilities, fears, and trivialities of upcoming adulthood. Specifically in secondary world fantasies, childhood is offered as an antidote and only solution to different problems adults and the adult world inflict on the humanity and the world - whether it be the real world or a secondary one.[27]

The separation of the child world from the adult world has become more palpable especially since the beginning of the twentieth century. Deborah Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb relate this profound emphasis on the separation of the adult world and child world in children's literature to various social, economic, and cultural changes that took place in *fin de siécle* England (101). They argue that "the beginning of the new century and the shifting response to social and cultural change brought about a renewal in children's literature" (101). As Thacker and Webb point out, the technological and scientific progress, the devastative effects of the world war added with a change in the perception of time and space have culminated in "the ultimate loss of innocence" and offered a pessimistic perception of the world at the turn of the century (102). The sense of pessimism, which is conveyed in mainstream literature through literary modernism, has similarly changed the perception and representation of childhood in children's literature. Thacker and Webb express that

> The urge to break away from expected ways of seeing and portraying modern experience inevitably led writers and thinkers to look back at childhood for a rejuvenation of the imagination. Childhood offered an

[27] To say that children's fantasy literature unexceptionally tends to represent adulthood and adults in negative terms as the causes of degeneration would simply be generalizing. Children's fantasy literature itself is a broad sub-genre, which branches into other sub-genres in some of which human children and adults do not even appear as characters. Thus, the clash between adulthood and childhood can more appropriately be regarded as one of the most dominant and recursive themes in children's literature.

> escape from the already said, as children were seen to approach experience with an original, naive way of seeing. (102)

"[R]ecall[ing] the image of the Romantic innocent", the twentieth-century children's literature have thus utilised children's innocence as a vehicle to lay bare "a threatening […] knowledge of the adult world" (Thacker and Webb 105). In an atmosphere of despair caused mainly by the destructive outcomes of the adults' actions, childhood, child-world, child language, and children's literature have provided writers with a new perception and a new voice to escape from and contemplate on the notion of the shattered world. As such, the childlike state is not merely visited as a symbol of innocence. Instead, it is used as a powerful tool to problematize a number of issues, problems, and concerns of the adult world.

Such dichotomy between adulthood and childhood dominates Lewis' Narnia books, as well. Leaving the primary world, the children in Narnia books escape not only the constrictions of the adult world but also various disasters caused by adult pursuits. Their entrance into Narnia paradoxically situates them in the middle of an alternative world that is drawn into a myriad number of catastrophes caused by the adults once again. However, Narnia still offers children the freedom and strength to confront adults, which they are incapable of doing in the real world. Thus, the alternative world image opens up a space for a wide range of imaginative ways to represent the conflict between children and adults. While Narnia symbolically draws attention to the disruption of safety and confidence the adult world is supposed to ensure, it simultaneously provides a space where children can escape from the adult protection and build a safe environment for themselves. As such, the secondary world turns into a place where Lewis reflects on his concerns and criticism over the real world and enacts childhood and adulthood as conflicting stages of life more forcefully and influentially through reliance on fantasy elements.

Lewis represents adulthood as a restrictive and destructive force through different adult characters in Narnia books. He occasionally embodies adulthood in this sense in abusive and neglecting parental figures, as it is the case with Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew*, Arsheesh in *The Horse and His Boy*, and King Miraz in *Prince Caspian.* He sometimes depicts adults as evil usurpers and tyrannical figures such as Jadis in *The Magician's Nephew*, the White Queen in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the evil witch in *The Silver Chair*, and Shift in *The Last Battle*. Contrarily, Lewis presents both the real-world and the Narnian children as striving to suppress and make up for the adults' faulty actions. In this respect, Lewis subverts commonplace qualities attributed to both adulthood and childhood. The characteristics that are conventionally associated with adulthood such as maturity, order, dominance, protectiveness, authority, and knowledge are highly transgressed in the novels. These qualities do not render adults superior or in power. Lewis presents such qualities as imbuing adults with arrogance, greed, and ambition. In doing so, he problematizes adulthood as a stage of life which is marked by self-centrism, rivalry, and competitiveness of a destructive kind. Contrarily, Lewis values and promotes qualities that are conventionally associated with childhood such as innocence, immaturity, and inexperience. Correspondingly, he displays these considerably taken-for-granted associations in ways symbolizing development, rejuvenation, renewal, and hope for the future.

Lewis' emphasis on the clash between adulthood and childhood, in addition to being a generic quality, stems from various reasons. First of all, his depiction of adults as threatening figures can be related to what Thacker and Webb call "post-war angst", namely "a pessimistic view of civilization" (111). The imprints of war linger in each book either as a reference to the war in the real world or through wars fought in Narnia against tyrants. Lewis acknowledges "the darkness in a contemporary world" as caused

by adults but still "offer[s] [children] something comforting" in the series (Thacker and Webb 110). For instance, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Mr. Tumnus as well as the Beaver couple welcome the Pevensie kids with joy and consider their arrival heralding a return to the good old days in Narnia. Similarly, in *The Last Battle*, the desperate king, Tirian summons children from the real world thinking of them as his only and last chance to save Narnia. While children come to mean hope for the humane adult figures, they accordingly mean threat, disruption, and trouble for the sinister and despotic adults. The evil adult figures dread the possibility of children's intervention in their plans. For instance, King Miraz tries to prevent young Caspian from learning the history of old Narnia in *Prince Caspian.* While the White Witch orders her men to catch the sons and daughters of Adam in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* in *The Silver Chair,* the Lady of the Green Kirtle directs children to the castle of the giants so that they can be killed. These various instances eventually indicate the adults' view of children as threats against the order and authority they painstakingly try to enforce and maintain.

In both cases, Lewis puts emphasis on children as heroic figures whom a significant reliance is placed upon for the welfare of the society. Children are occasionally summoned to help the Narnians resolve various kinds of catastrophes that befell on them by self-seeking adults. Even when they are not directly asked for help, they are still depicted as courageous and willing enough to throw themselves into danger to help restore the order, maintain peace, and rehabilitate the society. When viewed from this aspect, the *Chronicles* offers a significant reversal of roles that are conventionally associated with adults and children. As Susan Cornell Poskanzer also points out, "[k]ids are represented as being more powerful than kings" in Narnia books, and they transform from "everyday children" into great warriors, heroes, and "powerful kings and queens of astounding strength and bravery" (524). The children in Narnia

become lawmakers, peace bringers, and great politicians, whereas the adult figures behave almost like spoiled children who are ready to terrorize the world once their interests are put into danger.

Through such reversals, Lewis, in fact, puts emphasis on how differently children and adults perceive and reflect on life. Compared to the adult characters who are driven by their self-seeking desires, the children in the *Chronicles* are depicted as ready to cooperate, share, commiserate, and sacrifice. Therefore, childhood and children function as a way of uncovering and criticising adults as selfishly ambitious and destructively powerful individuals throughout the series. As Thacker and Webb put it, Narnia books engage in a profound "rejection or questioning of adult value systems" (112). Throughout the *Chronicles*, ostensibly positive concepts such as triumph, passion, power, and supremacy, which adults put too much value on, are abidingly underestimated and despised. They are suggested as vices restricting freedom, destroying peace, and drawing society into turmoil and corruption.

The binary of adulthood and childhood also represents Lewis' own celebration of childhood as a space, which is untouched by various self-centred pursuits that come with growing up. Indeed, Lewis considers childhood a desirable and naive stage of life which is in no way inferior to or less valuable than adulthood. For him, adulthood denotes merely an age range and does not amount to any kind of superiority. In regard to the misconceptions of childhood and adulthood, Lewis argues that

> Critics who treat adult as a term of approval, instead of merely a descriptive term, cannot be adult themselves. To be concerned about being grown up, to admire the grown up because it is grown up, to blush at the suspicion of being childish; these are the marks of childhood and adolescence. ("On Three Ways" 59)

Criticising the modern view of adulthood as involving "a false conception of growth", Lewis himself rejoices in being childish ("On Three Ways" 60). He further indicates that "[w]hen I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up" ("On Three Ways" 60). For Lewis, adulthood obviously does not endow one with necessarily good qualities. Likewise, childhood does not equal to peculiarities inferior to those associated with being a grown-up. In this respect, Lewis makes a critique of the use of "child" and "childish" as pejorative terms to indicate one's incapability and naivety. Instead, he exalts childhood as a state of mind indulging in a never-ending enthusiasm for imagining, exploring, and wondering. As Paul F. Ford also affirms, "Lewis [feels] strongly that children's imagination should be nourished and encouraged to grow" (185). Therefore, Lewis asserts his celebration of imagination not only through his out-of-this-world fantasy series but also through the depiction of overly imaginative children who spend a good amount of time on dreaming about basically everything.

Correspondingly, Lewis' view of adulthood is embodied in an image of a grown-up who does not appreciate imagination, who gives up on wonder, and who is too practical and self-centred to appreciate simple beauties around him/her. As Ford similarly highlights, "[t]hroughout the *Chronicles*, Lewis uses "grown-up" as synonym for narrow-minded, unimaginative, and too practical thinking" (25). For instance, in *Prince Caspian*, Lewis depicts Miraz, the unrightfully crowned King of Narnia, as a "stereotypical adult who does not believe in fairy tales, the possibility of talking animals, or anything that he sees as impractical" (Ford 220). As a practical ruler, Miraz regards believing in ancient tales about Narnia as childish and nonsensical. Miraz's disdain for ancient tales is largely related to his wish to wipe the history of Narnia, which was once inhabited by talking animals, dwarfs, Dryads, and Aslan. When young Caspian wonderingly asks Miraz about the history of Narnia, he scolds him saying that

“[t]hat’s all nonsense, for babies” (*PC* 43). He further adds that Caspian is “getting too old for that sort of stuff”, and at his age one “ought to be thinking of battles and adventures not fairy tales” (*PC* 43). Similarly, in *The Horse and His Boy*, Lewis depicts adults as unimaginative and lacking any sense of curiosity through the character of Arsheesh, Shasta’s abusive warden. Confining himself to Calormen, Arsheesh shows no interest in what lies beyond this small Southern town. When he is asked by Shasta about what lies beyond the hill, Arsheesh orders him to “attend his work" and not to “allow [his] mind to be distracted by idle questions” (*HHB* 12). In line with Lewis’ views on adulthood, Miraz and Arsheesh equate imagination with childhood yet in a negative sense. Lewis critiques their underestimation of children as dreamers by depicting them as overly unsympathetic and intolerant characters.

Contrarily, the child characters take delight in dreaming and fantasizing about things that are beyond their knowledge. They are characterized by their curiosity as well as their unending wish to discover and uncover things that are tried to be kept as secret. The children’s imagination and delight in exploration help them transgress the boundaries set by the adults and embark on various adventures by which they can mature or recover their lost identities. In *Prince Caspian*, for instance, young Caspian’s high esteem for the ancient tales renders him the direct opposite of practical Miraz. However, Caspian’s destiny changes once he starts to inquire into the probability of these semi-fantastic stories. The value he puts on ancient tales and “silly stories”, as Miraz calls them, makes him interrogate his uncle’s authority and helps him find out that he is the rightful king (*PC* 43). Likewise, Shasta’s fantasies about the North and Narnia help him escape the practical and pragmatist Arsheesh. Shasta’s interest in the North stems largely from the fact that he is “never allowed to go there himself” (*HHB* 12). Shasta thus thinks, “beyond the hill there must be some delightful secret which his father wished to hide from him” (*HHB* 12). However, his desire to explore and his wish

for freedom not only make him arrive his dreamland Narnia and but also help him discover his real identity as the lost son of King Lune of Archenland.

As such, the children's imaginative and curious natures also make them interfere in the world of adults from which they are kept away. The secondary world fantasy in *The Magician's Nephew*, for instance, starts with Digory and Polly's boredom in a wet and cold summer day, which eventually "[drives] them to do indoor things" (*MN* 12). In the beginning of the novel, Digory's uncle, Andrew, keeps Digory away from his experiments with magic. Nevertheless, Digory and Polly decide to sneak into the attics of the houses out of curiosity, and this actually results in their bringing into light Andrew's secret practices. Thus, Digory and Polly intrude in the adult sphere through their exploration game only to find themselves at the centre of a life or death struggle. Similarly, the children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are characterized by their exceedingly curious natures. They are sent to the Professor's house so that they will be safe and away from the war. However, as soon as they enter into the Professor's house, they see it as a place offering many things to explore. Lucy's curiosity about what lies behind the wardrobe eventually transports them into Narnia and makes them a part of a war that is fiercer than the ongoing one in the real world. The adult characters in the series consider children's imagination, dreaming, and desire to explore powerful threats against their authority and aim to repress it condemning it as childish and insignificant. Nevertheless, the children's curiosity serves to negate such adult assumptions concerning childhood, and it accordingly functions as a vehicle to problematize the narrow-mindedness and resistance to improvement the adults display throughout the series.

Narnia books evidently celebrate childhood over adulthood. Correspondingly, the series depicts few adult characters, and when they appear, they are either evil or

inert.[28] Even when adults are depicted in the form of a wise old man, wizard or a talking animal with good intentions, they do not necessarily play crucial roles in the development of events. These adult characters generally appear as guiding and aiding figures. Despite giving vital advice to the child heroes, they generally prefer to keep themselves in the background allowing children to take the initiative. That Lewis does not allow these guiding adult characters to interfere in children's decisions does not mean that he aims to draw attention to these adults' incapability and weakness. Instead, the children respect and hold high esteem for the adults who guide and comfort them throughout their journey. The recessive nature of these adult figures serves to bring the child experience, children's capabilities, and child heroism into prominence.

Aslan, Professor Kirke, the Beaver family in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and Professor Cornelius in *Prince Caspian* exemplify such characterization. For instance, Aslan "protects the children" throughout the series, but he "still insists that they fend for themselves as much as possible" (Poskanzer 525). The children occasionally seek for Aslan's help and guidance, however, as Manlove points out, "[they] most often work it out for themselves" (*The Fantasy* 178). For instance, when Susan calls for her brother's help using her Horn, Aslan does not let anyone interfere in Peter's battle in spite of having an army of animals under his service. He commands his men saying that "Back! Let the Prince win his spurs" (*LWW* 119). He wants Peter to prove his courage and heroism as a king-to-be without his help. Like Aslan, the Professor also functions as a guiding figure in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.* Even though Professor Kirke visits Narnia himself, he prefers not to reveal his knowledge of Narnia to the children and lets them discover it by trial and error. Even when he implicitly encourages the Pevensie children about the existence of this magical land, he never interferes in their decisions about going there or not. In a similar vein,

[28] In *The Fantasy Literature of England*, Colin Manlove similarly maintains that "adults and adult figures are frequently absent, and where they appear, are often eccentric or inept" (178).

Professor Cornelius, a wise and scholarly dwarf in *Prince Caspian*, heartens young Caspian about his being the rightful king and taking his murdered father's revenge. However, after Caspian starts his quest, Cornelius turns into a minor figure who occasionally gives advice to Caspian and never plays a crucial role in his decisions. As such, Lewis does not situate adults at the centre of events anywhere in the *Chronicles*. He focuses on the child hero's quest whereby he replaces adults' triumphs with that of children. The emphasis becomes on children's capability to change and rejuvenate the world that is driven into chaos by adults.

In this respect, compared to the children who change and develop through a series of events, the adults are presented mostly as stereotypes appearing as either inactive yet kind-hearted guides or powerful antagonists. As Poskanzer similarly indicates, the adult characters in Lewis' Narnia books turn out to be "one-dimensional", and they "generally enjoy only sketchy descriptions or are caricatures of good and evil" (524). Adult stereotypes in Narnia books such as neglecting parents, abusive relatives, evil witches, tyrants, usurpers, and occasionally fratricides are marked by their shared arrogance, greediness, and most significantly egocentricity. The adult figures in the series prove to be non-progressive individuals never judging their own actions, never recognizing their ill-deeds, hence never attempting to change themselves for good. These adult stereotypes also resist moving and leaving their domains. Identified with their usurped thrones in Narnia, the White Witch and King Miraz neither leave Narnia nor accept any stranger into the country from the outside. In *The Magician's Nephew*, Jadis' resistance to leave her domain is even starker. In order to ensure the continuity of her ultimate reign over Charn, she utters the Deplorable Word, "a magic word that has the power to destroy all but its speaker" (Ford 104). By uttering this magic word, Jadis stops time and assures her position as the ruler even if it means to bring the end of Charn.

The image of adults resisting to leave their safe zones as a symbol of their non-progressiveness is also emphasised in *The Horse and His Boy* in the character of Arsheesh, who never attempted to leave Calormen and travelled to North in his entire life. As the narrator points out, Arsheesh does not know what lies to the North simply because he does not care (*HHB* 12). As a man with "a very practical mind", Arsheesh is spiritlessly content about his miserable life as a fisherman and shows no interest in taking a step for the good (*HHB* 12). The immobility of these adult figures stems mainly from their desire to protect their social position in society whether it be of a higher degree or lesser. Nevertheless, situated against children who achieve various successes on the road, their immobility becomes what largely determines their failure in development, change, and continuity.

The child characters contrarily "seem very real in many ways" (Poskanzer 523). Not only do they have "distinct personalities" but they also turn out to be "multi-faceted" characters changing and evolving throughout the narrative (Poskanzer 523). The children in the series display certain flaws occasionally making wrong decisions and showing signs of weakness. However, they are given opportunities whereby they can learn from their mistakes, grow into maturity, and learn not to stumble into similar errors. They mature by experiencing, occasionally erring, and most importantly by exploring. For instance, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Edmund initially takes sides with the White Witch betraying his siblings. Edmund is driven by his selfish desire to become the future king of Narnia. However, he gradually comes to realize that the White Witch does not look out for his goodness but merely cares about securing her own authority. Edmund's recognition of the White Witch as an egocentric woman marks an enlightenment and change in his character. Lewis puts emphasis on children's development once again in *The Voyage of the Dawn Trader* through the character of Eustace. Eustace greedily desires to obtain the gold in the dragon's cave, and his desire

eventually results in his transformation into a dragon. His re-transformation into a human being depends on his recognition of his theft as a wrongful action. When Eustace transforms into a human being again, he is now a changed, mature, and kind boy. In *The Silver Chair*, he now becomes the central character on whom the Narnians depend. In this respect, the dichotomy between adulthood and childhood is paralleled by the opposition between stability and inertia that adulthood brings and potential for growth that childhood alludes to.

When the children show signs of reluctance, Lewis still allows space for them to contemplate and take action. In the beginning of *Prince Caspian*, Caspian is depicted as enjoying bedtime stories showing no interest in swords and shields. Yet, his acknowledgment of his identity as the rightful king transforms him into a valiant soldier. Similarly, in *The Horse and His Boy*, Lewis depicts Shasta's gradual transition from an orphan into a dauntless boy and finally the future ruler of Narnia. In *The Magician's Nephew* "growth" again becomes "the ruling metaphor" (Manlove, "The Birth" 77). The novel suggests a development of the "understanding of the children concerning their actions" in the course of events ("The Birth" 77-78). As Manlove contends, at first children "had knowledge, but not insight" on how things work in Charn ("The Birth" 78). Nevertheless, "[w]hat were previously acts forced on them, or ignorant choices, or events […] become fully free and knowing choices in the course of events" ("The Birth" 78-79). Thus, Digory and Polly transform into free-willed and more mature children in the process. They start as curious kids wandering about the attics of the houses in their neighbourhood, yet, they gradually turn into bold children who now yearn for exploring other worlds. The children's capability to improve and develop juxtaposed against the adults' resistance to change reflects Lewis' association of childhood with renewal, regeneration, and progress.

In addition to such associations, childhood is also offered as a space, which is not inflicted by the self-centeredness of adulthood and adult goals. Throughout the series, the evilness of adult figures stems mainly from their selfish, segregationist and individualistic desires and expectations. For instance, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the White Witch declares herself as the sole authority in Narnia. As Ford indicates, the White Witch "has no conscience and no scruples and will do anything that is to her advantage", and "in believing she can control everything, she blinds herself to other possibilities" (335). Indeed, she shows no interest in compromise, equality, or justice. She leaves the Narnians with two choices: to resign themselves to her sovereignty or to live like fugitives on their own land. In the case of a rebellion, she does not hesitate to turn the rebels into stones and use them as decorations in her courtyard. By doing this, she assures that everyone in Narnia remains as her subjects. Similarly, in *The Magician's Nephew*, Jadis is represented as selfish to the extent of killing her own sister, the rightful ruler of Charn. Her self-centeredness is so extreme that she prefers to live alone in Charn rather than sharing the throne with anyone else.

By contrast, the children value cooperation and solidarity. The Pevensie children differ from the White Witch in their willingness to acknowledge the Narnians as free individuals. In their war against the witch, the children align with the Narnians and work as a team playing different roles. While Peter and Edmund, the male siblings fight with their swords and shields against the witch's army on the battleground, Susan and Lucy help the wounded soldiers. Upon the siblings' accession to the throne, the tyranny is replaced with an egalitarian government that is ruled not by a single ruler but four children. In this respect, the actual war between the Pevensie children and the witch turns into a symbolic one that is between adulthood and childhood, self-centrism and self-sacrifice, arrogance and modesty, selfishness and cooperation. A similar kind of emphasis on the sense of collectiveness also becomes manifest in *The Magician's*

Nephew where this time Lewis depicts Digory and Polly fighting together against Jadis. When Digory's reckless uncle Andrew deceivingly transports Polly to an alternative universe as a part of his experiment, Digory feels the responsibility to follow her. Like the Pevensie children, Polly and Digory complement each other throughout the novel. Digory's courage to embark on dangerous adventures is balanced by Polly's cautiousness in every step they take. Likewise, in *Prince Caspian*, Lewis juxtaposes adult egocentrism against children's cooperation. King Miraz, the cruel king of Narnia, considers asking for help and counsel as a sign of weakness throughout the novel. Hence, he is marked by his intolerant and contemptuous attitude towards his soldiers. As a result, Miraz is betrayed by his own counsellor, Glozelle, while he is fighting against Peter. However, young Caspian's belief in solidarity and equality plays a significant role in his ascent to the throne. After Caspian escapes from Miraz's castle, he establishes his council and unites with the old Narnians; moreover, he does not even hesitate asking for the Pevensie children's help.

In this context, Lewis utilises collaborative and humble children to promote such values as benevolence, humbleness, and self-sacrifice as well as to make a critique of the vanity and arrogance of the adult world. The wars fought between self-centred adults and cooperative children create a sense of community and determine the moral direction of the series as "more social than personal" (Manlove, *The Fantasy* 178). Accordingly, throughout the *Chronicles*, the greater emphasis becomes on the welfare of an entire community rather than on the single child hero's development, and the child hero is appreciated as much as he devotes himself/herself to the establishment of an equal and peaceful environment for all. The moral focus of the series becomes more manifest when Aslan puts young Caspian into a vanity test once again:

> 'Welcome, Prince,' said Aslan. 'Do you feel yourself sufficient enough to take up the Kingship of Narnia?'

> 'I - I don't think I do, Sir,' said Caspian. I'm only a kid.'
>
> 'Good,' said Aslan. 'If you had felt yourself sufficient, it would have been a proof that you were not. Therefore, under us and under the High King, you shall be King of Narnia, Lord of Cair Paravel, and Emperor of the Lone Islands.' (*PC* 175)

As the given quotation points out, Caspian's modesty becomes what earns him his princedom. Compared to his vain uncle, Caspian represents an ideal king-to-be with his egalitarian attitude and personality that is open to self-development and learning, which are qualities Lewis obviously values and promotes in the series.

The binary of adulthood and childhood is reinforced in places where adult characters and child characters reflect on these concepts themselves. Throughout the *Chronicles*, to be a "grown-up" is used by children as an expression with negative associations. Behaving or speaking like a grown-up is made use of in ways equal with dullness, extreme arrogance, and artificiality in attitude. In *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory underestimates "[g]rown-ups" for "always thinking of uninteresting explanations" (15). In *Prince Caspian*, the way Miraz speaks as a grown-up is similarly disliked by young Caspian: "Up till now King Miraz had been talking in some way that some grown-ups have, which makes it quite clear that they are not really interested in what they are saying" (*PC* 42-43). Furthermore, when any child tends to behave and speak like an adult, that is to say more solemnly, authoritatively, and lacking any sense of curiosity, s/he is abruptly deemed to be boring and oppressive by the others. For instance, Susan is constantly teased by her siblings, especially by Lucy, for sounding like a boring adult. When she tells her siblings to go to bed in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, she is regarded as pretentious trying to substitute their absent mother.

Likewise, childhood is detested by the adult figures. Children are occasionally underestimated and challenged by the adults as well as other characters. Their

capabilities are doubted, their suggestions are devalued, and they are regarded as inexperienced hence inadequate. Uncle Andrew looks down on Digory simply because he is a child. When Digory taunts Andrew with cowardice, he responds to him saying that "I will not be talked to like that by a little, dirty, schoolboy" (*MN* 27). Similarly, in *Prince Caspian*, Trumpkin is disappointed by the fact that the horn they blow for help does not bring Aslan but the Pevensie siblings. Trumpkin is sure that the children would prove insufficient to help them win the war against the great Miraz. Despite saying that they are all "fond of children", Trumpkin maintains that they all imagined them as "great warriors" not little children (*PC* 91). In *The Horse and His Boy*, children are seen too feeble to be included in the war against Rabadash. When Corin expresses his wish to fight, he is warned to stay away from the battle simply because he is a small child:

> I have the strictest orders from King Edmund to see to it that your Highness is not in the fight. You will be allowed to see it, and that's treat enough for your Highness's little years. […] No one doubts your courage. But a boy in battle is a danger only to his own side. (*HHB* 152-153)

Nevertheless, the underestimated and undervalued children negate various prejudices of the adults about childhood. The Pevensie siblings prove their abilities at archery and sword one by one only to embarrass Trumpkin for underestimating the power of children. Corin takes part in the battle in disguise only to prove that he is a courageous warrior. Lewis' representation of children as courageous and assertive figures functions as a means to criticise the assumption that childhood marks naivety and inexperience, hence a lack of an awareness of the world.

Even though children's literature generically foresees maturation and development for its child characters, it simultaneously tends to keep children as children throughout. In *Deconstructing the Hero*, Margery Hourihan contends that in children's

literature, “[h]eroes are young” and “there is no recognition of a future in which they will grow old” (71). Indeed, children’s fantasy books generally end with the finalization of the quest and “readers are not invited to consider further” (Hourihan 71-72). “Old heroes” as Hourihan points out “are dissatisfied, dreaming of the past” whereas the young heroes stand for dynamism, courage, and idealism that are associated with youthfulness (Hourihan 72). Focusing on child heroism, Lewis equates aging with decay, decline, and regression. The corrupt societies Lewis describes in the books are typically governed by old and intolerant kings; therefore, they require a renewal. Each book thus ends with the replacement of the old ruler by a younger child or children. These young heroes neither grow up nor think about old age, because for them the journey and the struggle are crucial to the development of the society and the individual (Hourihan 73). In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lewis does not have the Pevensies age, and he makes sure that they do not enter the world of adults. Reigning Narnia successfully for years and almost reaching adulthood, the Pevensies return to the real world by using the wardrobe. When they are back in England, they find themselves as children again for the time passes slower in the real world. By not letting the Pevensie children grow old, Lewis assures that they can proceed to the subsequent adventures in the following books as children. In *Prince Caspian*, the Pevensies are summoned back once more as courageous and fearless children to save Narnia for the second time.

Lewis’ insistence to eternalize childhood is evinced in the last book of the series, *The Last Battle*. In the last book, Narnia comes to an end due to an irrevocable corruption caused by extreme selfishness and evilness. The children, who appreciate Narnia, imagination, and childhood itself, gather in Narnia and learn that they all died in the real world and were transported to Narnia. Symbolically, Narnia turns into a heaven-like place where children are going to stay as children forever. Even though the

Chronicles ends in a joyous atmosphere depicting children happily united in Narnia for eternity, Lewis' ending of the series in such a manner creates a sense of pessimism regarding the real world, Narnia as well as humanity. The ending of the series with the collapse of Narnia suggests that neither the primary nor the secondary world can offer children an environment which is free from selfishness, self-pursuits, or self-centrism.

In conclusion, Lewis uses the dualistic relationship between childhood and adulthood to promote and highlight certain virtues and morals which he considers to be essential for a just and egalitarian society. Although the children in Narnia books replace adults' roles, this replacement functions as a narrative device by which Lewis draws attention to the degeneration caused by adult pursuits and adult goals. In this regard, the Narnian universe not only serves as a space where Lewis contemplates on childhood as an uncorrupted stage of life, but it also becomes a space through which Lewis presents values and morals children are expected to internalize. As such, the ideal behaviour patterns, social issues, and unfavourable attitudes discussed through the conflict between adulthood and childhood lay bare the didactic purpose of the series. Moreover, the values Lewis inscribes through the binary of adulthood and childhood elucidate his thoughts on universalism of ethics and value systems. The physical death yet the spiritual immortality of children in the end arguably embody Lewis' ideas regarding the collapse of these values because of self-centrism and egocentricity. The discussion of such matters through the opposition between adults and children eventually shows that children's literature can contemplate on varied social, philosophical, moral, and ethical questions through binaries.

2. 3. Natural and Urban Spaces in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Children's literature is conventionally associated with pastoral settings. This affinity can arguably be related to the Romantic preoccupation with formulating a relationship between nature and child, childhood, child-ness, childlike innocence, immaturity, and purity. The image of the Romantic child, which contributed to the birth of children's fantasy literature in the nineteenth century, can also be argued to establish the relationship between nature and children's fantasy literature as well as nature and secondary worlds. As Sylvia Kelso points out, "until recently, the current fantasy genre […] has preferred the secondary world, and moreover, a medieval and/or pre-industrial world" (13). As such, the city as a setting and urban life remained more or less absent in children's fantasy literature as well as in fantasy literature for a general readership until about the mid-twentieth century.[29] Children's fantasy books tended to disregard the city entirely and depicted secondary worlds as natural settings. This has accordingly bred an association between nature and childhood as initiated by Romanticism and the Romantic child. As a result, children's fantasy books have offered nature as an escape from the real world, which has been dominated by growing industrialism, materialism, and urbanism.

Children's fantasy literature has been intertwining urban settings more distinctly with the fantasy elements since the mid-twentieth century, especially starting with C. S. Lewis in *The Magician's Nephew* (Kelso 13). However, this intertwinement situates the city and nature in overly dichotomous positions, linking these two spaces to more abstract ideas and directing the reader to question how an individual may situate her/himself within the city or nature. In this context, the city and nature dichotomy as

[29] There are still exceptions of the use of urban settings in children's fantasy literature. For instance, published in 1863 Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies* opens in the city and moves gradually towards the countryside and the underwater world in the course of events. Hence, it provides comparative scenes between the city and the nature from a critical perspective.

well as the transitions between the two spheres reveal various ethical, spiritual, socio-economic, and political questions.

As Kelso also highlights, Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* significantly sets urban settings against nature. The urban space in the *Chronicles* is represented mainly as part of the primary world. Occasionally, it is presented as areas of settlement in Narnia. In both cases, nature and city are juxtaposed against each other enunciating opposing ideas and revealing a political and socio-economic mind-set. In the narrowest sense, it might be argued that Lewis depicts nature as a liberating antidote to the concrete, simultaneously ordered and chaotic urban sphere. As an admirer and keen reader of his Romantic ancestors, Lewis represents nature as in close relationship with childhood and as a liberating force for both the child and the community itself.

Expectedly, Lewis presents the city as a space, which is driven by materialistic, pragmatic, and self-centred pursuits. The city belongs to the adults and is shaped by the adults. Even though it serves the adults and their interests, it is ironically drawn into various kinds of corruption by the adults again. Correspondingly, the urban spaces in the books are marked by their competitive and degenerate nature. Moreover, a sense of mundaneness and joylessness permeates them throughout the books. Therefore, children and childhood in the Romantic sense do not belong to the city. The city in return does not appreciate childhood and situates children out of its system. In this kind of environment, the urban sphere as represented in Narnia books exercises a restrictive power over the freedom of children as individuals and most significantly suppresses the imagination that is associated with childhood in the context of Romanticism. In this respect, the binary of nature and city functions more or less in the same vein with the binary of adulthood and childhood as discussed earlier in this study. Children's association with nature gives way to inferences that can be related to Lewis' view of

nature as a liberating force and his criticism of certain pursuits and desires embodied in the corrupt urban settings.

Accordingly, in Narnia books, the child characters find themselves overwhelmed with and surpassed by various issues and problems related to the city, hence culture, civilization, and modernity. The children variably confront the war, the psychological pressure of the new school term, the separation from their parents due to economic reasons, and they are occasionally exposed to physical and psychological abuse in the urban space. The city, despite its conventional associations with civilization, order, and security, cannot ensure children a safe environment to live in. In this respect, nature functions as a way of escaping various responsibilities, institutions, and dangers of the city. As children move from the real world to the secondary world, they simultaneously leave the dangerous and barren city and enter into the exuberant nature.

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, children's transition to a natural setting occurs gradually. The novel opens with a reference to the air raids bombing London. First, the Pevensie siblings are "sent to the house of an old Professor who live[s] in the heart of the country" (*LWW* 9). This first encounter with nature becomes a short relief for the children, and they are overjoyed for having an opportunity to explore the nature, which they are not familiar with:

> 'I say, let's go and explore tomorrow. You might find anything in a place like this. Did you see those mountains as we came along? And the woods? There might be eagles. There might be stags. There'll be hawks.'
>
> 'Badgers!' said Lucy.
>
> 'Foxes!' said Edmund.
>
> 'Rabbits!' said Susan. (*LWW* 10)

Despite being located in the countryside, Professor Kirke's house still represents the materialist world with its high ceilings, labyrinthine corridors, and art pieces displayed here and there. The Pevensie children feel themselves still invisible and under pressure especially under the supervision of the despotic Mrs. Macready, the housekeeper. Yet, the siblings' entrance to Narnia through the wardrobe marks the start of their ultimate interaction with nature. The old Narnia as told by Mr. Tumnus - the Faun - turns out to be a place, which intertwines sensual nature with mythological entities:

> He had wonderful tales to tell of life in the forest. He told about the midnight dances and how the Nymphs who lived in the wells and the Dryads who lived in the tress came out to dance with the Fauns; about long hunting parties after the milk-white stag who could give you wishes if you caught him; about feasting and treasure-seeking with the wild Red Dwarfs in deep mines and caverns far beneath the forest floor; and then about summer when the woods were green […] then the streams would run with wine instead of water and the whole forest would give itself up to jollification for weeks on end. (*LWW* 20-21)

In the Narnian wilderness, the Pevensie siblings find the freedom they lack in real life. Most outstandingly, the Narnians respect and depend on them for the future of the country, as they beseech the children to break the White Witch's spell and bring back the once-joyous and abundant nature. This call for help can be read as an interdependence between children/childhood and nature. Nature offers children the freedom they seek for, but it simultaneously needs them for its rebirth and rejuvenation.

The same pattern characterizes the entire series. Each book presents a transition from the mundane and corrupt city life into the wild, simultaneously protective and dangerous natural settings. The real-world children often find themselves in the midst of Narnian wilderness when they feel most surrounded by the burdens of real life. In the

opening of *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory Kirke is tackling with the sorrow of his ill mother and his abusive uncle Andrew Ketterley in whose London house he has to live. Digory offers the first comparison between city and nature while explaining the reason of his tears:

> if you'd lived all your life in the country and had a pony, and a river at the bottom of the garden, and then been brought to live in a beastly Hole like this. […] And if your father was away in India - and you had to come and live with an Aunt and an Uncle who's mad […] and if the reason was that they were looking after your Mother - and if your Mother was ill and was going to - going to - die. (*MN* 10)

Likewise, in *Prince Caspian*, the Pevensie siblings are transported to Narnia when they are whining about the new school term that is about to start. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Lucy and Edmund are also presented as bored and under pressure in their aunt and uncle's house. As they desperately wish to return to Narnia, they and their cousin Eustace are soaked into a picture and find themselves among the waves on a Narnian ship. In *The Silver Chair*, Eustace and Jill are represented as weary of the bullies at school. They find themselves on the edge of a steep cliff in Narnia when running away from the schoolchildren chasing after them. Even though all of these children find themselves given a variety of dangerous tasks in Narnia, they become visible, audible, and most importantly free in the Narnian nature. The nature reminds them of their childhood wasted within four walls in the urban space. They feel themselves in harmony with nature, whereas they feel excluded and segregated in the urban space. Accordingly, nature provides children not only with a wide range of unknown adventures they play central roles in but also with opportunities whereby they freely reveal and put into action their different personal qualities that are suppressed in the real world.

Sylvia Kelso suggests that the binary of the city and nature as represented in fantasy literature engenders such "cognitive and cultural divisions as Artificial/Natural, urban/rural, Man/Nature […] present/future" as well as nature/culture and nature/civilization (21). Viewed from this perspective, juxtaposing the Narnian nature against various urban settings, the *Chronicles* evokes a sense of nostalgia for the past - a pre-industrial and a non-urban society - which is largely a Romantic ideal. In the meantime, it exposes various philosophical, socio-economic, and ethical questions concerning culture as an artefact and nature as primordial, untouched, and untainted by human intervention. As David C. Downing affirms, "Lewis preferred simple, old-fashioned things, and he often complained about the modern world's preoccupation with luxury and technology" (98). Correspondingly, his fiction represents "wars and industrialism" as "twin curses" that have befallen on humanity (Downing 98). In this context, the *Chronicles* sets the Narnian nature against civilization, modernity, and institutions, which dominate British cities or corrupt Narnian cities in the books. The urban space comes to be equal with war and bombs in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, a suppressive educational system and bullies in *The Silver Chair*, broken families due to economic struggles in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, abusive adults in *The Magician's Nephew*, and slavery, dirt, difficult living and working conditions in *The Horse and His Boy.*

Lewis' critical perspective towards urbanism also becomes manifest in the comparative scenes he draws between Tashban (the capital city of Calormen) and Cair Paravel (the capital city of Narnia). Narnia's government is based on harmony with nature, respect for all living things, and the preservation of the rights of Talking Animals. By contrast, Calormen is a place of economic rivalry, self-interest, corruption, human and animal trafficking, and social inequality. Paul F. Ford compares the capital cities of Narnia and Calormen and their relationship with nature as such:

> Tashbaan is crowded with slaves, disorder, and filth. By comparison, the streets of Cair Paravel are clean, bright, and full of happy people. Green lawns gleam in the sunlight. […] There are no native Talking Beasts in Calormen. When such animals are kidnapped […] they are treaded badly. Ownership of animals is common practice in Calormen, and the Calormenes think nothing of overriding their mounts, whipping and harnessing horses for hard work, and selling worn-out horses to be rendered into dog-meat. In Narnia, respect for life extends even to dumb animals. Talking horses are never mounted, except in battle, and are certainly not used as slaves. (72-73)

Lewis arguably makes use of Calormen and its capital city Tashbaan to point at moral and social deterioration that can be caused by commercialism and urbanism. The materialist ends of Calormene people and the rulers' desire for ultimate power seem to deplete people's respect for each other and also for nature. The filthy and chaotic city centre of Tashbaan can be taken as a symbol of British industrial cities where the daily chores turn people into strangers to each other. Tashbaan proves to be the total opposite of Narnia where, as the Faun recounts, the Narnians sing and dance altogether in harmony amidst nature. Throughout the series, the Narnian nature is depicted as having a spiritual existence and communicating with those who appreciate it. Even the trees in Narnia have nymphs living alongside them, which openly represent their souls. Thus, cutting off a tree and killing an animal are considered acts of murder, which are no different from killing a human being. On the contrary, urbanism and commercialism are represented as destructive to the nature as they lead to the exploitation of its sources for economic purposes.

The binary of city and nature in this sense becomes much more manifest in *The Last Battle*, where the end of the world comes as people start to lose their respect for

nature and the spirituality associated with it. Shift, the ape, initiates the decline of Narnia by trying to replace the Great Lion, Aslan. Lewis' use of an ape as the bringer of destruction is symbolic since the apes are considered to be the ancestors of *homo sapiens*. Shift denies being an ape claiming that he is "a Man" and he explains his ape-like appearance as a sign of his old age, hence his wisdom (*LB* 33). Shift's arrogance and his feeling of superiority over the talking animals represent an anthropocentric attitude. Shift's aim is to take control of Narnia and govern it in his own way. His plans for Narnia show that he is a pragmatist and a supporter of industrialism and urbanism:

> Everybody who can work is going to be made to work in future. […] All you horses and bulls and donkeys are to be sent down into Calormen to work for your living - pulling and carrying the way horses and such-like do in other countries. And all you digging animals like moles and rabbits and Dwarfs are going to work in The Tisroc's mines. (*LB* 33-34)

Shift attempts to transform Narnia into an industrial country by making use of animals' manual work force. His plans echo the beginnings of British industrialism, the establishment of industrial cities, the destruction of nature, and the emergence of the working-class. He tricks the Narnian animals into labouring by offering them supposedly modernized and civilized life standards. Thus, he explains his plans as such:

> It's all arranged. And all for your own good. We'll be able, with the money you earn, to make Narnia a country worth living in. There'll be oranges and bananas pouring in - and roads and big cities and schools and offices and whips and muzzles and sales and cages and kennels and prison. Oh, everything. (*LB* 34)

As such, Shift becomes a symbol of the colonialist discourse. His argument is reminiscent of the white man's burden - an idea that advocates that Western civilization is responsible for bringing civilization and modernity to the underprivileged societies.

Nevertheless, his manifesto includes the exploitation of nature and the talking animals for his own interests. Thus, the conflict between nature and men as represented in *The Last Battle* can be interpreted as Lewis' critique of various ways humanity destroys nature. Accordingly, Lewis' depiction of humankind as the destroyers of the idyllic and heavenly Narnia elucidates his scepticism towards urbanism, modernity, industrialism, and technological developments.

Developing an argument against urbanism and modernism, Lewis also subverts the conventional hierarchy between such dualities as man and nature, culture and nature, and urban space and natural environment the conventional hero story inscribes. As Margery Hourihan suggests, "[t]he hero story celebrates the conquest of nature as well as of savages" (6). Referring to Northrop Frye, Hourihan maintains that "the transformation of nature into shape and meaning" has been the "the essential human endeavor" (6). Nevertheless, Hourihan argues that this has tended to change in time: "today the urgent requirement is the salvation of the natural environment, and we need to reassess the ideas of achievement and progress which are inherent in the hero story" (Hourihan 6). In this context, despite affirming the normative social codes of Western culture in many respects, Lewis reconsiders the nature and culture duality from a critical and non-traditional perspective. His religious discourse pertaining to the entire series determines his view of nature as a spiritual entity, and his perception of urban space as a site of corruption and loss of faith.

Lewis' celebration of natural settings over urban space can also be related to his Irish background, his admiration for the Irish landscape as well as his childhood memories marked by the natural beauty of Belfast countryside. Lewis' autobiography *Surprised by Joy* provides an insight into how much he was influenced by the natural landscape of Ireland as both a child and a young man. As a child, Lewis regarded nature as his playground for his imaginary games and utilised it as his setting for the stories he

made up. As Lewis grew into an intellectually mature young man, his relationship with nature transformed into a kind of appreciation, which is more spiritual and intrinsic than the naive pleasure he found in nature as a child. He explains his relationship with nature in his autobiography as follows:

> But soon […] nature ceased to be a mere reminder of the books, became herself the medium of the real joy. […] But Nature and the books now became equal reminders, joint reminders, of - well, of whatever it is. I came to nearer to what some would regard as the only genuine love of nature, the studious love which will make a man a botanist or an ornithologist. It was the mood of a scene that mattered to me; and in tasting that mood my skin and nose were busy as my eyes. (*Surprised by Joy* 77-78)

As David Clare also writes in "C.S. Lewis: an Irish Writer", Lewis utilises the Irish landscape as a model for the natural settings in his fiction including Narnia books. Most significantly, Clare draws attention to how Lewis depicts cities as total opposites of natural settings. According to Clare, Lewis' fiction and non-fiction reveal his dislike for urban spaces compared to his love for nature. Clare adds that Lewis specifically did hate the English cities except Oxford (29). He further refers to Lewis' *The Great Divorce* where he resembles hell to "a depressed English commercial city" (29). In *The Great Divorce,* which is a dream vision, Lewis describes hell as such:

> I seemed to be standing in a bus queue by the side of a long, mean street. […] I had been wandering for hours in similar mean streets, always in the rain and always in evening twilight. […] And just as the evening never advanced to night, so my walking had never brought me to the better parts of the town. However far I went I found only dingy lodging houses, small tobacconists, boardings from which the posters

hung in rags, windowless warehouses, goods stations without trains […]. (qtd. in Clare 29)

While Lewis portrays hell as a mundane, joyless, and meaningless city, he envisions heaven as an idyllic place with its "emerald green" nature, "translucent mountains", "soft wet turf", "heather", and "moss" (qtd. in Clare 29). Viewed from this perspective, the dichotomy between city and nature is paralleled with the dichotomy between Hell and Heaven in Lewis' literature. This correlation between nature/city and heaven/hell is present in the *Chronicles*, as well. Throughout the series, both Narnian and real-world cities prove to be chaotic and hellish places. In *The Silver Chair*, the parallelism between the city and hell becomes even starker when Eustace, Jill, and Puddleglum discover an underground city, Underland, while escaping from the giants. Underland is a typical industrial town in its darkest form with its overcrowded galleries and labourers running around with sad and weary faces. To the children, the labourers look "all alike: every face in the whole hundred was as sad as a face that could be" (*SC* 124). The people of Underland, or Earthmen as they call it, obviously stand for the working-class who serves the evil Queen of Underland. However, it is revealed that they were not always workers and Underland was not always an industrial city, either. Underland is told to have transformed into an industrial city through the oppressive government ruled by the evil Queen.

It is only after the children break the spell of the evil Queen that Earthmen become once again "their true selves - fun-loving, jig-dancing, somersaulting, firecracker-firing people who shout in loud voices and dart all over the place" (Ford 124-125). In that respect, Lewis does not depict Underland as hellish because it is located under the earth but because it becomes a socially, governmentally, economically, and morally corrupt city due to governmental oppression. This indicates that Lewis as well as the Narnians appreciate nature as a whole. The deepest part of

Narnia, which is called Bism, is told to be even lighter and more abundant in natural resources and precious stones such as diamond, gold, and silver that are "alive and growing" (*SC* 177). The Narnians leave the road to the Bism open, and Bism becomes a place to which the Narnians "go […] with ships and lanterns" and "sail to and fro, singing, on the cool, dark underground sea, telling each other stories of the cities that lie fathoms deep below" (*SC* 206). As such, the *Chronicles* asserts gratefulness and respect for the entire universe including not only the living creatures but also underground sources, the air breathed, the planets and the stars above. Both the surface and underneath of the Earth are presented as equally beautiful and fertile as long as they are not exploited and turned into corrupt industrial cities. In this regard, pointing at a kind of regression or corruption experienced on the part of humanity, Lewis offers the human element as the main reason behind the transformation of these Narnian places into hellish cities.

As the underground city represented in *The Silver Chair* exemplifies, the natural landscape of Narnia is not always idyllic. Indeed, it is pure wilderness in some places, and it proves to be considerably challenging and dreadful for the human children. The nature in Narnia includes steep cliffs, vast deserts, underground tunnels, and caves which might inhabit dangerous mythological creatures such as dragons and giants. No matter how much dreadful and challenging the Narnian nature turns out, there is always an emphasis on its healing and instructive power on children both mentally and morally. Correspondingly, leaving the city and entering into the realm of nature equal to going back to the basics and discovering one's true self by stripping off the cultural and social precepts they bring from their background. Children confronting the wild nature in Narnia simultaneously confront their fears, desires, prejudices as well as their weaknesses and strengths. The missions assigned to the children and various voyages they take accordingly turn into a personal battle for each child where they struggle to

find an inner balance and contemplate on their identity and moral questionings. As such, the wilderness in Narnia turns into a site for meditation free from the constraints of the urban life.

Eustace's relationship with nature before and after his Narnia adventures epitomizes this kind of self-realization and illustrates how children position themselves differently in nature and urban space. Unlike his cousins - the Pevensies -, Eustace does not feel any respect or love for nature, nor for living beings including humans. As the narrator mentions, he likes "animals, especially beetles, if they [are] dead and pinned on a card" (*VDT* 7). Ford points out that Eustace "is the victim of his parents' untraditional ways of child raising and of his schooling at Experiment House" (135). Eustace's parents are described as "up-to-date and advanced people. They were vegetarians, non-smokers and teetotallers", and Eustace does not even call them mother and father but by their name (*VDT* 7). His school, Experiment House, on the other hand, is depicted as a hopeless school the head of which favours the bullies and where "Bibles were not encouraged" (*SC* 14). Eustace thus turns out to be a product of a discriminatory school system and a contemporary yet degenerated and negligent family. He is a spoiled, middle-class boy, and obviously a child of the city. He is an embodiment of the modern world which declines in morality, loses its traditions, breaks its' children's bonds with nature, and turns them into mechanic and inconsiderate beings.

In Narnia, Eustace evaluates the Narnian nature and life from an anthropocentric and middle-class perspective in the beginning. While Lucy and Edmund approach the Talking Beasts with respect and great care, Eustace simply detests them: "Oh! Ugh! What on earth's *that*! Take it away, the horrid thing.' […] 'I hate mice. And I never could bear performing animals. They're silly and vulgar and - sentimental" (*VDT* 16-17). He also considers the Narnian ways to be prehistoric, unlawful, uncivilized, and detached from the democratic and technologically advanced society in the real world.

When in Narnia, he becomes the child version of Robinson Crusoe or Richard Hakluyt - a typical British colonialist - keeping a diary where he reflects on various aspects of Narnia. Nevertheless, Eustace's voyage on the Dawn Treader and his confrontation with the untamed nature turn into an inner journey in the meantime. His transformation into a dragon upon setting his eye on dragon-treasures becomes a test for him to understand the value of friendship, sharing, and kindness. His friends and Talking Beasts accept him as he is, and this enlivens a sense of unconditional love in Eustace towards all living beings. Lewis portrays Eustace leaving Narnia as a different and a changed boy who has not only learned from nature but also discovered through nature his "Self" and "true identity". The change in Eustace's character eventually affirms Lewis' view of nature as a healing, meditative, and transformative space as represented in the entire series. Contrary to the city's deadening and numbing effect on children, nature is offered as a thought-provoking and emancipating place, which instils self-confidence and courage in children.

In the light of these comparisons between urban space and natural environment provided in the *Chronicles*, it can be said that the Narnian universe, especially the country of Narnia, embodies "Lewisian pastoral paradise, blending the ordinary and the impossible" (Schakel 59-60). The nature in Narnia is simple, pre-historic, primordial but it is simultaneously unworldly, supernatural, and extremely spiritual. Even though it comprises a wide range of materials belonging to the industrial world such as sewing machines, brewed beer, factory-made clothing items, Narnia "is unspoiled by the side effects of urbanization and industrialization" (Schakel 60). As Peter J. Schakel writes

> Lewis's ideal world has no cities, factories, pollution, or poverty. […] The story presupposes factories, shops, farms, laborers, shopkeepers, and farmers: but they are invisible. [Narnia] is a place of quite natural

beauty where simple wants are filled without the messiness and unpleasantness that usually accompany their fulfillment. (60)

It should be noted that, it would be a fallacy to read the *Chronicles* simply as an anti-urbanist or anti-industrialist propaganda, which suggests a complete return to the pre-modern times. The *Chronicles* also portrays ideal societies such as Narnia where monarchical government, food production, and manufacture are conducted in harmony with nature showing great care for the living beings as individuals. Therefore, Lewis' celebration of nature over urban spaces is a generic quality on the one hand, as children's literature conventionally associates childhood with nature. On the other hand, urban settings juxtaposed against the Narnian nature function as a way of relaying Lewis' Romantic ideals. Most significantly, his portrayal of natural and urban spaces as distinct opposites serves as a device through which he can expose ethical questions concerning the relationship between nature and city, nature and urbanisation, nature and modernity.

2. 4. Spatial Dualities: Home and Away in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Home as a cultural metaphor is associated with family and safety, and it is a sanctuary, where the family members are secure from potential dangers of the outer world. Nevertheless, in literary tradition, home might be an ambivalent space the attributes of which can be used in varied manners depending on the context and the genre of the text. In line with its cultural connotations, home in literature might symbolize a departure point. Leaving home opens the doors of a dangerous and unknown outside world, which eventually leads to experiencing, learning, and change for the characters. In children's fantasy literature, the opposition between home and away becomes highly important in interpreting the text as the genre inherently engages with the motifs of adventure and journey. Most outstandingly, secondary world narratives often dwell on the child hero's transition from his/her familiar surroundings to a new and unfamiliar environment. Thus, being away from home and the motif of journey give way to other interrelated polarities in children's literature such as family and stranger, inside and outside, safety and danger, familiar and unknown/unexpected as well as domestic sphere and public sphere.

In *The Hidden Adult: Defining Children's Literature*, Perry Nodelman explores home and away as "an essential doubleness" representing "opposing sets of values" (59). Nevertheless, he points at the fluidity of their associations and writes that "[q]uestions about the meanings of home and away […] seem to be central to cultural ideas about childhood in the time in which a specific children's literature has existed" (*The Hidden Adult* 59). Viewed from this perspective, the associations of home and away vary in relation to the ideological context at a given time. For instance, the earlier forms of children's literature such as fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and folk tales display children's attempts at leaving home as a sign of disobedience and put children in life-threatening situations as a punishment for not obeying adults. Nevertheless, in modern

children's fantasy literature home designating domesticity and safety has to be abandoned in order for the child hero to make an entrance to an alternative world and to save it from various evil forces. Leaving home thus turns into a literary convention in children's fantasy literature. As children depart home, they face a wide range of dangers in the outer world, but they simultaneously mature and gain awareness experienced both on individual and social levels.

In Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia,* home and away duality also becomes an ambivalent category simultaneously affirming and collapsing its cultural and conventional attributes. The dichotomy between home and away serves to explore the power relations between adults and children and provides social and cultural implications at the same time. As such, Lewis makes use of the binary of home and away as a means of contemplating on the real-world issues such as political and economic problems and exploring the relationship between space and power.

In the *Chronicles*, the hierarchy between home and away duality thus becomes a fluctuating one. Although home is a holy place in Lewis' fiction, the idea of home representing family and familial affection remains to be conspicuously absent throughout the series. Even when home is present in the sense of shelter and protection, it simultaneously proves to be a space where there are clear-cut divisions of power among its inhabitants and there is distinct oppression imposed on children who are painstakingly seeking freedom. In "Your Room or Mine? Spatial Politics in Children's Literature" - an exploration of the representations of home and its deconstruction in children's literature - Ann Alston also draws attention to the dual nature of the relationship between home and its others (outside/away) in children's books. Alston argues that the idea of home in children's literature brings into mind "hams hanging up, beamed ceilings, log fires and Welsh dressers" (15). She adds that "this is the literary cliché" - a pastoral ideal which promotes domesticity and creates a sense of cosiness

and familiarity (15-21). The ideal home, as described by Alston, is barely present in Narnia books. When it appears, it belongs to Narnia not to the real world. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Mr. Tumnus' house meets such a cliché to a great extent. When Lucy enters his house, she thinks that

> she had never been in a nicer place. It was a little, dry, clean cave of reddish stone with a carpet on the floor and two little chairs […] and a table and a dresser and a mantelpiece over the fire and above that a picture of an old Faun with a grey beard. In one corner there was a door which Lucy thought must lead to Mr. Tumnus' bedroom, and on one wall was a shelf full of books. (*LWW* 19)

Even though Mr. Tumnus has no family, his house becomes reminiscent of an ideal home that children lack throughout the series. Hence, Lucy's falling asleep in Tumnus' house serves to highlight her longing for a home where she feels safe, fed, and cared about. The Beavers' house is also such a place where the Pevensie children feel the familial warmth in the midst of cold Narnia. The first thing Lucy notices in the house is a "kind-looking old she-beaver sitting in the corner with a thread in her mouth working busily at her sewing machine" (*LWW* 68). Moreover, with potatoes "on boiling" and the kettle "singing", the interiors of the Beavers' house evokes a sense of domesticity (68). Juxtaposed against the loneliness, political unrest, and gloomy atmosphere pertaining to the outer world, the Beavers' small prudent underground house functions as a vehicle to emphasise the value of a humble home that is managed by the loving mother and provided by the father. Mrs. Beaver's preparation of food and blankets for the journey awaiting them can even be read as an attempt to maintain homely comfort for the children as much as possible. As such, Mr. and Mrs. Beaver and their family house become a reminder of a united family as opposed to the English houses, which lack loving and caring parents.

Even though the Beavers' house embodies the image of an ideal home, the division of labour and the Pevensies' roles within the house reveal space and power as extremely interrelated. The spaces allocated for Mr. and Mrs. Beaver as well as for the Pevensie siblings reflect Lewis' promotion of the traditional family structure which abides by the patriarchal mind-set. The space in the Beavers' house is organized in line with the traditional attributes of gender roles and the conventional ideas of childhood. Mrs. Beaver is linked with the domestic sphere, the interiors of the house, specifically the kitchen, and her sewing machine. Nevertheless, Mr. Beaver is presented as actively present in the public sphere to provide for the house. As such, men become mediators and bridges between the domestic and public spheres. The children, on the other hand, play subsidiary roles within the house mainly in accordance with their genders. While Lucy and Susan help cook the food and lay the table, Peter as the eldest male sibling goes out with Mr. Beaver to catch fish for the dinner. Viewed from this aspect, home ensures safety, yet it also exercises oppression of a subtle kind on the family members through the usage of spaces within and around the house. In terms of the relationship between power and space depicted in children's literature, Alston considers home "a complex environment essentially controlled by adults" (15). As Alston writes, home is

> the construction of space within the home is a process that is actually heavily invested with issues of power and control. […] The home is a complex environment essentially controlled by adults. […] while adults are free to roam around the house, children are often restricted to certain rooms - rarely, for example, are they allowed to play in the study. By looking at space in children's literature it becomes apparent that the seemingly united family, while celebrated on the one hand, is simultaneously broken down and questioned. (15-16)

Alston's view of homes as simultaneously protective and oppressive places for children applies well to the other homes presented in Lewis' books. In the *Chronicles*, houses and interiors of the real-world buildings also become images of suppression and sorrow for the English children. In *The Magician's House*, Digory is treated almost as if a parasite in Uncle Andrew's house. He is strictly prohibited from the attic, which Uncle Andrew uses as a laboratory for his experiments with magic. Moreover, when Digory and his friend Polly decide to do some secret indoor exploring through the tunnels that connect the houses, what they encounter becomes dust, darkness, and draught signifying the soullessness and barrenness of the childless and loveless house (*MN* 15).

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* the Pevensies' London house is also against the home-ideal, as it does offer neither safety nor a united family to the children under the air raids. Even though the Professor's house becomes a shelter for the Pevensie siblings during the ongoing war, where they are provided with food and other needs, it still does not provide the children with the familial warmth. It is, after all, not a *homely home* with its "long passages and rows of doors leading into empty rooms" (*LWW* 10). To the children, it looks creepy with rooms containing bizarrely random objects such as "pictures", "a suit of armour", and "a harp" (*LWW* 11). The Pevensies' aunt's house in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is also extremely oppressive as Lucy and Edmund are bullied by their then-spoiled cousin, Eustace. In *The Horse and His Boy*, Shasta's house in Calormen similarly turns out to be a house of abuse of various kinds. Shasta is exposed to psychological and physical violence at the same time. Despite being a child, Shasta functions more like a housemaid "mending and washing the nets, cooking the supper, and cleaning the cottage" (*HHB* 11). In *Prince Caspian*, the children are already devastated by being sent away from their family house to attend the boarding school. In *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle,* Lewis barely depicts a home that can be associated with family and its attributes.

In this context, Narnia books simultaneously construct and deconstruct the traditional images of home depicted in children's literature. Lewis presents the traditional family house in favourable terms but he simultaneously draws attention to the fact that families might be separated and relationships between family members might be harmed due to various reasons such as war, economic concerns, or diseases. On the one hand, the separated families and lack of family houses echo Lewis' own childhood, which was spent in the absence of his mother and presence of an unattached and prescriptive father. On the other hand, they are reminiscent of Lewis' witnessing the destruction of families during the Second World War and his acceptance of evacuated children into his country house.

In this respect, Narnian homes such as that of the Beaver family and Mr. Tumnus function as a means to compensate for the lack of family houses in the real world. Their homes signify a revival of home in the Romantic sense that is situated within nature offering an isolation from the outer world and its harsh realities. In this regard, the comfort the children find in both Mr. Tumnus' and the Beavers' houses lays bare a nostalgic feeling for pre-war society of nuclear families as well as a happy family house Lewis lacked as a child himself. Viewed from this perspective, Narnia as a secondary world serves as a space not only for reimagining the real-world issues but also for a kind of wish-fulfilment. Amidst the political chaos in Narnia, the very few scenes of cosy homes fulfil one of the primary functions of fantasy literature, which Tolkien conceptualizes as "Escape" in "On Fairy-Stories". The images of familial home intertwined with fantasy elements provide an escape from the war, enemies, and various dangers of the outer world. Thus, homes turn out to be safe places even when they exercise a certain power on children.

Just like houses, the outer world also has a dual nature in Narnia books. Outside proves to be a dangerous space for children in both the real world and Narnia. While the

real world is impaired by the war and its socio-economic outcomes, Narnia is full of vicious creatures, a challenging landscape, witchcraft as well as tyrannical antagonists roaming in various disguises. Nevertheless, the outer world proves to be emancipating and instructive at the same time. In the *Chronicles*, home should be left for good causes such as to acquire freedom that is restricted in family houses or to save other worlds from oppression. All in all, leaving home is essential to children's fantasy literature so that children can initiate the adventures.

Nevertheless, the outside of home belongs to the adults, especially to male ones in Narnia books. Associated with politics, power struggles, and governmental rivalries the public sphere tends to exclude children as well as women. Therefore, leaving home and entering into the public sphere, the children in Narnia surpass the boundaries drawn by the adults. As the children depart home, they leave behind the conventional attributes of childhood that are defined by adults and that tie them to the domestic sphere. With reference to children's books that dwell on departure from home, Perry Nodelman similarly states that

> To be a child, according to those texts, is inevitably a matter of wanting to defy adult wisdom, wanting to emerge from adult protection, and wanting to move past adult ideas about what a child is and should be. Specifically, therefore, these texts are about wanting to leave home. The way in which the texts center their disputes around ideas of home and away makes the actual spaces metaphoric by tying them values and to certain recurring values in particular. (*The Hidden Adult* 64)

In this context, although leaving home is dangerous for children from adult perspective, it turns into an empowering act from children's point of view. As Fiona McCulloch also argues, in Narnia the relocation of children to "an unfamiliar surrounding" leads to "a separation anxiety" but also "a journey that helps to heal the lack of security felt in their

uncanny environment" (*Children's Literature* 93). The sense of unfamiliarity and danger that traditionally characterizes the outside is compensated by the very idea of journeying and exploring. Hence, the children are overjoyed by a sense of freedom as soon as they leave their domestic spaces and enter into the public sphere. For instance, in *The Horse and His Boy*, Shasta feels the independence in the smell of air. The vanishing of the smell of fish, which he associates with his oppressive home, becomes a symbol of his liberation:

> But what Shasta chiefly noticed was the air. He couldn't think what was missing, until at last he realized that there was no smell of fish in it. For, of course, neither in the cottage nor among the nets, had he ever been away from that smell in his life. And this new air was so delicious, and all of his old life seemed far away […]. (*HHB* 25)

Likewise, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, once Lucy is in cold Narnia, she feels "a little frightened [but] very inquisitive and excited as well" (13). Her transition from one world to another through the magical wardrobe turns into a symbol of moving from home to the outside, from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from what is mundane to what could possibly be an exciting experience:

> she could still see the open doorway of the wardrobe and even catch a glimpse of the empty room from which she had set out. […] It seemed to be still daylight there. 'I can always go back if anything goes wrong,' thought Lucy. She began to walk forward, *crunch-crunch* over the snowing through the wood towards the other light. (*LWW* 13-14)

Lucy's feeling of fright and wonder when leaving the Professor's house is also telling of the ambivalence characterizing the home and away dichotomy depicted in children's literature. As the given quotation points out, outside of the house is tempting and attractive for Lucy because it is unknown and full of surprises, yet the possibility of

returning home any time is also reassuring. Therefore, the negative and positive meanings attributed to the inside and outside of the house depend on its opposite. In a clearer sense, home is suppressive compared to the freedom the outside offers, but it comes to mean a refuge and a safe zone to return whenever the outside constitutes a threat.

The representation of the outside as a preferable place prevails in the other books of the series, as well. In *Prince Caspian*, children are transported to Narnia as they are on their way to a boarding school. The boarding school, though not a family house, still represents an adult-governed institution, where children are exposed to authority and power exerted by the adults. As they are transported to a deserted island with “the wood” on one side, with “a sandy beach” and “calm sea” of “a dazzling blue” on the other sides, Peter utters with relief: “This is good enough” (*PC* 13). Edmund’s subsequent outpour reinforces the children’s desire to escape from institutions such as family and home and the roles they are assumed to play within such spaces. Preferring the deserted island over school, Edmund maintains that “This is better than being in a stuffy train on the way back to Latin and French and Algebra!” (*PC* 13). In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Edmund and Lucy similarly feel themselves safer and freer on the Dawn Treader that is sailing on dangerous Narnia seas. The Dawn Treader proves to be much homelier than their aunt’s house:

> Lucy found herself as much at home as if she had been in Caspian’s cabin for weeks, and the motion of the ship did not worry her […] When she had finished dressing she looked out of her window at the water rushing past and took a long deep breath. She felt quite sure they were in for a lovely time. (18)

The outside of home becomes preferable also because it provides children with the possibility of being self-sufficient and independent, hence free from the restrictions

they are exposed to in the family houses. At this point, the movement from home to away also functions to reverse the hierarchy between childhood and adulthood by interchanging the roles children and adults conventionally play in the real world. As Nodelman writes, the journeys in children's literature "inevitably imply psychic journeys, moves from one state of mind to another, from one set of values to another - specifically from adult views of what childhood is and should be to child-centered ones and back again" (*The Hidden Adult* 64). In Narnia, children become rulers, administrators, warriors, healers, politicians, and they play central roles in matters belonging to the adult world. The children's intervention in the public sphere - even if they do it merely in the secondary world - transgresses the conventional ideas and assumptions about childhood making it possible to contemplate on the position of children within and outside the house as individuals.

When considered from this point of view, various instances of transition from home to the outside (home might even stand for England in the real world) display symbolic functions in the entire series, especially taking into consideration the socio-historical context Lewis wrote the books in. Leaving the real world and safe places like the Beavers' house to save Narnia from various malignancies reverses the helplessness of children in the face of a raging war in the real world, which is the Second World War. The chaotic environment of the real world translates into Narnia in terms of evil forces and political conflicts it experiences. In this respect, even though the children cannot escape the effects of the war in the real world, they can take part in the war in Narnia only to end it and bring back the peace. Therefore, such dualities as home and away, safety and danger, leaving and staying also help draw attention to the destructive effects of the war on families, children, family relations, and family houses in the real world. Secondary world fantasy, which presents children as the only means of ending

various social and political conflicts, becomes a fantastic response and solution to the social, ethical, and historical quandaries which Lewis himself experienced with sorrow.

While discussing the representations of home and away duality in children's literature, the child hero's return also requires an exploration. Returning home gives way to inferences regarding the genre, the construction and deconstruction of the power structures, and conventional assumptions about childhood and space. Such scholars of children's literature as Perry Nodelman, Christopher Clausen, and Fiona McCulloch acknowledge *home-away-home* pattern as one of the crucial criteria of children's literature. This narrative structure requires the departure of the child hero from home, it continues with a wide range of adventures and concludes with his/her returning home as a changed and expectedly a mature person. Clausen writes that even though escape is present in children's fiction as a tempting phenomenon, "home is clearly where the characters belong and where, after many vicissitudes, they return" (142). On a similar note, with reference to secondary-world fantasies - especially Narnia books - McCulloch contends that

> [f]ollowing the conventions of children's literature, the children are liberated from paternal authority so that they can find new worlds and explore inhibited, but with the reassurance that the primary world is always waiting on this side of the wardrobe door. (*Children's Literature* 94)

As Perry Nodelman similarly affirms in *The Pleasures of Children's Literature*, "children in children's stories tend to learn the value of home by losing it and then finding it again" (qtd. in Gamble and Yates 43). In Narnia books, even though children initially complain about being confined to homes and their worlds, having a home to return becomes comforting as exemplified in the case of Lucy's entrance into Narnia.

Similarly, in *The Silver Chair*, Eustace and Jill also share similar concerns about being away, and they find relief in the possibility of returning home:

> Although she had been longing for something like this, Jill felt frightened. She looked at Scrubb's face and saw that he was frightened too. 'Come on, Pole,' he said in a breathless voice. 'Can we get back? Is it safe?' asked Jill. (*SC* 19)

As Jill gets dreadfully exhausted and homesick towards the end of the novel, she begs Aslan to send them back: "Please, Aslan' said Jill, 'may we go home again?" (*SC* 201). Therefore, the ambivalent relationship between home and away becomes evident in children's contradictory feelings about each space. Children detest home and the real world as long as it represses them. Outside remains to be attractive and a favourable place to be so long as it is safe, entertaining, and empowering.

In all of the books except *The Last Battle*, the child characters return home and to the real world in different ways. Perry Nodelman, who also designates this narrative pattern as "home again", adds that "the home one returns to after being away is not and cannot be the same home one left" (*The Hidden Adult* 65). In children's literature, children change during their time spent away. They mature, earn a distinct power through their adventures, and they find the once-strong oppression weakened when they are back. Nevertheless, the happy return, especially after experiencing the harshness of the outside world, does not always apply to the child characters in Narnia books. When the Narnian children (children who live in Narnia) end their journeys, they often find their real home, hometown, and throne restored. They usually recover their lost identity and fortune. Accordingly, they find it fairly convenient. It proves to be the case with Caspian in *Prince Caspian,* Shasta in *The Horse and His Boy,* and Rillian in *The Silver Chair*. For instance, Caspian settles down happily in his hometown as the rightful king having defeated his usurper uncle, Miraz. Likewise, Rillian returns to his house as the

rightful heir to the throne after he is rescued from the magic of the evil witch by Eustace and Jill. Shasta similarly discovers his noble identity through a set of events, and even though he does not move back to the house he left in the beginning, he discovers his real home and country he is supposed to govern.

However, in the case of real-world children, especially the Pevensie siblings, the houses they return to continue to lack the essential assets that render it *home* in the traditional sense of the word. Moreover, their world remains to be an oppressive and socio-politically chaotic place. Each Narnia book opens with a familial tension and separation of a different kind. Accordingly, each book starts with the children's wish to be away from the real world/home once again with an unconscious desire to fill the void in their lives. As such, the books repetitively deconstruct the binary relationship between home and away, which traditionally prioritizes and favours the former. In the opening scene of *Prince Caspian*, for example, the Pevensie siblings badly want to go back to Narnia once again. In a similar vein, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* opens with Lucy and Edmund's wish to be in Narnia. Even though Eustace used to love Experiment House and bully other children himself, he is presented as extremely discontent with both the school and bullies in *The Silver Chair*, searching for ways of going to Narnia again. In *The Last Battle*, Jill who wants to be back home towards the end of *The Silver Chair*, is now overjoyed to be in Narnia again to help King Tirian and save Narnia from usurpers. As a result, the dualistic relationship between home and away renders the books "ambivalent and double-voiced" (Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult* 67). As Nodelman writes, children's books

> want to say two different things at the same time: that children can and must stay as they are at home in the enclosed space of childhood that adults provide for them but also that children do and must change even

> in order to appreciate the value of the enclosed space. There is a fatal contradiction at their heart. (Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult* 67)

As such, home becomes a safe and oppressive place for children at the same time in Narnia books. Even though the outside of family houses is conventionally dangerous and frightening, it tests, changes, and matures children. Lewis' inscription of the binary of home and away thus epitomizes the ways in which children's literature can construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct the meanings of home and away. Nevertheless, this deconstruction does not come to mean that Lewis denies the sanctity and the necessity of a family house. On the contrary, the children's desire for the outside represents a lamentation felt because of the lack of family houses. In this regard, the final gathering in the Narnian heaven symbolizes a kind of reunion and their arrival at an everlasting home. As a result, Lewis' representation of home and away not only signifies a generic quality and a social criticism, but it also reinforces a theological perception. Family houses and outside are equally and separately important in Narnia books, however, in the end both the characters and readers are assured of the fact that the ultimate home is the eternal afterlife.

2. 5. Gendered Binaries in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

"But battles are ugly when women fight."

(Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 100)

Children's literature proves to be a fruitful space for representing gender roles and gender stereotypes especially when we take into consideration its traditionally didactic and socializing function. The division of gender roles is an inherent quality of children's books established in the earliest examples of the genre. As Perry Nodelman points out, the majority of children's books are written specifically for girls or boys answering "the presumably different tastes and interests of male and female children" (*The Hidden Adult* 173). Conventionally, boys are offered adventure stories, whereas girls are presumed to enjoy domestic stories (Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult* 173). Even when children's books appeal to an audience of both female and male children, gender divisions still mark children's literature offering children with primary or secondary world images, where gender roles are distinct, and domestic and public spheres are distinguished from each other. The affinity of children's literature with the issue of gender renders it an extremely political and ideological medium, which exposes children to a set of values and an ideal social order often through symbolic and covert representations.

Lewis, who can be considered a conservative and traditionalist writer, affirms the patriarchal discourse characterizing the earliest examples of children's literature in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Narnia books juxtapose female and male experience as well as female and male roles in an extremely palpable manner. "[B]ased on the traditional masculine-feminine stereotypes" and normative gender roles, Narnia books offer a hierarchical relationship between such binary pairs as man and woman, manhood and womanhood as well as masculinity and femininity, eventually promoting and glorifying male heroism and men's poignant roles in society (Myers 14). Thus, this section

analyses gender division in Narnia books and aims to reveal how gender binaries contribute to the dualistic structure of the series.

During his lifetime, Lewis witnessed grand socio-economic transformations including the transition from Victorian manners to a considerably egalitarian and democratic society, where women gained both social and legal visibility. Even though Lewis saw the approval of first female students to Oxbridge and women's suffrage, he still did not find it "easy to accept criticism of previously normative values in gender relations" (Loades 162). As Gretchen Bartels contends, Lewis' fiction seems to be "overlooking" such "social realities" as well as transformations as it is abundant in "problematic portraits of women, particularly the New Women" (325). The critics draw attention to a couple of reasons behind Lewis' celebration of patriarchal ideas of gender. On the one hand, Lewis' representation of gender represents a value system stemming from Lewis' theological views. As Bartels draws attention, "Lewis's theological concerns cause him to gloss over problematic social issues which he can only see from his perspective, and not from the perspective of a woman" (325). On the other hand, Lewis' upbringing as well as his social and literary circle seem to have influenced his view of gender. Lewis' loss of his mother at an early age, growing up with a despotic father, transfers between different boarding schools, his service in the army, and his engagement with the male-dominated Inklings might have caused his high esteem for patriarchal standards.

Lewis' conservative ideas about gender roles can actually be traced in his article entitled, "Modern Man and his Categories of Thought." In this article, Lewis complains about social and philosophical transformations that, according to him, changed human mind for the worse. Explaining the reasons that have negatively influenced the "consciousness of modern humanity", Lewis openly includes "The Emancipation of Women" in his list (Bartels 326; Lewis, "Modern Man" 62). He writes that

> the freer women become, the fewer exclusively male assemblies there are. Most men, if free, retire frequently into the society of their own sex: women, if free, do this less often. In modern social life, the sexes are more continuously mixed than they were in earlier periods. This probably has many good results: but it has one bad result. Among young people, obviously, it reduces the amount of serious argument about ideas. […] Any mixed society thus becomes the scene of wit, banter, persiflage, anecdote - of everything in the world rather than prolonged and rigorous discussion on ultimate issues, or of those serious masculine friendships in which such discussion arises. ("Modern Man" 62-63)

For Lewis, women's presence in society decreases the quality and the depth of philosophical and spiritual arguments, and it impairs "the glory of the masculine mind" ("Modern Man" 63). Viewed from this perspective, Narnia books embody nostalgia for the patriarchal society, which Lewis thinks has disappeared. Thus, Lewis returns to traditional literary forms which celebrate patriarchy such as romance, fairy tale, epic, and folk tale. Accordingly, he rejuvenates gender stereotypes such as witches, wise old men, male heroes, princes, and damsels in distress, which are abundant in these traditional genres.[30] It is in this context that Lewis creates the Narnian world with a medieval outlook, and he re-enacts a traditional and ideal social order which reiterates conventional gender roles.

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[30] The critics seem to split over Lewis' portrayal of female characters in his Narnia books. For instance, Philip Pullman considers Lewis misogynist. By contrast, Karla Faust Jones argues that none of the heroines in the books "conforms to a familiar female stereotype" developing "their individual talents unbound by social convention" (19). Neither of these extremist ideas constitutes the basis of this chapter. This chapter aims to explore how the novels divide and contrast gender roles and reinforce the hierarchy between the binary relationship between woman and man, womanhood and manhood, masculinity and femininity.

Lewis celebrates the patriarchal order and creates a hierarchy between manhood and womanhood most profoundly through his inscription of male-heroism. As Margery Hourihan writes,

> Hero stories inscribe the male/female dualism, asserting the male as the norm, as what it means to be human, and defining the female as the other - deviant, different, dangerous. The essence of the hero's masculinity is his assertion of control over himself, his environment and his world. (68)

In the Narnia books, Lewis reiterates the hero-myth as formulated by Hourihan. Male heroes in Lewis' story embody the standards of ideal masculinity and normative values, whilst female characters remain to be inferior figures who need to be controlled, guided, and directed. Such hierarchical relationship between genders becomes most evident probably in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* through the characterization of the Pevensie siblings. The power relations, tensions, and distribution of work between the Pevensies - Peter, Susan, Edward, and Lucy - illustrate what Lewis considers to be an ideal relationship between genders. A symbolic interpretation of the siblings' relationship shows that Peter takes on the role of father and turns out to be the most heroic member of the group. Peter is simultaneously authoritative and caring in accordance with the idealized image of a father. He is also the embodiment of ideal masculinity being physically and mentally invulnerable. Susan, on the other hand, assumes the role of their absent mother. She takes care of the siblings' domestic needs and acts like the protective and nurturing mother of the family. In this respect, Susan becomes an authority figure among the quartet, but her authoritativeness as an elder sister and a mother figure extends only to the degree of telling the youngsters when to sleep and eat.

The division of roles between genders as exemplified in the case of Peter and Susan can be observed in the entire series. Narnia books tend to present characters in

pairs, generally consisting of a male and a female child. This kind of characterization not only complements the dualistic structure of the books, but it also reinforces the gendered binaries pertaining to the entire series. The relationship between Peter and Susan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* Digory and Polly in *The Magician's Nephew*, Shasta and Aravis in *The Horse and His Boy*, Edmund and Lucy in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Eustace and Jill in *The Silver Chair* proves to be affirmative of the power relations between binaries of gender. Even though each duo complements each other by playing different roles throughout their journey, the male characters become the central characters by changing the direction of events and eventually earning a great triumph and recognition within the society. The girls contrarily become subsidiary characters throughout the narrative acting as either loyal assistants or faithful wives to the men. Therefore, the novels put forward certain and unchangeable standards that inform ideal femininity and ideal masculinity throughout the narrative. Accordingly, they depict and categorise female and male characters in terms of their harmony or disharmony with the patriarchal standards of their genders.

Lewis' ideal femininity requires women to be naive, kind-hearted, and fragile. However, the frailty of female characters does not equal to weakness, instead it is presented as a normal and inherent female trait. In relation to this, the female characters remain to be in the background throughout the narrative, and they do not take part in the critical and dangerous tasks. As Susan Cornell Poskanzer similarly writes, "[u]nfortunately Narnia itself is not a province of equal rights. Lewis protects girls from the most violent fights and revolting scenes" (525). For instance, when the witch's wolf surrounds Lucy and Susan, they desperately call for Peter's help. The girls' need for a male assistance is obviously a proof the series' emphasis on the ideal femininity as fragile and delicate. Peter's immediate response to the call, on the other hand, is simultaneously revealing of the idealized masculinity. After Peter's success against the

wolf, Aslan rewards him with knighthood calling him "Sir Peter, Wolf's Bane" (*LWW* 121). Reminiscent of medieval romances, Peter's knightly fight serves as a test for him to prove his manhood and masculine power. As such, while the girls reiterate the naive and helpless female stereotype, Peter fulfils the requirements of ideal masculinity, which needs men to be bold, heroic, sturdy, as well as protective of women who are in distress.

The Pevensies' encounter with Father Christmas on their way to Aslan not only accentuates such gender division but also reinforces the religious basis of gender roles. Father Christmas' gifts for the siblings accord with their gender as well as chivalric values, eventually rendering womanhood inferior to its counterpart. Father Christmas gives Peter a sword and a shield, and he reminds Peter that the "time to use them is […] near at hand" foreshadowing the approaching war. Nevertheless, the nature of the gifts and Father Christmas' attitude change largely when it is the girls' turn. Father Christmas hands Susan "a bow and a quiver full of arrows", which he warns her to use only in great need (*LWW* 100). He also hands her "a little ivory horn" which would bring help wherever she is. As for Lucy, Father Christmas hands her a bottle of healing cordial and a dagger. However, he adds that Lucy would not need the dagger as she is never going to need to fight. When Lucy articulates her wish to take part in the battle claiming that "she could be brave enough", Father Christmas responds imperiously maintaining that "battles are ugly when women fight" (*LWW* 100). As Candice Fredrick and Sam McBride indicate, "C. S. Lewis's hierarchical understanding of gender, grounded on medieval worldview, identifies war as a man's realm" (29).[31] As a result, the gifts and their symbolic references serve to emphasise male-heroism and promote male presence in the public sphere.

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[31] Fredrick and McBride draw attention to the fact that Lewis was not "a pacifist" and never "desired war for war's sake" as he had "first-hand experiences in the First World War" (29). Therefore, his association of battles with masculinity as signs of strength should be read as a re-visitation of the literary tropes in medieval literature.

Although the people of Narnia crown all of the Pevensie siblings in the end, Peter becomes “the high ruler” whom the others are all obliged to (Poskanzer 525). While Susan, Edmund, and Lucy are hailed respectively as “the Gentle”, “the Just”, and “the Valiant”, Peter is hailed as “King Peter the Magnificent” symbolizing his power and superiority (*LWW* 166-167). The future of the siblings in Narnia is also shaped as compatible with their genders:

> And Peter became a tall and deep-chested man and a great warrior, and he was called King Peter the Magnificent. And Susan grew into a tall and gracious woman with black hair that fell almost to her feet and the kings of the countries beyond the sea began to send ambassadors asking for her hand in marriage. […] Edmund was a graver and quieter man than Peter, and great council and judgement. […] But as for Lucy, she was always gay and golden-haired, and all princes in those parts desired her to be their Queen […]. (*LWW* 166-167)

Consequently, the dynamics of the siblings’ relationship and their future engender a set of interrelated dualities stemming from the binary relationship between man and woman. The girls are defined in relation to qualities associated with ideal womanhood and femininity including kind-heartedness, naivety, innocence, marriage, and beauty; whereas the boys are characterized by qualities conventionally attributed to manhood and masculinity such as justness, ruling abilities as well as courage.

Such interconnected binaries of gender become manifest also through Shasta and Aravis’ partnership in *The Horse and His Boy.* Aravis starts the narrative as a courageous and self-confident girl escaping an arranged marriage. She even declines Shasta’s offer of help in the beginning displaying an individualistic attitude. Nevertheless, Narnia books do not present Aravis’ assertiveness in a favourable manner. Even when Aravis gets excited at the idea of taking part in the battle maintaining that it

"must have been wonderful" (which is quite similar to Lucy's case), Lewis still does not let women interfere in the men's battles (*HHB* 172). As such, the series requires once again that the characters act in accordance with their genders. Correspondingly, Aravis gradually transforms into a subsidiary character and the focus of the narrative transforms into the children's effort to save Archenland from invasion and Shasta's discovery of his identity as Prince Cor, the heir to the Archenland.

Aravis' initial temperament and aggressiveness also yield to a collaborative attitude. As Paul F. Ford similarly maintains, *The Horse and His Boy* becomes "the chronicle of her transformation from arrogance and self-centeredness into an example of true Narnia nobility" (36). Viewed from this perspective, the novel asserts another hierarchy that relates to gender, which is between female cause and male cause. The novel prioritizes politics, male-heirs, and governmental crises over Aravis' individual pursuits as a woman. In the end, Shasta transforms from a peasant boy into a courageous and noble prince, however, Aravis turns from an assertive and aggressive girl into a loyal wife to Shasta and the mother of future kings. Aravis' love for Shasta and her responsibilities as the new queen of Archenland outweigh her initial aim to become a free woman. In this regard, the novel not only promotes an ideal female and male companionship but also offers a restoration of the patriarchal family and governmental structure. Hence, the characters' transformations help stabilize the hierarchies between gender-related dualities such as fatherhood and motherhood, public domain and domestic sphere, government and house, ruling and subordination, mental faculties and emotive responses, assertive masculinity and naive femininity.

The gender-oriented power relations between female and male children even characterize the relationships between anthropomorphic animals in the series. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Mr. and Mrs. Beaver help reinforce normative gender roles by paralleling Peter and Susan's relationship as the ideal husband and wife.

Even Father Christmas gives Mrs. Beaver "a new and better sewing machine" as a gift, which emphasises her affinity with the domestic sphere (*LWW* 99). In a similar vein, in *The Horse and His Boy*, Shasta and Aravis' talking horses Bree and Hwin unfurl such gendered discourse. Bree's pride and self-confidence as "a [male] great war-horse" are juxtaposed against Hwin's "shy" and "sensible" nature as "a highly bred mare" (*HHB* 43; Ford 185). Bree chivalrously offers Hwin male support and protection on their way to Narnia: "I trust, Madam Hwin, you will accept such assistance and protection as I may be able to give you on the journey?" (*HHB* 34). Hwin's naive and lady-like acceptance saying that "I don't mind going with you, Mr. War-Horse" strengthens patriarchal standards of ideal femininity, simultaneously affirming chivalrous male-heroism and masculine power.

The hierarchy between man and woman exemplified in the relationships between these paired characters echoes Lewis' ideas concerning the relationship between husband and wife in *The Four Loves*, which contemplates on different kinds of life from a Christian perspective. In this study, Lewis forms an analogy between Church/Christ and wife/husband by which he trivializes the place of women in society and in her relationship with men. Lewis maintains that

> The husband is the head of wife just in so far as he is to her what Christ is to the Church. He is to love her as Christ loved the Church […] This headship, then, is dost fully embodied not in the husband we should all wish to be but in him whose marriage is most like a crucifixion; whose wife receives most and gives least, is most unworthy of him, is in her own mere nature least lovable. For the Church has no beauty but what the Bride-groom gives her; he does not find, but makes her lovely. (*The Four Loves* 148)

The husband's leadership as indicated in the quotation arguably underlies Lewis' presentation of the relationship between male and female characters in the series.

Lewis' female characters are often marked by their emotive responses to events, hence their inability to think analytically. The male characters, however, prove to be prudent, cautious, and eligible to act strategically. For instance, in the beginning of *The Silver Chair*, Eustace teases Jill for her incapacity to use the compass relating it to her gender: "It's an extraordinary thing about girls that they never know the points of the compass" (16). Even the narrator affirms Eustace by mocking Jill's misdirection: "Scrubb was quite right in saying that Jill (I don't know about girls in general) didn't think much about points of the compass. Otherwise, she would have known, when the sun began getting in her eyes, that she was travelling pretty nearly due west" (*SC* 32). Through such details, the series continuously underlines the leading abilities of male characters and tends to represent the female characters as fragile and inept, hence dependent on male guidance and protection.

The binary of man and woman as represented in the *Chronicles* can also be examined in terms of antagonistic female characters. Lewis' portrayal of women as inferior to men falls into two categories. On the one hand, Lewis portrays naive, innocent, good-willed, and domestic female characters such as Susan, Mrs. Beaver, Lucy, and Jill. On the other hand, he presents strong but evil, cruel, and tyrannical female characters such as Jadis in *The Magician's Nephew*, the eponymous White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and the Green Witch in *The Silver Chair*. Margery Hourihan writes that strong female figures such as "witches, sirens, fatal enchantresses and other evil female creatures […] do not fit comfortably into the pattern of interrelated dualisms at the centre of Western culture which asserts the supremacy of the European patriarchy" (175). In line with this, the witches in the *Chronicles* represent "the monstrous feminine, which patriarchy must keep in check" (McCulloch, *Children's Literature* 95). In accordance with his ideas asserted in "Modern Man", Lewis attributes governmental, political, and intellectual skills to men.

The novels accordingly present these female stereotypes as villainous since they lay claim to the throne, which is a male domain. In this respect, the evilness of the witches stems from the fact that they trespass onto the public sphere and consider themselves qualified enough to replace men. Nevertheless, as Alan Jacobs underlines, "the story of Narnia concerns an unacknowledged but true King" and as such, the novels never offer a female figure that is able to rule Narnia truly and properly (274). As a result, these witches are deemed usurpers hence villains, who bring chaos and disarray to Narnia, which should and could only be quenched by men.

The evil witches of Narnia obtain a remarkable power sometimes by gathering an army or taking control of the government even if for a short time; nevertheless, the source of their strength is trivial compared to the masculine power, which is primarily associated with physicality and mental faculties. As Fredrick and McBride maintain the "evil queens […] rely more on magic than physical prowess" (38). As such, they prove to be dangerous to not only the masculine physicality but also the patriarchal notions of reason and sense. These witches win the affection of men not through love, friendship, and kinship as it is the case with Susan, Lucy, Jill, and Mrs. Beaver, but through evil magic, which contradicts with both the religious and patriarchal discourse in the novels. The conflict between heroic male characters and evil witches accordingly gives way to other gendered binaries. Man and woman are equalled respectively with order and chaos, faith and heresy, lawfulness and unlawfulness, logic and magic, reason and irrationality.

Such gender binaries become exceedingly evident in the relationship between Prince Rillian and the Green Witch in *The Silver Chair.* The Green Witch kidnaps and bewitches Rillian to sit on the throne herself. Her spell on Rillian causes him to lose his memory, leading to a kind of insanity. Under the influence of the witch's spell, Prince Rillian considers the evil witch to be "of divine race" knowing "neither age nor death"

(*SC* 135). In addition, Rillian expresses his gratitude to the witch since she promises him, in his words, "a great kingdom in Overland" as well as "her own most gracious hand in marriage" (*SC* 135). Rillian's loyalty and service to the witch out of insanity disrupt not only male dominance in governmental issues but also the hierarchal relationship between men and women, as the witch supposedly protects and rewards Prince Rillian. However, once the spell is broken, Rillian is no longer the Green Witch's captive and inferior. He becomes the patriotic, powerful, and royal man again:

> I am now in my right mind, and there are two things I will say to you. First - as for your Ladyship's design of putting me at the head of an army of Earthmen so that I may break out into the Overworked and there, by main force, make myself king over some nation that never did me wrong - murdering their natural lords and holding their throne as a bloody and foreign tyrant - now that I know myself, I do utterly abhor and renounce is as plain villainy. And second: I am the King's son of Narnia, Rillian, the only child of Caspian, Tenth of that name, whom some call Caspian the Seafarer. Therefore, Madam, it is my purpose, as it is also my duty, to depart suddenly from your Highness's court into my own country. (*SC* 149)

A similar set of gendered binaries prevails in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Magician's Nephew*, as well. Like the Green Witch, the White Witch makes use of her magical powers as a weapon against male rationality and reasoning. Having eaten the magical Turkish Delight, Edmund is deprived of logical and ethical thinking, and he is driven by pride, egocentrism, and selfishness characterizing the very nature of evil witches. The spellbound Edmund thwarts the traditional hierarchy between men and women accepting both the protection of and service to the White Witch. Similarly, in *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory's hesitation to take the forbidden apples to the real world on the suggestion of Jadis - so that he can cure his ill mother - is

a sign of weakness.[32] His hesitation stemming from his impulses and emotions contrasts with the masculine way of thinking, planning, and calculating. Nevertheless, Digory achieves to defy Jadis' temptation through evaluating the moral aspect of his action. These three male captives regain their *masculine* consciousness and sanity before causing greater catastrophes. As McCulloch contends, "[t]he restoration of order [in Narnian universe] involves a reinforcement of patriarchal values, particularly in relation to gender roles" (*Children's Literature* 95). Therefore, the defeat of Jadis, the White Witch, and the Green Witch by respectively Digory, Peter, and Eustace sanitizes the Narnian universe from female evilness. Once saved from the hands of evil female characters, the throne is handed over to their rightful kings or male heirs. Therefore, the restoration of the patriarchal government brings back the peaceful environment through reorganising the disrupted hierarchy between genders.

The conflict between male heroes and the witches does not only serve to emphasise and celebrate ideal masculinity and patriarchal dominance. These evil women also function as a means to draw attention to the ideal femininity and womanhood, specifically when compared to the domestic, submissive, and subservient female figures discussed before. The witches not only resist being subservient to patriarchy but also refuse to abide by the standards of ideal femininity. As McCulloch points out, the White Witch "is unmaternal", and so are Jadis and the Green Witch, and "women without so-called maternal instincts are considered unnatural even now in society" (*Children's Literature* 96). The witches negate the attributes of the female-ideal such as fertility, domesticity, and motherhood. In that respect, they re-enact the feminized evil embodied in Lilith, Adam's first wife as well as in Circe, the evil temptress in Homer's *Odyssey* - cultural and literary female figures who decline to adopt the conventional attributes of their gender. In one of his writings, Lewis already

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[32] Jadis' attempted temptation of Digory to steal the forbidden apples is comparable to the myth of Adam and Eve.

acknowledges taking his inspiration from Circe in creating the White Witch (Graham 32). Similarly, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Mr. Beaver tells children that the White Witch "comes from your father Adam's first wife, her they called Lilith. And on the other she comes of the giants. No, no, there isn't a drop of real human blood in the Witch" (76). Mrs. Beaver's remarks render the witch, in McCulloch's words, "demonic in a Christian affirmation of patriarchy" (*Children's Literature* 96). More outstandingly, they dehumanize her by equalling female ambition and power with being nonhuman and unworldly.

Just like these religious and literary female figures, the Narnian witches refuse to be domestic goddesses, caring mothers, and subservient wives. They use their female sexuality as a vehicle on the path to their aims. It is hinted throughout the narrative that Jadis, the White Witch, and the Green Witch can actually be the same woman re-appearing in different forms at different times for the same purpose, which is to take over the patriarchal throne. Deprived of individuality, the Narnian witches as well as their religious, mythological, and literary counterparts function as stock characters and stereotypical embodiments of the kind of femininity that is against the norm. Such evil female figures can alternatively be read as transgressive characters declining patriarchal dominance and conventional gender roles; nevertheless, being "wild and irrational, governed by emotions and physical hungers", they stand out as opposites of male characters that represent intelligence, rationality, and civilization (Hourihan 175). Thus, juxtaposed against the heroic male characters, they paradoxically continue to "serve the ideological purposes of the [hero] myth perfectly" (Hourihan 175).

To conclude, gender roles and gender distinctions have an important place in the moral direction of Lewis' fiction for children. Lewis founds both the primary world and Narnia on the traditional and patriarchal standards of womanhood and manhood. Even the most conventional instalments of fantasy literature such as archetypal

characterization, anthropomorphic animals, and chivalric codes operate altogether in the service of separating and defining differences between genders. In line with this, the goodness/morality or evilness/immorality of both female and male characters depends on patriarchal ideals and ideas. It is in this context that the series constantly compares and contrasts (fe)male characters to (fe)male characters, eventually putting forth a normative image for each gender. Consequently, such dualistic representations prove analogous to Lewis' treatment of other binary pairs in the series and reveal the narrative as one structured on oppositions and polarizations. In addition, the dualities of gender as represented in the *Chronicles* display children's fantasy literature as interwoven with gendered discourses that are resistant to change and alternative viewpoints, and they reveal children's fantasy literature as a powerful vehicle for gender appropriation, which functions subtly through the imaginative qualities of fantasy literature.

2. 6. Physical/Bodily Dualities in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

“[…] the great mistake of teaching children that they have souls.
[…] they ought to be taught that they have bodies,
and that their bodies die;
while they themselves live on.” (MacDonald, *Annals* n. pag.)

The Chronicles of Narnia engages with such concepts as visibility, physicality, and appearances which can mainly be related to Lewis’ heavy reliance on symbolism and the archetypal representations in creating an alternative world image. Lewis’ imagined Narnia is inhabited by a myriad of races, animal species, anthropomorphic animals, supernatural, and mythological creatures which are based variably on Norse or Greek mythologies, Western folklore, and the fairy tale tradition. As the real-world children meet a wide range of characters along their journey such as witches, fairies, monsters, dragons, contours, and talking animals, the narrative inevitably engenders references and inferences regarding beauty, ugliness, deformity, and monstrosity. Lewis’ religious and moral sensibilities, which actually constitute the very essence of his series, inform his representation of the physical body. Thus, the *Chronicles* explores such dualistic patterns as physical beauty and internal goodness, physicality and spirituality, beauty and monstrosity in communication with the binary of body and soul. In accordance with Lewis’ Christian allegory, the series links the physical body mainly to materialism and worldliness, while elaborating on the soul as the essence of one’s being, which will be carried to an eternal afterlife in the end. As such, this section analyses the multifaceted representations of bodily and physical attributes in the *Chronicles.* It explores how Lewis’ depictions of the “monstrous” female body, bodily transformations, animalistic bodies, and deformed bodies tie in with the moral framework of the series and reinforce the religious discourse, patriarchal ideals, moral sensibilities, and the dualistic relationship between body and soul in the narrative.

Lewis' representation of the female body is of great significance in understanding the underlying messages and ideologies behind Lewis' ideas concerning physicality and body in the *Chronicles*. As indicated earlier in this study, Lewis' depiction of female characters engenders fevered discussions among the critics as to whether Lewis is a misogynist. Even if not a misogynist, Lewis celebrates the patriarchy and normative gender roles in the *Chronicles* through his depiction of heroic men juxtaposed against the domestic and subservient female characters. Lewis' patriarchal mind-set and his religious views similarly inform his depiction of the female body. On the one hand, the female body serves as an indicator of a female character's confirmation or refusal of patriarchal standards. On the other hand, it mirrors to what extent a certain female character abides by the Christian values as promoted by Lewis in the series.

At the juncture of patriarchal and Christian values, Lewis situates the monstrous female body only to embody the rebellious, the evil, hence the other. In creating the monstrous female body, Lewis resorts to various literary, folkloric, and Biblical sources. He embodies the monstrous female body mainly in the White Queen/the White Witch and the Lady of the Green Kirtle/the Green Witch. As Jean E. Graham notes, in Narnia books, "[t]he witches know they are beautiful, and use their beauty not to bring pleasure to men, but to put others under their control" (40). The female body becomes a weapon, in other words, a means the evil women use against men and patriarchal social institutions. Even though the utilisation of the female body earns these female characters a certain power, they are rendered demonic, evil, and malignant for threatening both the patriarchal and religious order. The White Witch and the Green Witch are both nameless women defined by their physical qualities and their clothes, hence their names. Lewis makes use of colours to denote the witches' beauty and monstrosity at the same time. The White Witch is,

> a great lady, taller than any woman that Edmund had ever seen. She was also covered in white fur up to her throat and held a long straight golden wand in her right hand and wore a golden crown on her head. Her face was white — not merely pale, but white like snow on paper or icing-sugar, except for her very red mouth. It was a beautiful face in other respects, but proud and cold and stern. (*LWW* 33)

The whiteness of her skin and her white fur make her an attractive, sexual, and beautiful woman in Edmund's eyes. However, it also symbolizes the eternal winter and cold she has brought to Narnia through evil magic. Margery Hourihan argues that even the White Witch's use of language parallels her sexual body. She asks Edmund to look at "two little hills" and says "my house is between those two hills" (*LWW* 183). As Hourihan notes, "The words evoke a sense of the female body, and of the possibility of entering it" (183). In this regard, the witch's body becomes everything that defines her: her illusionary beauty, weapon, identity, power, sexuality, and her home. Unlike the good-willed female believers of Narnia, the White Witch takes her destructive power from her physicality not from a spiritual inwardness. Such a reading renders the White Witch a rebel against not only the patriarchal notion of domesticity but also the Christian emphasis on soul and spirituality. She punishes the betrayers by turning them into stones, and her display of them as decorations in her garden becomes a parody of her own soullessness.

The villain of *The Silver Chair*, the Lady of the Green Kirtle, who is also referred to as the Emerald Witch, the Green Witch, and the Queen of Underland parallels the White Witch in terms of her evil plans as well as her taking advantage of her body as a weapon against the religious and patriarchal authorities. She achieves to mesmerize everyone with her "long, fluttering dress of dazzling green" at once (*SC* 79). Drinian describes her as

> tall and great, shining, and wrapped in a thin garment as green as poison. And the Prince started at her like a man out of his wits. But suddenly the lady was gone, Drinian knew not where; and they two returned to Cair Paravel. It struck in Drinian's mind that this shining green woman was evil. (*SC* 57)

As hinted at in the given-quotation, the sexual and attractive female body is monstrous because it is dangerous to the rational masculine mind. The Green Witch's greenness is a symbol of her association with poison and her true form, which is a serpent. The Lady of the Green Kirtle echoes Snow White's stepmother, who transforms from a haggard into a beautiful woman through magic. Her body similarly shifts between a seductive woman and a disgusting serpent. Moreover, her beastliness is evinced through her association with "the ruined city of the giants" and her home, Underland, where she lives in "a dark realm" (Graham 40). While the Green Witch's friendship with the giants who feed on human flesh parallels her monstrosity, her home below the earth symbolizes her serpentine form. As Cathy McSporran highlights, "poison is what she is and what she does" (197). The Green Witch has a poisonous mind, which finds ways to manipulate Lord Rillian and the children through her neat and royal outlook, yet when she becomes a serpent, she carries the deadliest venom, which has actually caused the death of Lord Rillian's mother. Lewis thus presents physical beauty imitable and deceptive, hence potentially dangerous. Indeed, the beauty of the witches proves to be a matter of magic and witchcraft not a natural one. In this respect, the beautiful and sexual female body functions as a cover for the evil witches, that is to say, their bodies mask their internal malignancy. Nevertheless, the Green Witch's transformation into her serpent form as depicted in the end of *The Silver Chair* becomes a pornographic and a highly grotesque visualization of the monstrous feminine:

> The long green train of her skirt thickened and grew solid, and seemed to be all one piece with the writhing green pillar of her interlocked legs. And that writhing green pillar was curving and swaying as if it had no joints, or else were all joints. Her head was thrown far back and while her nose grew longer and longer, every other part of her face seemed to disappear, except her eyes. […] the change was complete, and the great serpent which the Witch had become, green as poison, thick as Jill's waist, had flung two or three coils of its loathsome body round the Prince's legs. (*SC* 157)

Once the Green Witch turns into a serpent, she is now in her most disgusting and formidable form. Her transformation becomes an incarnation of the monstrous personality in the monstrous body. For Lord Rillian, the Green Witch changes from "the most beautiful thing that was ever made" and "fair thing" into a nameless "creature", "the horrible thing", "worm" which he eventually kills as if killing an insect (*SC* 57-158). The extermination of the monstrous female body brings not only a regaining of the rational and reasonable masculine mind but also a rehabilitation of the patriarchal government since Lord Rillian returns to his country as the sane and rightful heir in the end.

All of the witches' physical features are marked by excessiveness, that is to say an excessive height, an excess of colours, excessive hair, and an excessive sexuality. Such excessiveness, despite rendering them beautiful, becomes a symbol of their demonic and harmful nature. Most significantly, their bodily excessiveness contrasts with the domesticated and subservient females, who are beautiful in moderate degrees and who are not characterized by their sexuality. As Graham points out, "approved adult women" such as Mrs. Beaver "appear on the periphery [and] are highly domesticated" (41). The approved younger ones such as Lucy, Jill, and Aravis, on the other hand, do

not pursue physical beauty or materialistic gains; neither do they aim to replace men, and this actually makes them the perfect embodiments of the ideal feminine. Their physical moderateness thus becomes a symbol of their internal goodness and affirmation of the patriarchal and religious values.

In this context, the series also juxtaposes Lucy and Aravis' physicality against those of Susan and Lasaraleen, respectively. In *The Horse and His Boy*, Lewis compares and contrasts Aravis' search for internal peace to her friend Lasaraleen's materialistic expectations and the value she puts on the physical appearance:

> [Lasaraleen] insisted on Aravis having a long and luxurious bath [...] and then dressing her up in the finest clothes before she would let her explain anything. The fuss she made about choosing the dresses nearly drove Aravis mad. She remembered now that Lasaraleen had always been like that, interested in clothes and parties and gossip. Aravis had always been interested in bows and arrows and horses and dogs and swimming. (*HHB* 87)

Even though Lasaraleen is not evil like the three monstrous witches, she does not fit the feminine ideal prescribed by Lewis. Unlike Aravis, Lucy, Jill, and even Mrs. Beaver, she does not devote herself to finding social, inner, and spiritual peace; instead, she is immersed in the errands of the physical world. Her excessive occupation with appearances thus prevents her from being one of the true friends of the spiritual Narnia.

The difference between Lucy and her sister Susan in terms of their engagement with body and physicality is even more complicated. The contrast between Lucy and Susan actually constitutes one of the sub-plots of the narrative, which eventually helps reinforce the underlying message of the series in *The Last Battle*. Lucy starts the narrative as a little naive girl, who is willing to take part in adventures with her brothers. Accordingly, she often thinks of Susan as too girly for paying so much attention to her

appearance. Nevertheless, as Lucy grows up and is about to make a transition from childhood to adolescence, her relationship with appearances shows a tendency to change. In *The Lion, the Witch and The Wardrobe*, the emphasis is on her childhood, whereas in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* which takes place at a further time, it becomes her femaleness and female body that she and the readers are continuously reminded of. Once the children are on board, Lucy finds herself surrounded by men. That Lucy is given a separate room (because she is a female) but men's clothes becomes the first stimulator of her discovery of her femaleness and female body:

> Come on below and get changed I'll give you my cabin of course, Lucy, but I'm afraid we have no women's clothes on board. You'll have to make do with some of mine. […] This'll be your room, Lucy. I'll just get some dry things for myself […] and then leave you to change. If you'll fling your wet things outside the door I'll get them taken to the gallery to be dried. (*VDT* 17-18)

It is in this transition process that Lucy starts reflecting on her body, and she desires to adjust her own physical appearance. That her criterion of the female beauty now becomes Susan adds an ironic yet thought-provoking element to the narrative. In the course of the narration, the narrator hints at the fact that Lucy inwardly desires to be visible as a young woman in both the real world and Narnia. Susan becomes a reference point for Lucy whose physicality has been never at issue. In *The Horse and His Boy*, Susan is mentioned to attract royal suitors from various lands. In *The Silver Chair*, the narrator underlines the fact that "[g]rown-ups thought [Susan] the pretty one of the family" (8). Lucy's desire to be acknowledged as a beautiful girl like Susan initiates an internal conflict in her character, which actually surfaces for the first time when she encounters a spell book on Coriakin's island in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

Coming across a beauty spell called "*An in-allible spell to make beautiful her that uttereth it beyond the lot of mortals*", Lucy sees her reflection on the page of the spell book, and she thinks that her image on the page is lovelier than she is in the real life (*VDT* 118). The spell book functions as a mirror, visualizing Lucy's repressed desires and fears, which she cannot even put into words:

> And now the pictures came crowding on her thick and fast. She saw herself throned on high at a great tournament in Calormen and all the Kings of the world fought because of her beauty. After that it turned from tournaments to real wars, and all Narnia and Archenland, Telmar and the fury of the kings and dukes and great lords who fought for her favour. Then it changed and Lucy, still beautiful beyond the lot of mortals, was back in England. And Susan (who had always been the beauty of the family) come home from America. The Susan in picture looked exactly like the real Susan only plainer and with a nasty expression. And Susan was jealous of the dazzling beauty of Lucy, but that she didn't matter a bit because no one cared anything about Susan. (*VDT* 119)

Lucy's repressed desire to replace Susan echoes female rivalry, a leitmotif in folkloric and fairy tale tradition. Most significantly, it serves to juxtapose physical and materialistic aspirations against a devotion to spirituality and morality. Lucy's desire to attract male suitors with her physical appearance, on the one hand, makes her a kin of the evil witches, who resist and threat religious and patriarchal norms by taking advantage of their bodies. On the other hand, it features a preview of how female beauty can cause governmental chaos and "potentially destroy the entire Narnian world as its leaders fight over her" (Graham 41). Nevertheless, Lucy comes to her senses as soon as the spell book shows the image of the "growling" Aslan, the equivalent of Jesus in the

Narnian universe (*VDT* 120). Aslan's image becomes a reminder for Lucy to trust her inner beauty rather than to pursue physical perfection. As a result, Lucy's coming to terms with her own physicality shows desiring for excessive beauty as a rebellion against patriarchy, the ideal female, Christian morals, and the order of the society.

Lucy's personality juxtaposed against the extremely beautiful female characters reinforces the narrative's emphasis on moderateness of the female beauty, the importance of internal goodness, and the perseveration of one's faith in the Creator. Even the difference between Lucy and the daughter of Ramandu — the retired star — who appears in the end of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, serves to strengthen such argument. The daughter of Ramandu impresses men at once with her physical appearance, which is comparable to that of the evil witches:

> Now they could see that it was a tall girl, dressed in a single long garment of clear blue which left her arms bare. She was bareheaded and her yellow hair hung down her back. And when they looked at her they thought they had never before known what beauty meant. […] No one had yet spoken a word. Then — Reepicheep first, and Caspian next — they all rose to their feet, because they felt that she was a great lady. (*VDT* 152)

The men become speechless at the sight of Ramandu's daughter. That the men take her beauty as a sign of her greatness and royalty shows not only the social function of physicality but also literary and cultural stereotypes that come to determine people's assumptions about the female body. Even though Ramandu's daughter is not an evil woman, the men hesitate when it comes to sit at the feast table on her island. The crew is afraid of the girl, because they think that she might be the person, who has enchanted their Narnian friends whom they are looking for in this journey:

> ‘Travellers who have come from far to Aslan’s table,’ said the girl. ‘Why do you not eat and drink?’
>
> ‘Madam,’ said Caspian, ‘we feared the food because we thought it had cast our friends into an enchanted sleep.’
>
> […]
>
> ‘Look here,’ [Edmund] said, ‘I hope I’m not a coward – about eating this food, I mean – and I’m sure I don’t mean to be rude. But we have had a lot of queer adventures on this voyage of ours and things aren’t always what they seem. When I look in your face I can’t help believing all you say: but then that’s just what might happen with a witch too. How are we to know you’re a friend?’ (*VDT* 152-153)

While the male characters consider Lucy one of them and a trustable sincere companion, their distrust in Ramandu’s daughter arguably becomes a symbol of the cultural unreliability felt towards the magical and beautiful woman.

Lucy is granted redemption just before losing her childlike innocence and discovering her sexuality. Her reward becomes an acceptance by Aslan to the eternal Narnian afterlife in *The Last Battle.* Nevertheless, Susan is excluded from Heaven not because of her malignancy but because she puts so much value on how she looks and how the opposite sex perceives her and her physicality. As Lance Weldy and Thomas Crisp contend, “sexual maturity” becomes “a liability for the protagonists that it prohibits them from returning to Narnia for further adventures” (370). Indeed, when King Tirian inquiries into the whereabouts of Susan, Jill answers “She’s interested in nothing nowadays except nylons and lipstick and invitations. She always was a jolly sight too keen on being grown-up” (*LB* 129). As Cathy McSporran explains,

> Lucy and Susan both undergo this narcissistic temptation. Lucy, however, is spared when a picture of Aslan replaces her own mirror-

> image, and so comes to her senses. Susan, however, is not redeemed. She had become, like the Witches, defined by how she appears. […] Susan, who has forgotten the image of Aslan that might save her, can see nothing but herself. (202)

Susan declines the moderateness and simplicity ascribed to the idealized female beauty. Instead, she is captivated by the idea of becoming an admirable and desirable woman, which actually contrasts with the moral and religious framework Lewis draws in the *Chronicles*. In the narrowest sense, her investment in her own physicality as well as the physical world makes her "no longer a friend of Narnia" as her brother Peter puts it (*LB* 129). As such, Lewis' exemption of Susan from the Narnian heaven due her interest in appearances shows religious devotion as one of the central themes and messages underlying Lewis' narrative. As Karla Faust Jones argues,

> The reference to Susan's preoccupation with lipsticks and nylons is not an attempt to identify her with female frivolity, but to represent attractions of the real world which are grossly incongruous with Narnian life. Instead of making a general statement about women, Lewis is using Susan to demonstrate the "hesitant convert," lured away from Christianity by worldly conventions of the time. (16-17)

As a result, Lewis' often suppressive representations of the female body do not simply aim to show women as weak or malignant figures. As Thomas Williams writes, Lewis does not straightforwardly "equate *sensual* with *sinful*" or consider people "trapped in bodies which, will eventually be discarded" (32-33). Lewis sees "physical body as essential to our humanity, not only here on earth, but in heaven as well" (William 33). In this respect, Lewis sees the body as the soul's mirror and its temporary home. It is in this context that Lewis makes use of excessiveness of the female beauty as a space to explore and eventually celebrate not only patriarchal values but also religious

morals. Lewis' comparative representations concerning the female body relay soul, spirituality, and moral growth as the essentials in reaching an internal and eternal happiness.

Lewis' emphasis becomes on beauty and sexuality while utilising the female body to convey moral and religious messages. Nevertheless, in his depictions of the male body, he brings to the fore the desire for power. Such argument becomes manifest in Eustace's transformation into a dragon having set his eyes on the dragon treasure in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Lewis utilises Eustace's physical transformation as a narrative device to explore a psychological and moral transformation through an intense reflection on the body. Eustace's relationship with physicality and materials before his transformation into a dragon contrasts with the moral subtext of the narrative. In the real world, Eustace is extremely cruel to beetles enjoying to keep them "dead and pinned on a card" (*VDT* 7). Oddly enough, he is even mentioned to like books which "had pictures of grain elevators or of fat foreign children doing exercises in model schools" (*VDT* 7). Similarly, on the Dawn Treader, Eustace considers the talking animals of Narnia horrid and wretched based on their bodily appearances, and he takes no interest in their friendliness and personality. Eustace's derogatory view of the talking animals signifies his failure in understanding and integrating with the spirituality of Narnia. Already marked by an excessive arrogance, Eustace's temptation by the dragon treasure prompts his greed and makes her similar to the witches and Susan, who are invested in the physical and worldly gains.

With Eustace's metamorphosis into a dragon, the narrative invites the readers as well Eustace to elaborate on the distinction between body and soul and such interrelated dualities as physicality and spirituality, materialism and morality, worldliness and heavenliness. While the Narnian animals used to disgust Eustace, he ironically becomes one of them. For Margery Hourihan, compared to the aristocratic, social, and cultural

values represented by the hero, “the dragon is an emblem of the fiercer aspects of nature, its huge size and destructive flames and smoke suggesting volcanic forces” (111-112). In this context, the representations of dragons in literature invoke “both the culture/nature and the human/nature dualisms” (Hourihan 112). The dragons in fantasy literature thus represent the “other” which is not only the different and marginalized outsider but also the repressed and feared other within one’s own personality. Eustace’s dragon form thus becomes an incarnation of his arrogant, rude, and greedy nature. In this respect, the monstrosity of the dragon-Eustace serves as a means to visualize the monstrosity of his soul and his deviation from morality.

Alan Jacobs, who offers a Christian reading of Eustace’s transformation, contends that it symbolizes people’s turning themselves into dragons through their “pride and selfishness” (219). Jacobs recognizes “transformation” as “a consistent position” in Lewis’ perspective, and he maintains that we must “give up what we think of as ourselves in order to gain our true selves” (219). Viewed from this perspective, Eustace’s metamorphosis serves to create a defamiliarizing effect on him and the reader, directing both of them to a “self-understanding” and a “self-correction” (Jacobs 219). Eustace’s alienation to his dragon-claws, dragon-tears, dragon-face, and dragon-body makes him take an inward journey and reflect on his personality and soul, namely the essence of his being. The most significant stimulator of Eustace’s moral upheaval becomes the others’ friendly and understanding attitude, which shows no sign of marginalization. Both the Pevensies and the crew of the Dawn Treader “assured Eustace that they would all stand by him and many said there was sure to be some way of disenchanting him” (*VDT* 80). Eustace becomes a kinder and more helpful person because of the unconditional love he finds in the Narnians and his cousins:

> It was, however, clear to everyone that Eustace’s character had been rather improved by becoming a dragon. He was anxious to help. […]

> The pleasure (quite new to him) of being liked and, still more, of liking other people, was what kept Eustace from despair. For it was very dreary being a dragon. He shuddered whenever he caught sight of his own reflection as he flew over a mountain lake. He hated the huge bat-like wings, the saw-edged ridge on his back, and the cruel, curved flaws. He was almost afraid to be alone with himself and yet he was ashamed to be with the others. (*VDT* 80-81)

Aslan's re-transformation of Eustace into a human being denotes a redemption, which is similar to that of Lucy, and it indicates the completion of Eustace's moral transformation and acquirement of a spiritual awareness. After Eustace becomes human again, he apologizes for "hating everything" and being "beastly" before (*VDT* 87). His remarks complicate such interrelated dualities as immorality and morality, monstrous body and beautiful body, finally showing that monstrosity is essentially a matter of soul. In this context, in the *Chronicles*, the body turns out to be a space, which - despite reflecting an internal goodness or evilness as it is the case with the female characters – is potentially misleading, hence susceptive to misjudgements.

With the introduction of the Duffers, the Monopods, and the future-Dufflepuds, the narrative intertwines such interrelated concepts as appearance, physicality, transformation, visibility, and invisibility. The Duffers introduce themselves as a community, who have made themselves invisible through a self-inflicted invisibility spell, and they ask the crew of the Dawn Trader for help to break it. No matter how much dangerous it is, the monstrous body has a physicality to be fought against. Nevertheless, the invisibility of the Duffers and their voices as the only indicator of their existence evoke horror at once, because invisibility connotes unknown and comes to mean danger coming from an obscure source.

However, as the characters learn the story behind the Duffers, the narrative invites the reader to question and problematize the cultural distinctions between beauty and deformity, beauty and ugliness, and their representations in literature. The ruler of the island, Coriakin changes the Duffers from dwarves into Monopods as a response to their disobedience, laziness, greed, and most significantly nonsensical actions such as "washing up the plates and knives before dinner" or "planting boiled potatoes" to save time (*VDT* 127). The once-Duffers and now-Monopods, as the name reveals, are described as such:

> Each body had a single thick leg right under it (not to one side like the leg of a one-legged-man) and at the end of it, a single enormous foot - a broad-toed foot with the toes curling up a little so that it looked rather like a small canoe. She saw in a moment why they had looked like mushrooms. (*VDT* 128)

The unique and allegedly deformed form of the Monopods renders them different but not entirely other, especially considering their funny and not-so-evil attitudes, which can actually be considered harmless human errors. After the crew ascertains the Duffer's story, their horror at the unknown yields to a sense of pity. Maria Schiko Cecire contends, "the Duffers are at once comfortingly familiar and totally foreign, both for the English children and Narnia explorers" echoing mischievous fairy-tale dwarves (118). As Schiko adds, "the Duffers' recognizable qualities prevent them from reading as wholly monstrous, while maintaining a sense of the wonder of traveling to unknown shores" (119). Indeed, the crew is simultaneously shocked and amused by the Duffers' physicality from this moment, and they do not regard them as beastly or monstrous.

The Monopods consider their new form so ugly that they make themselves invisible, whereas Coriakin offers an alternative perspective of looking at their circumstances. Coriakin thinks of the spell as a change spell rather than an

"uglification", and he affirms that it is aimed to give a moral lesson to the Duffers. Changing their physicality, Coriakin intends to make the Duffers understand the value of hard work and the importance of being humble and grateful for what one already has:

> You see, it's only they who think *they* were so nice to look at before. They say they've been uglified, but that isn't what I called it. Many people might say the change was for the better.
>
> Are they awfully conceited?
>
> They are. Or at least the Chief Duffer is, and he's taught all the rest to be. They always believe every word he says. (*VDT* 126)

Based on Coriakin's explanation, the Duffers' metamorphosis into Monopods parallels Eustace's transformation into a dragon. In this regard, physical metamorphoses in the series function as a means to defamiliarize the individuals to not only their current physicality but also their moral and psychological flaws, which they take as their normal. Nonetheless, an ideological reading of the Duffers' transformation shows that physical transformation and physical adjustments can also serve as reminders of the necessity of being subservient to the holders of the authority. Accordingly, Clare Echterling writes that

> Lewis describes the Dufflepuds as less-than-human creatures with inferior intelligence. They cannot be left to their own devices, but instead require the supervision of Coriakin. […] Since the Dufflepuds are near facsimiles to humans, they function as a clear allegory for the dangers of disobeying those who possess superior knowledge and authority. […] By transforming them into strange, ineffectual, and monstrous creatures Croaking exerts his own superiority by dehumanizing subjects. (106-107)

Even though the Duffers' change into allegedly beastly creatures paves the way for such controversial interpretations, Lewis seems to be inscribing it for reinforcing the central moral of the narrative. After all, the Duffers do not seem to have learnt their lessons through transformation, unlike Eustace. The self-inflicted invisibility spell, on the one hand, symbolizes their resistance against change and preference to ignore their flaws rather than to acknowledge them. On the other hand, it comes to signify their arrogance and an excessive importance they give to physicality. Ironically, their invisibility turns them into total strangers not only to one another but also to themselves, as they are unable to remember who they are. After Lucy breaks the invisibility spell, the Duffers, now-Monopods, are happy to be visible again despite their unique bodies:

> Of course these little one-footed men couldn't walk or run as we do. They got about by jumping, like fleas or frogs. And what jumps they made! — as if each big foot were a mass of springs. And with what a bounce they came down; that was what made the thumping noise which had so puzzled Lucy yesterday. For now they were jumping in all directions and calling out to one another, 'Hey, lads! We're visible again'
>
> 'Visible we are,' […] 'And what I say is, when chaps are visible, why, they can see one another.' (*VDT* 129)

Lucy thinks that "[i]t would be pity to change them back" as "[t]hey're so funny" and "rather nice" (*VDT* 130). Finally, the Duffers find the approval and appreciation they desire in Lucy's remarks about their nicety, and they come to terms with their new appearance, naming themselves Dufflepuds. The Duffers' eventual acknowledgment comes to signify the reestablishment of the social order and their recognition of the authority of Coriakin. As such, the various physical metamorphoses of the Duffers add a playful and imaginative makeover to the exploration of serious issues such as morality,

spirituality, and obedience. Through the story of Duffers, Lewis shows bodily dualities such as ugliness and beauty, deformed and un/deformed as relative concepts which change their meaning depending on the mind-set of the perceiver and the perceived.

The dualistic relationship between internal goodness and excessive physicality or spirituality and materialism exerts itself as a powerful conflict in the last volume of the series, *The Last Battle*, and it actually turns out to be the main reason behind the collapse of the Narnian world. Until this point, Lewis presents various characters assuming or desiring various bodies and appearances to elaborate on different human flaws. However, his presentation of Shift, the ape, as he desires to replace Aslan - the Narnian embodiment of Jesus - concludes all of the attempts to evade evil from Narnia. As Paul F. Ford maintains, Shift, true to his name, is "shifty — underhanded, sneaky, and a liar" (283). His selfish, cunning, and corrupt personality is mirrored in his eccentric appearance: "as an ape, he looks like a man but it isn't; in fact, he tries to pass himself off to the animals as a wise old man. At the stable, he is dressed garishly, wears a paper crown, and calls himself Lord Shift" (Ford 283). In order to take over the rule of Narnia by eliminating the real Aslan, Shift deceives the dumb donkey, Puzzle, into pretending to be Aslan by wearing a lion's skin. As the Narnians and the talking animals start to serve the fake Aslan, such replacement brings only chaos to Narnia; because, it symbolizes a decline in the spirituality Aslan has established in Narnia.

The purely moral Narnians, who have devoted themselves to Aslan, have doubts about the false Aslan. For instance, Roonwit tells the King that "the stars say nothing of the coming of Aslan, nor of peace, nor of joy" and adds that "[i]f Aslan were really coming to Narnia […] all the most gracious starts would be assembled in his honour" (*VDT* 20). Similarly, King Tirian questions the false Aslan's malignant orders and is assured of the evil powers taking over Narnia. The real Aslan does not appear until the very end of the narrative as if he is observing and waiting to be sure of the intentions of

each and every one. The physical absence of the real Aslan at this point becomes a narrative strategy through which Lewis shows the deceptiveness of the body and the damage it might give to spirituality and social order. Therefore, Lewis presents a symbolic battle, which tests the devotion of the characters to the values and morals of Aslan. That the majority of the Narnians obey the false Aslan without being inquisitive of its practices reinforces the idea that body is deceptive, yet morals and values are unchanged and stable. Even though Lewis endows Aslan - a religious entity - with a physical body, this last battle between evil and good forces shows that essential to Aslan's being are his spirituality and the morals he represents. In the end, the failure of the Narnians in keeping their faith in Aslan's creed results in the collapse of the physical existence of Narnia but entails the foundation of Aslan's Country, which is obviously heaven. The exceedingly Platonic ending of the series summarizes the moral stance underlying Lewis' narrative, which is the transience of the physical world but the immortality of the soul and the indisputable reality of the afterlife:

> '[…] The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning.'
>
> And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before. (*LB* 173)

Lewis' comparative representations of body through a myriad number of fantasy elements, supernatural characters, and magical transformations serve to highlight and reinforce the moral questions Lewis explores throughout the narrative. The physical body in Lewis' religious philosophy and fiction simultaneously becomes a mirror of the soul as well as a means one can utilise for gaining worldly gains. To say that Lewis thinks of body and bodily desires as evil and enticing would be too simplistic, however, the *Chronicles* lays great emphasis on the importance of spirituality and internal goodness, and it constantly gives references to the immoral connotations of excessive beauty and also excessive value given to physicality and the material world. In this regard, the dualistic relationship between body and soul, physical and spiritual as represented by Lewis strengthens the didactic direction and allegorical quality of his fiction, subtly inculcating in its readers a set of religious values and morals. More important than this, Lewis' representation of bodily dualities in this framework invites the reader to recognize children's fantasy literature as a powerful apparatus in discussing extremely serious, philosophical, and abstract concepts through playful and entertaining elements of fantasy genre.

3. DUALISTIC REPRESENTATIONS IN PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS*

3. 1. *His Dark Materials*: Radical Children's Fantasy Literature

Published between 1995-2000, Philip Pullman's prize-winning children's fantasy trilogy *His Dark Materials* has been both a literary and commercial success.[33] Translated into more than twenty different languages, adapted into motion picture, stage plays, radio plays, and video games, the popularity of the series has accelerated in time, and the books continue to attract both adults and children even to this day (Wartofsky n.pag.). Despite the critical acclaim, the novels have also sparked fevered discussions among educators, theologians, literary critics, librarians, and even parents as to whether they are appropriate for children. The controversies concerning the series have centred on the ways the books employ Christianity. Perry Glanzer emphasises that the books are thought to "offend Christians" through "entertaining and creative stories" which yet contain "anti-Christian pokes, anti-Christian symbolism, and even occasional anti-Christian diatribes" (166-167). Alona Wartofsky similarly points out that "Pullman received a handful of letters from readers accusing him of endorsing Satanism" especially after the publication of the second book of the series, *The Subtle Knife* (n. pag.). With the anticipation of possible controversy over his series, Pullman acknowledges anti-Christian imprints in the books himself. Nevertheless, even though he admits that he "undermines the basis of Christian belief," he still declines any intention to offend people (Wartofsky n.pag.). Eventually, Pullman's narrative does not set out to implore its readers to reject religion by any means. The series can more properly be considered an epic narrative, which offers alternative ways of looking at varied issues which we call norms or absolutes that are accepted as non-negotiable.

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[33] The first book of the series, *Northern Lights* won Carnegie Medal in 1995 and Guardian Children's Fiction Prize in 1996. *The Amber Spyglass* received Whitbread Prize for Literature in 2001.

Consisted of three consecutive novels, respectively *Northern Lights*, *The Subtle Knife*, and *The Amber Spyglass*, the trilogy chronicles Lyra Belacqua and her companions' struggle to surpass various enforcements of the Magisterium, the theocratic government as well as their travels between parallel universes during this mission. As the main story unfolds, the reader is provided with many sub-plots, which are variably concerned with the nature of *daemons* as people's souls, Lyra's discovery of her biological parents' identities, the doors opening into parallel universes, varied approaches to Dust, the introduction of Gyptians as a lesser society, the usurped kingdom of armoured bears, and the community of free-spirited witches. While the first volume introduces Victorian-looking Oxford as its main setting, the second book of the series, *The Subtle Knife*, differently opens in a world which is quite similar to ours with modern day looking cafes and hotels, but also with "window[s] in the air" linking it to different worlds (*SK* 26). The novel revolves around further adventures of Lyra and her new companion, Will, as they move back and forth between different worlds, confront Magisterium, and meet new threats such as the spectres, which are soul-eater creatures. The last book of the series, *The Amber Spyglass*, carries the central conflict to another level when Will and Lyra are cast as the new Adam and Eve during a great war against the Authority, namely God. The narrative hereby takes an allegorical turn re-enacting the Biblical story of the original sin and the Fall with a radical twist. The novel delves into spiritual issues such as the possibility of a better world with the acceptation of the original sin.

Amidst a variety of interwoven sub-plots, the novels question the reliability of the Christian God and religious institutions through an imagined theocratic society. They also pose questions concerning a variety of interrelated subject matters such as patriarchal dominance, power relations between genders, the conventional references of adulthood, childhood, maturity, immaturity, heroism as well as possible outcomes of

science and scientific knowledge. The exploration of such subject matters through the utilisation of fantasy elements and archetypal imagery renders the narrative dualistic like Narnia books in one aspect. As Rebekah Fitzsimmons affirms, "*His Dark Materials* deals with weighty issues such as good and evil, free will versus fate, and the true nature of a mysterious substance called Dust which seems to imbue living beings with consciousness" (212). As Peter Hunt and Millicent Lenz similarly write, "Pullman also draws heavily upon William Blake's dialectic of contraries: innocence/experience, heaven/hell" (125).

Nevertheless, the ways in which these dualistic patterns are reflected on and made sense of throughout the narrative make Pullman's narrative a total opposite of C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia.* As Hunt and Lenz emphasise, "[t]he simplistic categories of 'good' and 'evil' do not fit" *His Dark Materials* (134). The religious, cultural, and moral connotations of goodness and evilness fall short of defining what/who is good or evil in Pullman's fantasy series. Even though one can recognize heroes/heroines and villains since the beginning of the narrative, it "take[s] the reading of all three volumes to be sure of the goodness or evil of all parties and forces involved" (Newby 72). Hence, the universal and normative assumptions concerning evil and good, moral and immoral, ethical and unethical do not apply to either the characters or the events in the series, and the attributions of such interrelated pairs remain to be ambivalent throughout the narrative.

Written almost fifty years after Lewis' Narnia books, Pullman's subversive discourse in *His Dark Materials* has actually stimulated literary critics, scholars, and specifically children's literature specialists into reconsideration and re-evaluation of both series through a comparative perspective. These comparative studies are mainly reinforced by Pullman's critique of Narnia books. Pullman openly considers Narnia books "dangerous" and "disgusting" as they "celebrate death" (Bertodano n.pag.). In a

newspaper article, he similarly draws attention to Lewis' fixation on the innocence of childhood and criticises the way Lewis "killed [children] rather than let them go through adolescence" (qtd. in Brittain 49). Moreover, in the *Guardian* article titled "The Dark Side of Narnia", Pullman attacks Lewis in terms of not only killing off children but also for dictating certain ideologies and so-called hierarchies to its child readers:

> To solve a narrative problem by killing one of your characters is something many authors have done at one time or another. To slaughter the lot of them, and then claim they're better off, is not honest storytelling: it's propaganda in the service of a life-hating ideology. […] Death is better than life; boys are better than girls; light-coloured people are better than dark-coloured people; and so on. (qtd in. Wolfe, "On Power" 174)

As such, Pullman takes no interest in a "mythical Heaven" or absolutist values as Lewis does in Narnia books, but he engages with the world we inhabit and, in his own words, the "preciousness of the here and now" (Bertodano n.pag.). In this regard, Pullman's *His Dark Materials* becomes a response not only to *The Chronicles of Narnia* but to a bulk of children's books that are (un)intentionally endowed with conservative values, *de facto* morals, and normative power relations between binary pairs that supposedly organize societies and determine people's assumptions.

Therefore, Pullman can be said to problematize didacticism in children's literature, which celebrates dominant ideologies and fails to take into account what is marginalized and rendered "other". Nevertheless, this does not come to mean that *His Dark Materials* lacks morality and a moral message, or it is not didactic at all. Pullman personally thinks of "story as the force that leads the way to a better world" - which might actually be related to Pullman's long-years-experience of teaching, hence his close relationship with children (Thomson 148; Duncan 275). In line with this, Pullman

esteems children’s literature highly, and he even considers it a space that is suitable for discussing the most elaborate subject matters. Receiving his Carnegie Medal, Pullman says that “[t]here are some themes, some subjects, too large for adult fiction; they can only be dealt with adequately in a children’s book” (qtd. in Miller n. pag.). When Pullman is asked about the value system underlying *His Dark Materials*, he maintains that

> I find the books upholding certain values that I think are important. Such as that this life is immensely valuable. And that this world is an extraordinarily beautiful place, and we should do what we can to increase the amount of wisdom in the world. (Wartofsky n.pag.)

Therefore, Pullman’s didacticism in his children’s fiction rejects values that represent the majority, and that have come to be understood as the norm and ideal. As Pullman confirms, “the story celebrates love, courage, and imaginative engagement with the world, tolerance, open-mindedness, courtesy. And it criticises cold-heartedness, fanaticism, cruelty, intolerance” (qtd. in Bertonado n. pag.). In the narrowest sense, Pullman’s fiction for children appreciates diversity and plurality, and it declines dogmatism and celebration of selective and normative views about a wide range of issues including religion, gender, politics, economy, nature, and social institutions. In addition, Pullman seems to be aware of the role of children’s literature in inscribing binary oppositions and accordingly determining power relations within societies. He affirms in an interview saying that “we can learn what’s good and what’s bad, what’s generous and unselfish, what’s cruel and mean, from fiction” (qtd. in Miller n.pag.). As it can be inferred from Pullman’s remarks, he believes that literary texts contribute to our way of making sense of the world, and they also make people internalize the precepts of the dominant ideologies developing assumptions about inferiority and superiority.

All in all, Pullman's critical stance against the tradition of children's literature, his recognition of children's literature as a powerful tool for conveying ideologies, added with his atheism constitute the backbone of his radical fantasy epic. Even though the series relies heavily upon the conventions of fantasy literature by portraying supernatural and mythological creatures and depicting unconventional settings, it tends to diverge from the canon (including Narnia books) in terms of its radical treatment of the dominant ideologies characterising the genre. Pullman employs conventional archetypes, stereotypes, motifs, and accordingly binary pairs in an overly transgressive manner. Pullman's radical treatment of the dualistic patterns that are central to Western societies such as man and woman, outside and inside, home and away, adulthood and childhood destabilizes the conventional hierarchies between those pairs and subverts their conventional attributes. Correspondingly, the series hangs on an ambiguity concerning the divisions between right and wrong, hazardous and beneficial, order and chaos, and various related binary pairs. The meanings attributed to such concepts as well as to objects, places, genders, certain events, and institutions tend to change throughout the narrative. This shows that *His Dark Materials* engages with the relativity of interpretation and judgment, as well as the multidimensionality of value systems. As a result, the emphasis on the idea of relativity renders the series "largely about the way the human subject chooses to perceive the world around him" (Greenwell, "The Language of Pictures" 100).

Such subversion of the conventional associations of binary pairs can be related to Pullman's critique of dominant discourses and ideologies on the one hand. On the other hand, it corresponds to postmodern incredulity to grand narratives. Deborah Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb consider Pullman among a group of children's writers who "incorporate postmodern strategies in their work to challenge expected

reader/author relationships" (143). Referring to the children's books that engage with postmodern concerns and anxieties like *His Dark Materials*, they write that:

> Those texts which decline the position of authority, or refuse to privilege one discourse over the other, suggest a postmodern response to the dislocations at work in contemporary culture. Readers are, thus, invited (particularly those readers on the cusp of adulthood and with a special interest in the play of power) to explore a variety of positions in relation to history or truth. (145)

As such, harmonizing his personal views of such controversial subject matters as gender, religion, nature, culture, morality, and ethics with the changing dynamics of the contemporary world, new literary strategies, and concerns, Pullman disrupts the hierarchies set by the Western culture and reinforced by its literary tradition. Hence, the narrative possibilities of fantasy literature work for a subversive discourse in Pullman's series, revealing children's fantasy literature as a versatile and multifunctional genre, which can be ideologically shaped in exceedingly different directions. Therefore, the following chapters explore Pullman's subversive employment of dualistic patterns in *His Dark Materials*, and with comparative references to Lewis' Narnia books, they discuss how Pullman's representation of dualities contributes to the narrative's radical, and what might be called anti-Lewisian discourse. Eventually, they aim to show how children's literature might simultaneously utilise and deconstruct conventional and archetypal dualities in the service of a subversive point of view, which tends to problematize dominant ideologies, normative ideas, and people's unexamined assumptions and biases.

3. 2. Un/stereotyping Childhood and Adulthood in *His Dark Materials*

"That is the duty of the old," said the Librarian,

"to be anxious on behalf of the young.

And the duty of the young is to scorn the anxiety of the old."

(*Northern Lights* 33)

The binary relationship between adulthood and childhood constitutes one of the basic conflicts of children's literature and its criticism. Children's literature inherently puts the child experience and child perspective into the centre, and it often depends on the image of the Romantic child to reinforce this binary and to celebrate childhood over adulthood. The celebration of childhood, insofar as it has been received as a positive convention in literature for children and young adults, also brings along the possibility of stereotyping and idealization on the part of both childhood and adulthood as discussed in the former parts of this dissertation. As a traditional and conservative text, Narnia series, for instance, offers childhood as an incorrupt space symbolizing innocence and salvation, whereas it associates adulthood with materialism and destruction and presents it as the bringer of the end of humanity. Even though the central theme in *His Dark Materials* is the conflict between adulthood and childhood, Pullman presents this dualistic pattern in ways that eventually problematize the conventional associations and power relations between adults and children. As such, the conventional and archetypal meanings attributed to the binary of childhood and adulthood such as innocence and experience, immaturity and maturity, naivety and corruption, simplicity and complexity do not apply to *His Dark Materials*. Accordingly, the adult and child stereotypes, which are abundant in children's books, do not define and qualify the characters in Pullman's narrative.

Primarily, Pullman rejects stereotypical renditions of both adults and children throughout the narrative and resists genre-unique associations of adulthood and

childhood. For instance, the children in *His Dark Materials* prove not heroic in the conventional and medievalist sense, with swords and arrows in their hands and armours on their backs, fighting against monstrous creatures and dragons. Accordingly, they do not represent grand ideas such as honour, mightiness, power nor do they embody traditional attributes of ideal childhood. Maria Nikolajeva writes that "Romantic belief that the child is good by nature and therefore more suitable for struggle against evil is central in all fantasy novels" ("Fairy Tale" 146). Nevertheless, as argued by Kristine Moruzi, Pullman "rejects nostalgic impressions of children and childhood" and "insist[s] on a more realistic portrayal" (59). For instance, Pullman depicts Lyra as a "half-wild, half-civilized girl" and "a barbarian" (*NL* 19-36). Lyra leads an unruly life in Jordan College,

> climbing over the College roofs […] to spit plum-stones on the heads of passing Scholars or to hoot like owls outside a window here a tutorial was going on; or racing through the narrow streets, or stealing apples from the market, or waging war. (*NL* 36)

Moreover, she does not care much about what the Scholars tell her, and she finds lying very easy to evade the outcomes of her reckless actions or to escape trouble (*NL* 19-36). As the harpy's cry in *The Amber Spyglass* echoes, even her name, Lyra, "recalls the poet's lyre and a liar" pointing at the creative and immoral dimension of her lying (Colas 41):

> "*Liar! Liar! Liar*!"
>
> And it sounded as if her voice were coming from everywhere, and the word echoed back from the great wall in the fog, muffled and changed, so that she seemed to be screaming Lyra's name, so that *Lyra* and *liar* were one and the same thing. (*AS* 201)

Therefore, Lyra maintains an untrustworthy side throughout the narrative. Causing the death of her best friend Roger and making up stories, she turns out to be "not as pure and innocent as traditional fantasy prescribes" for child characters (Nikolajeva, "Fairy Tale" 146). As Peter Hunt and Millicent Lenz emphasise, "the children display the capacity for both good and evil acts" in *His Dark Materials* (134). Accordingly, the direction of the children's actions depends very much on their circumstances as exemplified in the case of Lyra's being a professional liar.

Such denial of conventional roles applies to Will, as well. Like Lyra, Will also defies innocence and goodness associated with childhood most outstandingly because of his problematical family relationships. As the Rustins point out, Will's "relationship with his parents is as difficult as Lyra's is with hers" ("A New Kind of Friendship" 228). His father is already absent, and living with a mentally unhealthy mother, Will not only looks after himself but also has to find his own ways to cope with the hardships of life. Will's negation of childlike innocence and naivety becomes first manifest in his handling the usurpers in the beginning of *The Subtle Knife*. As Will tries to escape from the men who break into his house, he accidentally kills one of them. Even though, killing a dragon, witch, or other evil figures is very common in children's fantasy books, the death of a real-world man by a child in the real world proves to be rather unconventional hence startling for the reader. Above all, Will's murder in self-defence contests the idea that a child is feeble, safe, and manageable.

Lyra's reaction to Will's killing also reinforces such transgression. When Lyra asks the alethiometer whether Will is "[a] friend or an enemy", it answers: "he is a murderer" (*SK* 28). Lyra's response is shocking and unexpected especially thinking that the text is addressed to a young audience:

> When she saw the answer, she relaxed at once. He could find food, and show her how to reach Oxford, and those were powers that were useful,

> but he might still have been untrustworthy or cowardly. A murderer was a worthy companion. She felt as safe with as she'd felt with Iorek Byrnison, the armored bear. (*SK* 28)

Lyra's relief at this knowledge is comprehensible taking into consideration the series' engagement with such postmodern concerns as the relativity of perception as well as rejection of the universality of ethics and morality. Apart from that, Lyra's thoughts break the bond between childhood and innocence and deconstruct the conventional binary relationship between power and weakness, trust and distrust, danger and safety. After all, Lyra and Will's allegedly improper actions do not diminish the reader's sympathy for them. Contrarily, the motivations behind their actions and decisions make them easier to identify with.

This, however, comes to mean the death of the Romantic child, who is purely good. Pullman's children can be quite evil even to one another contrary to Lewis' children who put so much value on solidarity. As Hunt and Lenz similarly underline, "there is no sentimentality in Pullman's view", and it might well be observed in "the abandoned children of Cittagazze, who behave in a lawless, bloodthirsty manner towards Will and Lyra" (133). The cruelty of the children of Cittagazze transforms even Lyra's opinions about childhood creating disillusionment about her own kind and human nature:

> "Well, I won't trust kids again," said Lyra. "I thought back at Bolvangar that whatever grownups did, however bad it was, kids were different. They wouldn't do cruel things like that. But I en't sure now. I never seen kids like that before, and that's a fact." (*SK* 261)

Even though Lyra and Will are bold, courageous, and self-sustained characters like Narnia kids, their defects and faults render them more human-like, lifelike, and child-like. In this view, unlike the children in Narnia books, Pullman's children do not serve

to promote certain values and ideals. Lyra and Will are assumed to play an important role in the future of humanity, however, Pullman still "get[s] away from the notion that somebody is born with a particular destiny" (Wartofsky n.pag.). Drawing attention to the children's lifelikeness in *His Dark Materials*, Pullman contends that

> Lyra is a very ordinary child, and so is Will, and there are hundreds of thousands of millions of kids like Will and Lyra all around the place. The great things they do are doable by all of us…Lyra's and Will's responses are the responses of every young person who is faced with something difficult and is courageous enough to deal with it. (qtd. in Wartofsky n.pag.)

Therefore, the children in *His Dark Materials* prove to be autonomous, and they determine their paths by themselves to a great extent. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Pevensie siblings' ascent to the throne is already predetermined by the prophecy, however, in *His Dark Materials*, no one is sure to which way and outcome Lyra's journey will take her and the others in the end. Both the Master of Jordan College and Serafina Pekkala affirm that Lyra should continue her journey without knowing her importance. Likewise, as Mr. Scorseby and Serafina Pekkala discuss over Lyra's role in shaping the future, they also get lost in paradoxes:

> "Where is my free will, if you please? And this child seems to me to have more free will than anyone I ever met. Are you telling me that she's just some kind of clockwork toy wound up and set going on a course she can't change?"
>
> "We are all subject to the fates. But we must all act as if we are not," said the witch, "or die of despair. There is a curious prophecy about this child: she is destined to bring about the end of destiny." (*NL* 310)

Pullman's rejection of prophetic idealizations on the part of childhood accordingly blurs the distinction between free will and fate, reinforcing the paradoxical and ambiguous nature of the series. Most importantly, abstaining from celebrating fate and destiny over free will, Pullman gives the child characters freedom not only from prophetic visions but also from adult-defined roles, stereotypes, and genre-specific associations of child-heroism. Therefore, in *His Dark Materials*, one cannot find a natural bond between childhood and nature, childhood and spirituality, childhood and redemption, childhood and naivety, which are associations strongly established in Narnia books.

Such contestations against the conventional binaries also characterize adult characters in the novels. Pullman's adult characters are not one-dimensional, and they cannot straightforwardly be defined in terms of their moralistic directions. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis tends to show adults and adult-pursuits as destructive, nevertheless, Pullman depicts a wide range of adult figures, who differ from one another in terms of their plans, ambitions, and ideological precepts. Like the child characters, these adult characters have weaknesses, strengths, and they show a tendency to change. Hence, they fluctuate between varied moods and temperaments throughout the narrative, and they cannot be categorized as evil and good, immoral and moral, or heroic and enemy figures at once.

For instance, Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel - the most outstanding adult figures in the series- come to the fore as ambiguous characters. Even though Mrs. Coulter seems to be a good adult figure adopting Lyra and providing her with a luxurious life, her duty as the servant of the Magisterium renders her an embodiment of ruthlessness and mercilessness. Her role as the director of *intercision* makes her the ultimate enemy of childhood itself.[34] While Mrs. Coulter's evilness is quite evident in such aspect, her

[34] *Intercision* is the name given to the act of severing one's *daemon* from his/her physical body. The General Oblation Board, a part of the Magisterium – the theocratic government – conducts *intercision* experiments on children. Their aim through *intercision* is to prevent children from

rescuing Lyra as she is to be separated from her *daemon* (expectedly due to being her biological mother) creates a scepticism towards her character on the part of the reader as well as Lyra. In this regard, one cannot easily determine whether she is unethical or she tries to survive in this corrupt system. The novel strengthens the ambiguity regarding the motivations of adult figures through Lord Asriel's character. Lord Asriel starts the narrative as an authoritative yet protective uncle figure "whom [Lyra] admired and feared greatly" (*NL* 6). While his passion for science and his resistance to the government underlie Lyra's admiration of him, Lord Asriel creates the most devastating disappointment in Lyra by sacrificing Roger to reveal Dust and open a portal into an alternative world. At this point, Lord Asriel's priority becomes to pursue his own goals as a sceptic, a devoted scientist, and a strong rebel against the dogmatic government. Thus, his goodness and evilness cannot be measured easily because he can discard children with no hesitation while fighting against the corruption in the government.

Regarding the children's relationship with the adults in *His Dark Materials*, Margaret and Michael Rustin point at the scarcity of trustable adult figures, highlighting the importance of adults in children's development:

> There are two essential and related dimensions to children's experiences of growing up. The first is the process of becoming independent and autonomous - becoming persons in their own right. The second is the dependence of children in this development on the care and understanding of adults who love them. ("Where is Home?" 93-94).

Even though Lyra and Will meet the first criteria, they lack the second one as they cannot even trust their parents. In *The Chronicles of Narnia,* adults are absent due to a variety of reasons such as war, illness, and economic pursuits. In *His Dark Materials*,

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being inflicted with the original sin in adulthood, because they believe that the Dust, which links one's *daemon* to his/her body, is a sign of consciousness, namely the original sin. Breaking the bond between a *daemon* and a child through *intercision*, they allegedly aim to create an ideal society for the future.

adults are present and extremely active, yet, their priorities take precedence over their responsibilities for even their own children. Therefore, the children's disappointment at the closest adult figures makes them search for other protective and trustable adult figures, which generally turn out to be animals or mythological figures:

> Pullman gives the children a deep need of benign and committed parental figures, and creates characters who have their own reasons for meeting those needs. The witches, bears, and heroic adventurers like Lee Scoresby who populate the story are figures from the world of children's play. (Rustin and Rustin, "A New Kind of Friendship" 234)

Such characters are often deemed outcasts by the human-adults in the series as they threaten their order and authority, however, the children find them comforting, protective, and most importantly trustworthy. For instance, Iorek, the bear, becomes a father figure for Lyra. While Iorek scares almost everyone in the series with his physicality and aggressiveness, Lyra feels herself safe in his company. In *The Amber Spyglass*, the difference between Lyra's attitude towards her own father and Iorek lays bare the children's ambivalent feelings towards adult figures around them. While Lyra declines to go to Lord Asriel's premises, she feels herself more confident with Iorek:

> "Ah, but suppose I don't want to go to my father? Suppose I don't trust him?"
>
> […]
>
> As if she had never wanted to be anywhere else, Lyra climbed up as Iorek offered his back and rode proud and happy as her dear friend carried her up the last stretch of the way to his cave. (*AS* 149-157)

Lyra's relationship with Iorek is symbolic and gives inferences concerning a child's expectations from an adult figure. Through such comparisons, the series highlights that

children need protection of adults, yet they lose their trust in them when their freedom is limited and their free will is at stake.

In a similar vein, Pullman utilises the Gyptians to highlight an ideal relationship between adults and children, which denies hierarchies and separations. The Gyptians, who are considered a lesser community, turn out to be the people who look out for the children's interest and safety the most. On the one hand, their respect and love for children serve to contrast Lyra and Will's parents' negligence. On the other hand, they epitomize how the series declines overgeneralization and marginalization while describing both adults and children. The Magisterium sees the Gyptians as barbarians, who live on boats, and it uses their children as guinea pigs for the *intercision.* Nevertheless, the narrative shows how biases can prove wrong in many cases through focusing on the Gyptians' perception. The Gyptians' relationship with their children evinces such subversion:

> No one worried about a child gone missing for a few hours, certainly not a gyptian: in the tight-knit gyptian boat-world, all children were precious and extravagantly loved, and a mother knew that if a child was out of her sight, it wouldn't be far from someone else's who would protect it instinctively. (*NL* 56)

Pullman's portrayal of these various (un)reliable human-adults, animal-adults, and mythological adults cannot be considered incidental taking into consideration his radicalism. Pullman makes use of fantasy elements to reflect on the real world and the nature of human beings. The comparisons and contrasts between humans and varied supernatural characters all contribute to Pullman's subversive discourse with regard to people's assumptions about normative behaviour patterns and the hierarchies between/within societies. Regarding his use of fantasy elements in *His Dark Materials*, Pullman contends:

> I know there aren't really bears that talk, but I'm trying to be as realistic as I can about human beings. The people are as real as I could make them: they are complex and unpredictable, and the fantasy elements are there to say what I thought would be true and interesting about what it's like to be a human being. (qtd. in Bertodano n. pag.)

Viewed from this perspective, it might be argued that Pullman's depiction of adults failing to form healthy relationships with children does not serve to highlight a moral decline. The series can be considered deprived of any kind judgement on part of either the adult or child characters' errors or erroneous attitudes. The characters' varied emotive responses function as a means to show characters as individuals with different characteristics and reflections on events and human relations. Even Lyra shows empathy for Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter in the end as the narrative brings to light their humane parts and real motivations. Accordingly, the fluctuating and changing interactions between the children and human-adults or supernatural-adult-figures all render the narrative closer to the real-world relations, which are complicated, dynamic, and changeable. In the meantime, they help problematize the traditionally didactic children's literature, which not only divides the good from the evil but also reiterates Romantic ideals, stereotypical roles, and conventional hierarchies.

Pullman thus relies on the dichotomous relationship between childhood and adulthood only to problematize, deconstruct, and subvert it. Even the narrative elements of the fantasy genre paradoxically and simultaneously reinforce and scrutinize such distinction. The presentation of *daemons* as the physical embodiments of one's soul and mind, for instance, centres on the opposition between adulthood and childhood. The children's *daemons* are able to change their shapes in accordance with their moods until they reach puberty. Once they become adults, their *daemons* take their permanent form of animals or mythological creatures in harmony with their personalities. The symbolic

readings of such difference between the *daemons* of adults and children can vary. On the one hand, the changeability of children's *daemons* functions as a symbol of dynamism, optimism, and rejuvenation. On the other hand, the children's shape-shifting *daemons* point at "the infinite possibilities within children" (Moruzi 63). As Margaret and Michael Rustin affirm, the *daemons* become "a statement about the undetermined potential of children, whose identities are still being formed" ("Where is Home?" 96). This kind of reading shows children as prone to manipulation and moral education, which can be conducted in entirely different directions. As a result, the children in Pullman's imagined world promise hope and despair at the same time, as they can be educated for the good or the bad of the society. In the meantime, the instability of children's *daemons* renders them extremely unpredictable, and such unpredictability denotes uncertainty and deceptiveness. The children disturb those who represent and pursue order within society, because they have the potential to cause chaos. Such interpretation seems to determine the adult characters' relationship with the children in the series, and it explains largely why the adults try to keep children under control and supervision throughout the narrative.

Contrarily, the fixed *daemons* of the adult characters make them relatively transparent compared to children, hence unguarded. As Amanda M. Greenwell writes,

> the form of an adult's daemon functions as an icon, a symbol indicating a mode of being. Seeing one's own daemon's settled form is helpful to understanding one's identity, and seeing other's daemons' forms allows one to make judgements about how to interact with them. ("The Language of Pictures" 103)

For example, while "Lord Asriel's daemon is a powerful and elegant snow-leopard, Mrs. Coulter's an intelligent, beautiful and cruel golden-haired monkey" (Rustin and Rustin, "Where is Home?" 95). Their *daemons* give hints about their characters from

the first moment both to the characters and readers, respectively the cold yet ambitious and strong personality of Lord Asriel and arguably evil yet extremely attractive character of Mrs. Coulter. Pullman's presentation of *daemons* hence acts subversively on the conventional associations of adulthood and childhood. While children are conventionally naive and easy to understand, the nature of the children's *daemons* in *His Dark Materials* makes them extremely complicated and vague. In line with this, childhood comes to be associated with instability, unreliability, and fluidity whereas adulthood is linked with stability yet in a negative sense of the word. The vagueness and instability of children ironically turn out be favourable qualities, providing advantages for the children. These qualities empower children especially against adults, whose recognizable personality and inner world arguably make them vulnerable.

Comparing and contrasting the *daemons* of adults and children, Peter Hunt and Millicent Lenz similarly argue that "[b]eing an adult entails accepting the narrowing of one's potential possible 'shapes', learning to live with a diminishment of the protean possibilities inherent in the child" (140). As a result, children enjoy their shape-shifting *daemons* while they can, and they dread the idea of growing up, feeling anxiety over the possible shapes their *daemons* will permanently take in the future. The conversation between Lyra and the Able-seaman on Ma Costa's boat reveals Lyra's such fear:

> "Why do daemons have to settle?" Lyra said. "I want Pantalaimon to be able to change for ever. So does he."
>
> "Ah, they always have settled, and they always will. That's part of growing up. There'll come a time when you'll be tired of his changing about, and you'll want a settled kind of form for him."
>
> "I never will!"
>
> "Oh, you will. You'll want to grow up like all the other girls. Anyway, there's compensations for a settled form."

> “What are they?”
>
> “Knowing what kind of person you are. Take old Belisaria. She’s a seagull, and that means I’m kind of seagull too. I’m not grand and splendid nor beautiful, but I’m a tough old thing and I can survive anywhere and always find a bit of food and company. That’s worth knowing, that is. And when your daemon settles, you’ll know the sort of person you are.” (*NL* 167)

Lyra “needs reassurance that growing up and having [her] daemon become ‘settled’ is not to be feared” and the seaman actually achieves to comfort Lyra about growing up and becoming an adult (Hunt and Millicent 140). As such, the series does not idealize or undervalue either adulthood or childhood as it is the case in the conventional binary relationship between the two concepts, but it draws attention to the necessity and inevitability of growing up and accepting the transition from childhood to adulthood.

The central conflict of the series, which is between children and adults, stems largely from the characters’ misinterpretation of childhood and adulthood. According to the theocratic Magisterium, adults’ settled *daemons* are a sign of the original sin, namely their acquired consciousness; whereas children’s shape-shifting *daemons* show that they are not inflicted with the original sin yet, which means that they are innocent. Hence, growing up comes to mean confinement to eternal sinfulness for the Magisterium and its followers. In order to save humanity from the curse of the original sin, the Magisterium follows the *intercision* project, which aims to sever children from their *daemons*, so that they would be free from this affliction. Nonetheless, Mrs. Coulter’s desperate attempt to justify their practices proves extremely paradoxical and nonsensical:

> Lyra…Lyra, Lyra. Darling, these are big difficult ideas, Dust and so on. It’s not something for children to worry about. But the doctors do it for

> the children's own good, my love. Dust is something bad, something wrong, something evil and wicked. Grown-ups and their daemons are infected with Dust so deeply that it's too late for them. They can't be helped…But a quick operation on children means they're safe from it. Dust just won't stick to them ever again. They're safe and happy and […]. (*NL* 283-284)

The Magisterium's main purpose is allegedly to save humanity from the original sin and create an ideal society for the future generations. However, their methods in providing such an ideal paradoxically include the extermination of children. As Mike Newby explains, "upon the death of a person, the daemon also dies, but upon the death or removal of the daemon, the person continues to exist, though in a sort of limbo-like state, able to become the tool of whoever has them in their control" (73). Unfortunately, children cannot survive without their *daemons* after the separation procedure since the project is still at an experimental stage. Viewed from this perspective, the *intercision* proves to be a massacre, which brings the end of childhood itself. The adult-pursuits, which are concentrated on religious causes, not only separate children from their souls, their mental faculties, namely their other halves, but they also debar them from the very act of growing up and becoming adults. Thus, the Magisterium's seemingly innocent project results in an actual battle between adults and children, reinforcing the already-present tension between adulthood and childhood in the series. In this regard, the children's main purpose becomes to protect their own existence as children and ensure their right to grow up and become adults in the future. As highlighted by the Rustins, "Lyra and Will have to take what they need to survive and grow" ("A New Kind of Friendship" 235). Lyra gathers an army of her supporters and achieves to release the kidnapped children from the experiment centre in *Northern Lights*. In *The Subtle Knife*,

Lyra and Will face additional obstacles and dangers as they strive hard to save the very stage of childhood from the Magisterium's wrath.

Pullman's comparative representations of adulthood and childhood through the utilisation of fantasy elements such as *daemons*, *intercision*, and alternative world image make the underlying message of the series an opposite of Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia.* Lewis has the child characters killed at the end of the *Chronicles* on the basis that adulthood brings self-centeredness and destructiveness and marks the end of innocence and naivety. Correspondingly, he ends the narrative in heaven where children will remain innocent and pure forever. Pullman, however, contests such religion-oriented comparisons between adulthood and childhood. As he writes in his introduction to Milton's *Paradise Lost,* his story "resolve[s] itself into an account of the necessity of growing up, and a refusal to lament the loss of innocence" (qtd. in Miller n.pag.). Thus, Pullman lets children grow up to enjoy the tastes and pains of every stage of life, thereby breaking the bond between childhood and being sinless.

Will and Lyra's visit to the land of the dead in *The Amber Spyglass* reinforces such an argument more forcefully. While the children of Narnia feel the joy of having united in the afterlife for eternity, the dead children in *His Dark Materials* find the land of the dead painful, oppressive, and dreadful. Lyra and Will are devastated by the hopelessness of the dead children:

> "I been pretending to talk to you all the time since I died," [Roger] said. "I been wishing I could, and wishing so hard… Just wishing I could get out, me and all the other dead 'uns, 'cause this is a terrible place, Lyra, it's hopeless, there's no change when you're dead, and them bird-things […] you can't never sleep properly, you just sort of doze." (*AS* 275-276)

Pullman depicts children as suppressed and depressed in the land of the dead, and in so doing, he negates the Romantic notion of the angelic and heavenly child. In this view,

Pullman's dead children also become the voice of the literary child, who has been idealized, stereotyped hence silenced by the tradition of children's literature. The dead children's inability to remember their names arguably symbolizes the child characters' lack of identity and individualism because of such idealization and stereotyping:

> "[…] What's your name?"
>
> But the poor girl was embarrassed and ashamed: she'd forgotten. She turned away, hiding her face, and a boy said:
>
> "It's better to forget, I reckon. I've forgotten mine. Some en't been here long, and they still know who they are. There's some kids been here thousands of years. They're no older than us, and they've forgotten a whole a lot. Except the sunshine. No one forgets that. And the wind." (*AS* 280)

Nevertheless, negotiating with the harpies who watch over the dead, Will and Lyra ensure that the harpies permit the dead to go back to their own worlds if they tell them the story of their lives. It can be argued that Will and Lyra not only free the dead children in *His Dark Materials* but they also liberate the stereotyped and idealized child from the constraints of Romantic notions. In this regard, the conflict between childhood and adulthood as represented in the series also functions as a means to problematize the binary relationship between child character/reader and adult author, who aims to frame the child within moral, religious, and literary norms.

Pullman's emphasis on the normalcy of experiencing certain gains and losses during the transition from childhood to adulthood becomes much more apparent in the course of narration. For instance, as Lyra and Will mature both physically and psychologically, their bond with their magic instruments weakens. As pointed out by Margaret and Michael Rustin, this weakening comes through "maturation" ("A New Kind of Friendship" 236). Even though Lyra feels disappointed at losing her intuitive

ability to read the truth-teller, Dame Hannah comforts her saying that she can learn to read the alethiometer again as an adult through hard work:

> "And if you'd like to begin studying the alethiometer systematically, you and I could meet for some private lessons. But there's time, my dear, there's plenty of time." […] Somewhere in this city were the books that would tell her how to read the alethiometer again, and the kindly and learned woman who was going to teach her […]. (*AS* 462-464)

As such, changing, transforming, and losing certain abilities in the process of growing up do not point at a failure or an insufficiency, on the contrary, such losses give way to new graces and capabilities to be gained. Pullman explains such change as "a truer picture of what it's like to be human being, […] And a more hopeful one" as he openly acknowledges, "We are bound to grow up" (qtd. in Miller n. pag.). Pullman emphasises his reaction to distinctions between adulthood and childhood as well as children's literature and literature for adults in many platforms. In a talk on the relationship between children's literature and literature for adults, he says that

> […] the children - will one day be adults. So surely there isn't a complete and unbridgeable gap between them, the children, and us, the grown-ups; or between their books and ours. There must be some sort of continuity here; surely we should all be interested in books for every age, since our experience includes them all. (*Daemon Voices* n. pag.)

The second book, *The Subtle Knife*, evinces Pullman's contestation against creating polarized ideas about adulthood and childhood more profoundly when the novel introduces the Specters, soul-eaters who/which attack and devour the consciousness of adults, eventually turning them into zombie-like and numb beings. The Specters of Cittagazze engender multiple interpretations regarding the conflict between adulthood and childhood as represented by Pullman. On the one hand, Cittagazze offers

an adultness and control-free world, where children have the ultimate freedom and authority:

> "We like it when the Specters come, 'cause we can run about in the city, do what we like, all right."
>
> "But what do the grownups think the specters will do to them?" Will said.
>
> "Well, when a Specter catch a grownup, that's bad to see. They eat the life out of them there and then, all right. I don't want to be grownup, for sure. At first they know it's happening, and they're afraid; then cry and cry. […] Then they get pale and they stop moving. They still alive, but it's like they have been eaten from inside. You look in they eyes, you see the back of they heads. Ain't nothing there." (*SK* 60)

Like the children of Cittagazze, Lyra and Will also find it easier to circulate in adult-free Cittagazze: "It is good there aren't any grownups about. We can just come and go and no one'll notice" (*SK* 62). They even tease about not acting like adults not to get caught by the Specters: "If you start behaving like a grownup, the Specters'll get you" (*SK* 63). On the other hand, Cittagazze as besieged by the Specters reverses the circumstances of Lyra's Oxford presented in the first volume. It becomes adults who are in danger now, whereas children stay safe as the Specters do not target at them. The most outstanding contribution of the depiction of Specters to the adult and child duality yet becomes the similarity between the damage they give to adults and the outcomes of *intercision.* Like the severed children, the adults turn into soulless beings after they are attacked by the Specters. Obviously, this creates identification with the severed hence victimized children in the first book. In addition, it helps criticise the separation between adulthood and childhood, experience and innocence. Even the characters compare and contrast the *intercision* to the Specters, and they come up with the

conclusion that both stem from distinguishing innocence from experience, childhood from adulthood, and immaturity from maturity. As such, presenting both adults and children as equally suffering from such division, the narrative critiques normative assumptions resulting from such dichotomies:

> "The Specters feast as vampires feast on blood, but the Specters' food is attention. A conscious and informed interest in the world. The immaturity of children is less attractive to them."
>
> "They're the opposite of those devils at Bolvangar, then."
>
> "On the contrary. Both the Oblation Board and the Specters of Indifference are bewitched by this truth about human beings: that innocence is different from experience." (*SK* 280)

The Specters remain to be mysteriously semi-physical and semi-spiritual beings for the characters in the novel as everybody speculates differently about their nature and the reasons of their emergence. Whatever the reason of their appearance is, the Specters cause a chaotic and apocalyptical environment. Devoid of parental care and guidance, the children of Cittagazze experience a kind of moral deterioration forming gangs, discarding any principles, and violently fighting against each another. The few surviving adults, on the other hand, abandon their children in the city all by themselves to escape from the Specters. Even some adults make use of children as shields against the attacking Specters:

> One old woman seated on a cart held two children her lap, and Ruti Skadi was angered by her cowardice: because she tried to hide behind them, and thrust them out toward the Specter that approached her, as if offering them up to save her own life. (*SK* 129)

This sort of deterioration experienced by both parties unsettles *de facto* dynamics of the relationship between adults and children. In Cittagazze, the adults are no longer

protective and authoritative, as much as the children are not dependent on and subservient to adults. The destabilization of conventional adult-child relationships illustrates Pullman's ideas on the interdependency of adulthood and childhood and his critique of establishing hierarchies between childhood and adulthood, children's literature and adult fiction, as well as experience and innocence.

At the end of the last volume, *The Amber Spyglass*, the main conflict between adults and children seems to cease after the Authority is defeated. In the end, Lyra and Will are no longer the children they were once in the beginning, nor are they adults who can live independently. Even though both Lyra and Will return to their universes acquiring a certain independence as young adults who have just discovered their sexualities, they still need the assistance and guidance of adult figures. While this adult figure becomes Dame Hannah Relf for Lyra in her Oxford, a wise female scholar, it becomes Mary Malone for Will in his version of Oxford. Lyra and Will's wilful acceptance of adult supervision after a harsh fight against adult-inflicted oppression seems to be contradictory, however, such implementation seems to fit Pullman's view of adulthood and childhood as interdependent concepts. Simultaneously drawing attention to children's autonomy and their need to have guiding adults, *His Dark Materials* achieves to find a balance between these two spheres of life and declines their conventional attributes, abstaining from any idealization or marginalization.

To conclude, *His Dark Materials* brings considerably new and subversive ways of representing the binary relationship between childhood and adulthood, especially considering the conventional representations culminating in children's books. Pullman draws heavily on the differences between adulthood and childhood whilst he simultaneously and paradoxically refuses to present them as conflicting concepts. For Pullman, adults and children can differ from each other in terms of how they reflect on life, religion, gender, and science. However, this does not determine a state of inferiority

or superiority, innocence or corruption, morality or immorality. According to Pullman, stereotyping children and adults likewise both in the real world and in fiction seems to be against the human nature, resulting in limitation and marginalization. In line with this, Pullman does not always depict children as the objects of sympathy. Similarly, he does not always present adulthood in negative terms as self-centred, materialist, ambitious, and destructive. Pullman depicts adults and children as individuals with different strengths and weaknesses. In doing so, he draws attention to the individualism of both the adult and child characters, thereby keeping the series' ties with the real world and real-world relations firm and consistent. As a result, such conventional interrelated dualities as childhood and adulthood, good and evil, incorrupt and corrupt, innocent and mature, naive and experienced do not apply to *His Dark Materials,* revealing the story as an unconventional example of children's literature, which celebrates fluidity, relativity, multidimensionality, and most importantly the individuality of literary personas who decline to abide by the norms.

3. 3. Restructuring the Binary of Nature and City in *His Dark* Materials

As Sarah K. Cantrell contends, "the spaces within Pullman's narrative are […] formidably complex" (305). *His Dark Materials* presents travels to the North, London, apocalyptical Cittagazze, different versions of Oxford, the natural *mulefa* world, and the land of the dead in a very short time span. As the multiplicity and diversity of these visited spaces point out, "[t]he physical worlds and geographical spaces within Pullman's narrative force readers and protagonists to confront moments of staggering complexity and profound difference" (Cantrell 303). As argued in the exploration of spatial dualities in Narnia books, children's fantasy literature has an affinity with nature and natural settings stemming from Romantic ideals, and it offers nature as a healing and meditative space free from corruption, which is often attributed to urbanization, industrialization, and materialism. In line with this, children's fantasy books tend to present a transition from chaotic urban settings to the wild, untamed, or idyllic nature. They usually describe alternative worlds as natural environments as it is the case in Narnia books; therefore, they highlight nature as a sort of utopian space.

Nevertheless, Pullman's *His Dark Materials* complicates the conventional meanings associated with nature and urban spaces that are set and reinforced by the tradition of children's literature. Such transgression seems to stem mainly from Pullman's rejection of the myth of the Garden of Eden, which narrates the expulsion of humanity from nature, and the Christian view of nature as the physical manifestation of the creator. On the other hand, such subversion appears to represent Pullman's critique of children's books, which dictate unexamined and often suppressive ideologies through Romantic ideals concerning space. Pullman's anti-Christian and anti-Lewisian discourse breaks the archetypal associations between nature and heaven, nature and childhood, nature and God as well as city and hell, city and adulthood, city and immorality. Therefore, Pullman does not necessarily depict linear movements from cities to the

nature. The back and forth transitions between urban settings and natural ones reinforce the subversive force of the narrative, showcasing that Pullman avoids creating ideological or literary hierarchies between spatial dualities.

Oxford turns out to be Pullman's foremost inspiration in creating urban settings in *His Dark Materials*, as he once writes, "the city of Oxford […] fosters the imagination" (qtd. in Miller n. pag.). Pullman provides two versions of Oxford, Lyra's Oxford and Will's Oxford respectively. Lyra's world, which "seems equivalent to [England's] late nineteenth to early twentieth century", is neither entirely natural nor urban in the modern sense (Beahm and Kirk 50). It is a scholarly city situated within and surrounded by natural elements, and it offers children places to take refuge in so that they can escape from the seriousness of Jordan College:

> Jordan College was the grandest and richest of all the colleges in Oxford. […] The College owned farms and estates all over Brytain. It was said that you could walk from Oxford to Bristol in one direction and to London in the other, and never leave Jordan land. In every part of the kingdom there were dye-works and brick-kilns, forests and atomcraft-works that paid rent to Jordan, and every Quarter-Day the Bursar and his clerks would tot it all up, announce the total to Concilium, and order a pair of swans for the Feast. (*NL* 34-35)

As George Beahm points out, "Lyra's world is a cross between Victorian England and our world, but clearly set in our time frame" (58). It is not entirely detached from the outputs of industrialization and technology associated with urban settings. It has anbaric power (electricity), photogram (photograph), projecting lantern (projector) as well as trains, gyropters (helicopters), pistols, rifles, and bombs (Beahm and Kirk 58). Such representations do not yet render Lyra's world gloomy or dystopian contrary to many children's fantasy books where mechanization and industrialization are generally the

causes of moral decline. As Stephen Maddison writes, Lyra's world is "pre-postmodern, even pre-capitalist, and that there is a social stratification, there is no commodity culture or attendant structure of commodity fetishism" (205). Lyra's Oxford negates Lewis' depiction of urban settings as marked by materialism, war, unemployment, dirt, diseases, and bad working conditions. Contrarily, the evilness surrounding Lyra's world emerges from the practices of the theocratic government and institutionalized religion. Even though the oppressive practices of the Magisterium and Jordan College seem to overwhelm its inhabitants, even Lyra seems to be proud of being a part of this scholarly city and its established college. In the *Chronicles*, the Pevensie children find Professor Kirke's labyrinthine house suffocating as it is full of books and decorated with art pieces. Similarly, Digory hates to be in his uncle's London house, dreaming of his former house in the country. Nevertheless, Lyra values the concrete side of Oxford and its natural beauties altogether. Even though she is excited for London, she simultaneously feels sorry to leave her Oxford:

> Lyra ran into the Library Garden, and stood for a moment in the immense hush, looking up at the stone pinnacles of the Chapel, the pearl-green cupola of the Sheldon Building, the white-painted lantern of the Library. Now she was going to leave these sights, she wondered how much she'd miss them. (*NL* 73)

As Lyra prepares for London, she abruptly overcomes her sadness to leave Oxford's civic and natural landscape. She even forgets about her dreams to explore the wild North with Lord Asriel. Lyra's curiosity for the dynamic city life is very un-Lewisian, specifically taking into consideration the Pevensie children, who often prefer to be in the Narnian wilderness and in wavy seas rather than being in the city. Nevertheless, Lyra's changing attitudes make her more down-to-earth and child-like,

hence an antidote to her literary counterpart, namely the idealized Romantic child who is often within/part of the idyllic nature:

> Lyra was intoxicated; not about the North this time, but about London, and the restaurants and ballrooms, the soirees at Embassies or Ministries, the intrigues between White Hall and Westminster. Lyra was almost more fascinated by this than by the changing landscape below the airship […] And when the evening came, Mrs. Coulter might take Lyra to the theatre, and again there would be lots of glamorous people to talk to and be admired by, for it seemed that Mrs. Coulter knew everyone important in London. (*NL* 75-83)

Through Lyra's different interactions with spaces, Pullman defies the traditional association between nature and childhood represented in children's literature. Pullman, in communication with the postmodern idea of the collapse of the grand narratives, seems to be aware of the insufficiency of the Romantic ideals in defining and representing the contemporary child's relationship with nature. Unlike Lewis, who equates the innocence of children with the spirituality of nature, Pullman explores children's varying relationships with different spaces in different circumstances in different times. In so doing, Pullman draws attention to the ideological backdrops and functions of spaces and underscores the relativity, fluidity, and multiplicity of the meaning that can be attached to spatial concepts. It is in this context that Lyra's enticement by the vividness of city life yields to disdain and fear as soon as she discovers Mrs. Coulter and the London elites' evilness in serving the horrifying missions of the Magisterium. Once Lyra is alone in London streets, she feels herself a complete stranger since she can no longer relate herself to her surrounding:

> She walked quickly away from the river, because the embankment was wide and well lit. […] If only she knew London as well as she knew

> Oxford! Then she would have known which streets to avoid; or where she could scrounge some food; or, best of all, which doors to knock on and find shelter. […] It was fine thing to be free again. She knew that Pantalaimon, padding on wildcat paws beside her, felt the same joy as she did to be in the open air, even if it was murky London air laden with fumes and soot and clangorous noise. (*NL* 99-100)

Lyra experiences a similar kind of alienation to the urban space after entering Will's Oxford in *The Subtle Knife*. Pullman depicts Will's Oxford as a modern city, which is closer to its real-world version. Compared to Lyra's Oxford, Will's Oxford is chaotic, crowded, and full of varied potential dangers. Lyra is perplexed by the simultaneous similarity and difference between her own Oxford and that of Will:

> Lyra was looking for somewhere quiet to consult the alethiometer. In her own Oxford there would have been a dozen places within five minutes' walk, but this Oxford was so disconcertingly different, with patches of poignant familiarity right next to the downright outlandish: why had they painted those yellow lines on the road? What were those little white patches dotting every sidewalk? (In her own world, they had never heard of chewing gum.) What could those red and green lights mean at the corner of the road? It was all much harder to read than the alethiometer. (*SK* 74)

The difference between the two cities in terms of their relationship with nature does not lead to an inference as to beauty or ugliness, spirituality or materialism, incorruption or corruption. As indicated by the Rustins, Lyra and Will "learn that they come from bewilderingly different versions of the same city. The differences are partly of time - Lyra's 'Oxford' exists in an earlier time than Will's" ("A New Kind of Friendship" 229). Therefore, Lyra's alienation to Will's Oxford does not function as a moral lesson,

supposedly showing industrialization, modernity, and technology as the main causes of unrest. On the contrary, the physical differences between the two versions of Oxford display change and transience of time as inevitable realities of life. As a result, Pullman declines to draw ideological distinctions between natural and urban settings, thereby inviting the reader to question the real cause of the corruption that has been taking over all of the universes depicted in the series.

As Will and Lyra travel through Cittagazze, the series continues to raise such questions. The apocalyptical-looking Cittagazze is inhabited by the parentless children. Ironically, the adults are told to have "fled to the hills and out to sea" to evade the Specters that conquered the city (*SK* 136). Through such reversal, Cittagazze disrupts the conventional link between not only childhood and nature but also adulthood and city reinforced in Lewis' Narnia books. Lyra and Will soon discover that Cittagazze used to be a "mercantile city" where both nature and civic culture were equally valued before the arrival of Specters:

> The cities were spacious and elegant, the fields well tilled and fertile. Merchant ships plied to and fro on the blue oceans, and the fishermen hauled in brimming nets of cod and tunny, bass and muller; the forests ran with game, and no children went hungry. In the courts and squares of the great cities ambassadors from Brasil and Benin, from Eireland and Corea mingled with tobacco sellers, with com media players from Bergamo, with dealers in fortune bonds. At night masked lovers met under the rose-hung colonnades or in the limpet gardens, and the air stirred with the scent of jasmine and throbbed to the music of the wire strung mandarone. (*SK* 134)

The people of Cittagazze accept that they brought the Specters to their world by "making an inquiry into the deepest nature of things" and "becom[ing] curious about the

bonds that held the smallest particles of matter together" (*SK* 187). Nevertheless, they have erred in thinking that "a bond was something negotiable, something that could be bought and sold and exchanged and converted" (*SK* 187). In other words, Cittagazze brings its own downfall by integrating and intervening in Dust, a practice which Lyra's world is now currently exercising through cutting off the bond between children and their *daemons*. Cittagazze's apocalyptical and dystopian condition thus prefigures the moral and physical collapse which all of the parallel universes are to experience soon.

In exploring Pullman's employment of space in *His Dark Materials*, Cantrell argues that "our views of the world are limited by the spaces we occupy", however, we come to have a better understanding of the spaces we are familiar with once we are outside in different places and circumstances (304).[35] As Cantrell adds, such "other places and other conditions are at the heart of Pullman's narrative" (304). Correspondingly, the multiple movements between other worlds as well as natural and urban settings help Lyra and Will "confront their assumptions about the worlds they have left behind and those in which they travel" (Cantrell 304). Lyra and Will's encounters with unfamiliar natural and urban settings as well as species, mythological creatures, and floras change their view of normal, thereby canalizing them into questioning the political, social, and religious structures of not only their own worlds but also the others they visit. As Cantrell marks, none of Lyra and Will's "discoveries" would be "possible without the other spaces of multiple worlds" (304). In the light of Cantrell's reading of Pullman's treatment of space, it can be argued that natural and urban spaces function as a narrative instrument in *His Dark Materials* rather than serving to promote and reiterate cultural and literary norms through their binary positions. The natural and civic spaces in *His Dark Materials* display immense physical variances, however, they prove to be analogous to one another at the core. Each spatial

[35] Sarah K. Cantrell bases her exploration of space in *His Dark Materials* mainly on Pierre Bourdie's arguments presented in *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology.*

jump in Pullman's fantasy universe renders one space meaningful and comprehendible in relation to its similarity to and difference from the preceding one. In the end, Lyra and Will come to a full conclusion and awareness about the central conflict that threatens their worlds by comparing and contrasting the circumstances of the places they visit.

The characters' last stop, the *mulefa* world yet adds another and possibly a more comprehensive dimension to the dualistic relationships between nature and city, nature and culture as represented in the series. As Dr. Malone enters the world of the *mulefa*, the narrative introduces a new world image, inhabited by the *mulefa* - animal-creatures who look like elephants. The *mulefa* world is founded on pure nature, and it is untouched by men and their cultural, social, and economical artefacts. Dr. Malone is abruptly amazed by the nature of the *mulefa* world:

> Wide golden light, and an endless prairie or savanna, like nothing she had ever seen in her own world. To begin with, although most of it was covered in short grass in an infinite variety of buff-brown-green-ocher-yellow-golden shades, and undulating very gently in a way that the long evening light showed up clearly, the prairie seemed to be laced through and through with what looked like rivers of rock with a light gray surface. (*SK* 73)

As Dr. Malone gradually gets to know the *mulefa* and their world, she and the readers come to recognize their life as an "ecological paradise" as Fitzsimmons puts it (215). As a physicist, Dr. Malone believes in "the multiple worlds" and considers the *mulefa* world one which "split off from her own much earlier than others" (*AS* 77). She further thinks that "in this world evolution had favored enormous trees and large creatures with a diamond-framed skeletons" (*AS* 77). As Bigger and Webb point out, the *mulefa*'s "way of life is ecologically friendly, harmonious and cooperative" (408). The

elephant-like *mulefa* use seedpods as wheels in order to move, and they absorb the seedpods' oil as source of consciousness and intelligence. As their consciousness and mobility depend essentially on nature, they highly value and protect it in turn. Rebekah Fitzsimmons interprets the *mulefa*'s relationship with nature a "symbiotic" one, and she puts emphasis on their respect of nature saying that "the *mulefa* are stewards of their world" (216).

Dr. Malone points out the fact that the *mulefa* do not strive to shape the nature according to their needs. Instead, they adapt themselves to the nature so that they do not spoil it. This means that the way the *mulefa* lead their lives develops and shapes in line with the landscape, climate, and various natural phenomena of their natural surrounding:

> Mary led the way along a hard path above the mud; like many things the *mulefa* had made, it was ancient and perfectly maintained, more like a part of nature than something imposed on it.
>
> "Did they make the stone roads?" Will said.
>
> "No, I think the roads made them, in a way," Mary said. "I mean they'd never have developed the use of the wheels if there hadn't been plenty of hard, flat surfaces to use them on. (*AS* 390)

Even though Pullman at once creates an Edenic and heavenly nature in the *mulefa* world, which is reminiscent of the Romantic notions of nature, the *mulefa*'s relationship with their environment is a unique one, which combines practicality with spirituality, natural elements with the elements of culture and civilization. Such idiosyncratic relationship disrupts the traditional dichotomy between nature and civilization/culture/industrialization. As such, the *mulefa* become a great example of how nature and various instruments of industrial society can co-exist in harmony without diminishing or increasing the value of one another. As the narrator maintains,

> Mulefa technology had little use for metal. They did extraordinary things with stone and wood and cord and shell and horn, but what metals they had were hammered from native nuggets of copper and other metals that they found in the sand of the river, and they were never used for toolmaking. They were ornamental. *Mulefa* couples, for example, on entering marriage, would exchange strips of bright copper, which were bent around the base of one of their horns with much the same meaning as a wedding ring. So they were fascinated by the Swiss Army knife that was Mary's most valuable possession. (*AS* 197)

As hinted at in the quotation, the *mulefa* have social institutions associated with civilization such as marriage, family, and education. Furthermore, they have a developed and considerably complex language system as well as "an astonishing capacity for memory and an accurate oral history, social memory, that goes back to 33,000 years" (Fitzsimmons 218). On the one hand, the *mulefa*'s social structures, technology, cultural and religious history that develop in harmony with nature enable critical readings from an environmentalist perspective. On the other hand, they serve to problematize the Christian myth of Garden of Eden, offering an alternative and more hopeful version, which results in an ecological harmony. The *mulefa* tell Dr. Malone the story of how their ancestors came into consciousness and knowledge back in the days:

> One day a creature with no name discovered a seedpod and began to play… She saw a snake coiling itself through the hole in a seedpod… The story tells that the snake said, "What do you know? What do you remember? What do you see ahead?" And she said, "Nothing, nothing, nothing." So the snake said, "Put your foot though the hole in the seedpod where I was playing, and you will become wise." So she put a foot in where the snake had been. And the oil entered her blood and

> helped her see more clearly than before, and the first thing she saw was the *sraf*. It was so strange and pleasant that she wanted to share it at once with her kindred. So she and her mate took the seedpods, and they discovered that they knew who they were, they know they were *mulefa* and not grazers. They gave each other names. They called themselves *mulefa*. They named the seed tree, and all the creatures and plants. (*AS* 200)

Even though this story is reminiscent of the myth of Adam and Eve, the *mulefa* are not expelled from the idyllic nature unlike their Biblical counterparts. Instead, the *mulefa*'s awakening and acquisition of *sraf*, that is to say consciousness and knowledge, result in an ultimate integration with the Edenic nature, which would eventually cause them to value all living beings and the nature itself. Therefore, the *mulefa*'s "ecological utopia", as Fiona McCulloch calls it, serves as an ideal space which balances the nature with the kind of knowledge and consciousness that we come to associate with civilization and culture (*Cosmopolitanism* 119). In this respect, the unique culture of the *mulefa* negates the idea that they lead a primitive life contrary to the immediate impression they create on Dr. Malone and possibly the readers. While Dr. Malone's modern technology fails her in understanding Dust, she comes to comprehend the true nature of Dust only after she invents the amber spyglass using natural materials with the help of *mulefa* technology. The simple amber spyglass makes Dust visible while Dr. Malone's developed machinery cannot provide a solid solution. In this regard, Pullman's presentation of natural materials as the source of technological and scientific knowledge breaks the binary relationship between nature and culture, nature and civilization, nature and industry, showing them as interdependent dualities. The *mulefa* world becomes a unique combination of the earthly and the heavenly, the spiritual and

the physical, directing the reader and the characters to problematization of preconceived religious and cultural hierarchies between such ideas.

Nevertheless, the *mulefa* still face an ecological crisis "despite every effort and all the love and attention [they give to] the wheel-pod trees" (*AS* 118). The *tulapi* birds, with whom the *mulefa* lived in harmony for years, start to destroy seedpod trees which the *mulefa* life depends on. The *tulapi* birds of the *mulefa* world resemble the flying Specters of Cittagazze in terms of their shape and the damage they give by feeding on Dust, namely consciousness. Therefore, as Fitzsimmons writes, "the ecological elements of the *mulefa* tale contributes significant elements to the conclusion of the trilogy" (214). As Dr. Malone finds out, the ecological catastrophe in the *mulefa* world stems from the same reason that causes a moral and ethical decline in other worlds including Lyra's Oxford and Cittagazze. The leakage of Dust hence the disruption of the cosmic balance prepares the end of all universes. The gradual death of the trees, which are the source of the *mulefa*'s consciousness, signifies not simply the depletion of their natural sources but also announces the end of their civilization, culture, and history. Thus, the detailed insight into the *mulefa* world, nature, society, and history serves to summarize the main conflict central to the trilogy. As Margaret and Michael Rustin write,

> Pullman has written a kind of allegory of ecological interdependence, through this invention of a species. It is an imaginative way of demonstrating the connection of all things in universe […] Pullman's allegory suggests that harmony and equilibrium in nature depend on relations of mutuality among living beings - both human and other. The reader gradually comes to understand how each aspect of the world contributes to the life of the whole. ("Learning to Say Goodbye" 419)

In the meantime, Lyra's world also starts to suffer from an ecological downfall, as well. The bears of the North escape from their natural habitat, because it becomes unliveable after Lord Asriel opens a gate into Cittagazze. Iorek explains that the battle Lord Asriel started against the Authority has destroyed the natural circumstances of their country and made them look for places that are more suitable for them:

> Since the catastrophe that had burst the worlds open, all the Arctic ice had begun to melt, and new and strange currents appeared in the water. Since the bears depended on ice and on the creatures who lives in the cold sea, they could see that they would soon starve if they stayed where they were; and being rational, they decided how they should respond. They would have to migrate to where there was snow and ice in plenty: they would go to the highest mountains, to the range that touched the sky, half a world away but unshakeable, eternal, and deep in snow. From bears of the sea they would become bears of the mountains, for as long as it took the world to settle itself again. (*AS* 99)

These concurrent catastrophes experienced in both nature and various social institutions result from the battle between Lord Asriel and Authority, that is to say between science and religion, hence they become a reminder of the series' promotion of finding harmony and balance in life rather than creating binaries. The ethical and natural decline eventually dismantles the hierarchical and dichotomous relationship between nature and culture/civilization showing them as interconnected concepts.

In contesting the natural and urban spaces' ideological, religious, and literary associations, Pullman also refurnishes the land of the dead, offering an un-romanticized version. In Narnia books, what remains beyond the idyllic and spiritual Narnia nature is hellish like the Underland of the Earthmen in *The Silver Chair*, bombarded London in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and Calormen inhabited by the cunning

merchants in *The Horse and His Boy*. Juxtaposed against these dark, chaotic, and hellish cities, Lewis imagines an afterlife as a natural utopia where only children are accepted. Yet, Pullman's imagined land of the dead proves to be barren, colourless, and far from being idyllic. First, Lyra and Will visit "the suburbs of the dead" which resembles a state building, post-office, and "a vast refugee-camp" where the dead wait in long queues before their acceptance to eternity (*AS* 211-224). As Graham Holderness maintains, Pullman's afterlife echoes "ancient Limbos and medieval Purgatories" which are "linked with the postindustrial urban landscape and with a postmodern sense of meaningless non-place" (285). Reminiscent of Dante Alighieri's hell described in *The Divine Comedy*, Pullman's underland is referred to as "the end of all places and the last of all worlds" and "a prison camp" which was established by the Authority (*AS* 7-29). As Lyra and Will move towards the depths of the land of the dead, the scene transforms into a natural one which yet does not give any kind of comfort to the children as it is wild and unpredictable:

> As they moved closer, they could see branches of cypress and yew hanging down low over the water, dark green, dense, and gloomy. The land rose steeply, and the trees grew so thickly that hardly a ferret could slip between them […] They found themselves on a great plain that extended far ahead into the mist. The light by which they saw was a dull self-luminescence that seemed to exist everywhere equally, so that there were no true shadows and no true light, and everything was the same dingy color. (*AS* 256)

Therefore, the land of the dead offers its residents nothing but an eternal emptiness and meaninglessness contrary to Lewis' afterlife which is marked by natural abundance and a spiritual contentment. As the Rustins contend, "Pullman's landscape with its precipices, gloom and dark air brilliantly describe the terror of being trapped

inside a place of cruelty and darkness" ("Learning to Say Goodbye" 421-422). Pullman imaginatively transforms the Christian perception of afterlife as the beginning into a view of afterlife as the end of everything. The dead people Lyra and Will encounter on the way reflect on the false impression they had of afterlife, and they direct the reader to a criticism of both religious sources and literary works that have given way to such archetypal images:

> When we were alive, they told us that when we died we'd go to Heaven. And they said that Heaven was a place of joy and glory and we would spend eternity in the company of saints and angels praising the Almighty, in a state of bliss. That's what they said. […] the land of the dead isn't a place of reward or a place of punishment. It's a place of nothing. The good come here as well as the wicked, and all of us languish in this gloom forever, with no hope of freedom, or joy, or sleep, or rest, or peace. (*AS* 286)

As Pullman rewrites "a contemporary version of the archetypal voyage to the underworld", he utilises the suffocating and deadening sights of nature and city equally (Holderness 279). It should be noted that Pullman's imagined afterlife consists of only Hell and gives no signs related to the presence of Heaven. Thus, by the end of the last volume, Lyra and Will decide to establish "The Republic of Heaven" on earth in their own universes once they are back (*AS* 465). This final consensus which marks the end of the trilogy summarizes the underlying message of the series, which is to find peace on the world we presently inhabit, and it also gives an insight into Pullman's character as a devoted humanist.

Pullman's treatment of the binary relationship between natural and urban settings is mainly shaped by his critique of institutionalized religion. The comparative representations between natural and civic environments, especially upon the

introduction of the *mulefa* world, undoubtedly give way to ecocritical readings as Duncan writes, "[i]ssues of global warming and potential ecological disaster powerfully enter Pullman's narrative […] particularly in the final volume, *The Amber Spyglass*" (Duncan 275). Nevertheless, central to the narrative remain people's misinterpretation of consciousness and knowledge on religious foundations and the damage this misinterpretation gives to the balance of all of the worlds. Avoiding conventional depictions of both natural and urban settings, Pullman integrates the elements of nature and civic culture as much as Lewis presents them as conflicting and dichotomous. As such, Pullman, in one way, draws attention to the insufficiency and limitations of the archetypal, religion-centred, and idealistic spatial representations in children's literature in such a fluid and fluctuating world we live in. As a result, through dismantling spatial binaries with the innovative implementation of fantasy elements, Pullman achieves to provide a more contemporary, postmodern, and actually realistic picture of children and childhood situated at the juncture of nature and city/culture.

3. 4. The Subversion of Home and Away Duality in *His Dark Materials*

"You'll never be lost while this college is standing, Lyra.

This is your home for as long as you need it."

(*The Amber Spyglass* 461)

The conventionally dichotomous relationship between home and away, a leitmotif in children's literature, requires an exploration in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* considering the series' restructuring of the conventional hierarchies between binary pairs. Like Lewis' Narnia books, Pullman's trilogy also engages with the theme of journey on both literal and symbolic levels. The series depicts various acts of departures from familiar places, which might be called home, towards outer places, which prove to be unfamiliar and alien territories specifically for children. The characters in *His Dark Materials,* specifically Lyra and Will, are often on the move not only within their worlds but also between different universes throughout the narrative. As part of the convention, their actual journeys turn into journeys they take into their inner world, and the children show significant psychological and moral transformations on the way.

As Perry Nodelman points out, "home and away are significant images of safety and/or constraint as opposed to danger and/or freedom" in conventional children's literature (*The Hidden Adult* 59). In this regard, home should be left for the spiritual and moral journey of the child hero as it is the case in the *Chronicles*. Nevertheless, the physical presence of home remains to be comforting for the child heroes/heroines along their journeys, and they want to go back to it for the safety it offers. However, such conventional associations of home and away go through a radical change *in His Dark Materials*. In Pullman's narrative, home does not come to mean a space of four walls that is inhabited by a family. In a similar vein, the outside of the house does not always signify danger, unknown, and unfamiliarity for the children. Pullman deconstructs the

traditional associations of both home and away in *His Dark Materials*. The meanings of home and away fluctuate depending on the characters' emotive responses to and individual engagement with places, thereby putting into question the archetypal spatial representations in children's fantasy literature.

Pullman's transgression of the conventional associations of home and away is ensured mainly by the absence of parents or the presence of parental figures who disappoint children. Raised in Jordan College, Lyra, for instance, does not have any experience of a family house, at all. Accordingly, Lyra's "relish for spaces outside the notion of protection so often attributed to the home (such as the rooftops, the streets, and the forbidden male Retiring Room) highlight her tendency to flout the conventional restrictions of home" (Greenwell, "Remodeling" 24). Her lack of parents as well as a traditional family house makes her associate home with other spaces throughout the narrative. Left by her biological parents, Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter, to the hands of the scholars, Lyra comes to consider the premises of Jordan College her home and the governesses and the authoritative male scholars parental figures. Even though she feels oppressed by the order of Jordan College, she simultaneously associates the college with the safety and protection, which one can find in a family/familiar environment. Lyra's conversation with the Master about leaving Jordan College lays bare such associations:

> "Lyra, it won't be long - a couple of years at most - before you will be young woman, and not a child any more. A young lady. And believe me, you'll find Jordan College a far from easy place to live in then."
>
> "But it's my home!"
>
> "It has been your home. But now you need something else."
>
> "Not school. I'm not going to school."
>
> "You need female company. Female guidance." (*NL* 70-71)

The Master's argument not only celebrates patriarchal discourse but also reveals family house as the best place for the development of a child, specifically a female one. Lyra's views, however, blur the distinctions between a family house and an educational institution, rejecting the traditional family structure as well as gender relations in it. Lyra's reluctance to leave Jordan College contrasts with the Pevensie children's attempts to escape from school in Narnia books. In this respect, Pullman draws attention to the individuals' personal experiences and emotional bonds in/with spaces and underlines the insufficiency of traditional meanings attributed to spaces in both real and fictional worlds.

Although Lyra is reluctant to leave Oxford, the luxuries and the female presence in Mrs. Coulter's house fascinate her once she is in. Lyra considers the interiors of Mrs. Coulter's London house homely and comforting. She even fantasizes about Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter falling in love, getting married, adopting her, and becoming a family (*NL* 86). Lyra's dreams, on the one hand, foreshadow the fact that Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel are her actual parents. On the other hand, they function as a means to show Lyra's need to create a family and family house as a naive and innocent girl who has never had both. Nevertheless, as Lyra discovers the identity of her biological parents and their unethical pursuits, her dreams of a home are shattered once again. Thus, Lyra is disappointed at both the Jordan College and Mrs. Coulter, who fail to provide a home for her. As Aine Mahon and Elizabeth O'Brien write:

> Lyra experiences a damaging lack of acknowledgement from significant persons around her. Consistently Lyra is dismissed and safeguarded. She does not directly belong in any of the familial or societal structures around her and yet she is clearly precious and important in some way. (188)

Lyra's changing feelings regarding home, familiar surroundings, and familiar people constantly make her set on journeys in search for places where she can feel secure. Unlike the conventional hero/heroine who leaves home mainly to embark on an adventure, Lyra's departures stem from a necessity and from the fact that the places she used to call home fail her. As Mahon and O'Brien write, Lyra "leave[s] the safety of familiar people and place, to countenance danger and uncertainty, and to strike out on a precarious path of liberation and self-discovery" (184). Therefore, leaving familiar places comes to mean taking a step into the unknown yet liberating territories, which might offer multiple and better possibilities for Lyra.

As Lyra suffers from homelessness in the dangerous streets of London, she finds stability, safety, and love which a child can find in a family house in the boat of the Gyptians. Unlike Mrs. Coulter, who plans to use Lyra for her secret mission, the Gyptians offer her a genuine kind of protection and help. The Gyptians are considered to be a lower class and a group of wild people who live on boats like nomads. In the beginning, even Lyra is considerably brutal to them hijacking their boats and getting into fights with their children. Nevertheless, as the series starts to give an insight into their life and relationships, they turn out to be people who put so much value on family, home, and friendship. Even though they appear to be belonging nowhere, the blend word, Gyptian, which seems to be a combination of gypsy and nation reveals them as a traveling and settled community at the same time. In this context, the Gyptians not only disrupt the conventional images of a domestic family house, but they also reject the dichotomous relationship between home and not-home/away being both:

> the very mobility of their community as they travel up and down the fens and waterways indexes the ways in which Gyptian life involves encountering and experiencing the wider world, and the expanse of the

> nurture Lyra experiences in the Gyptian community is crucial to Pullman's remodeling of the domestic. (Greenwell, "Remodeling" 26)

The Gyptians have strong emotional bonds and their commune life on the boat ensures a homely atmosphere felt by not only them but also Lyra. The Gyptians' boat harmonizes the domesticity of home and the adventurous nature of the outer world; therefore, it fulfils Lyra's expectations from a family and a family house, which are trust, protection, and unhindered freedom. As Amanda M. Greenwell summarizes "[p]aramount to the trilogy's theory of home is that the home would not isolate people from further experience and pursuit of knowledge, nor should it be isolated from those things" ("Remodeling Home" 32). As a result, the Gyptian boat provides Lyra with the security and care she wishes for, but in the meantime, it ensures mobility and opportunity to learn and explore on the move. Accordingly, Lyra's prejudice against the Gyptians turns into an intense sympathy and gratefulness. Even the division of labour on a Gyptian boat makes Lyra feel useful and a part of a family rather than a community. She is treated not simply as a female child who is required to be obedient and respectful, but more like an individual who is trusted and depended on within home:

> Helping Mrs. Coulter had been all very well, but Pantalaimon was right: she wasn't really doing any work there, she was just a pretty pet. On the gyptian boat, there was real work to do, and Ma Costa made sure she did it. She cleaned and swept, she peeled potatoes and made tea, she greased the propellor-shaft bearings, she kept the weed-trap clear over the propellor, she washed dishes, she opened lock gates, she tied the boat up at mooring-posts, and within a couple of days she was much at home with this new life as if she'd been born gyptian. (*NL* 111)

In addition to protecting and feeding Lyra, the Gyptians also decide to take action against the Magisterium with her help. Lyra thus feels herself belonging to the boat both

physically and emotionally, sharing the same food and goal with the Gyptians. As a result, the Gyptians and their boat prove to be a transgressive and an unconventional embodiment of such interrelated concepts as home, house, domesticity, and family. Most significantly, the Gyptian boat serves to reshape the conventional image of the physical house, highlighting that home denotes a feeling and it can be achieved anywhere.

A similar kind of homelessness characterizes Will's character and initiates his journey, as well. Lyra deceives herself by thinking that Jordan College is a home to her, however, Will is already a stranger in his family house, where there is no parental figure, no warmth, and actually no love. As his mother is ill and his father is already absent, Will is in charge of their house. As Greenwell points out, this already disrupts "the parent-child hierarchy that often characterizes constructions of home" (Greenwell, "Remodeling" 24). After the men of the Magisterium break into Will's house, his family house literally loses its association with safety, and he becomes alienated to the place where he was born and raised. David Levey describes Will's alienation to his family house as such: "Nearing the now-empty house that he has been sharing with his mother he observes that it is silent and shabby […], no longer a home, but ominous, a place where the familiar has become alien" (23). As Will further contemplates on his position in his house, he thinks that "home was the place he kept safe for his mother, not the place others kept safe for him" (*SK* 307).

Pullman complicates the binary relationship between home and away, safety and danger even more forcefully as Lyra and Will make their first entrances to the city of Cittagazze. Like their family houses, Lyra and Will's worlds also fail to become homes to them. The children leave their own worlds through different portals to escape from the Magisterium. Ironically, they find themselves yet in more dangerous and life-threatening Cittagazze, which is inhabited by the Specters and the hostile abandoned

children. In this respect, neither Lyra nor Will feels themselves "completely at home in their world, or in any other" (Levey 22).

However, Pullman restructures such ideas as home and homelessness once again through Lyra and Will's companionship, which is based on mutual trust and understanding. As Greenwell writes, "[r]efugees from their own worlds, Will and Lyra create a rudimentary 'home' as orphans together in Cittagazze" no matter how much unsafe it is ("Remodeling" 27). Even though they visit Will's Oxford during the day to make research on Dust, they find it very comforting to be back in Cittagazze at night-time. Therefore, Cittagazze becomes not only "a place to which they return consistently" but also "their safe haven from the threats that exist in their own worlds" (Greenwell, "Remodeling" 27). Lyra and Will's emotions after they return to Cittagazze reveal that they feel at home in each other's company:

> "Wait till there's no cars coming," he said. "I'm going through now."
>
> And a moment later he was on the grass under the palm trees, and a second or two afterward Lyra followed.
>
> They felt as if they were home again. The wide warm night and the scent of flowers and the sea, and the silence, bathed them like soothing water.
>
> Lyra stretched and yawned, and Will felt a great weight lift off his shoulders. He had been carrying it all day, and he hadn't noticed how it had nearly pressed him into the ground; but now he felt light and free and at peace. (*SK* 108)

A symbolic reading of the given-quotation points out that Lyra and Will create a microcosmic home in the midst of dangerous Cittagazze. Even though Lyra and Will's "adventures evoke experiences of strangeness of the kind that children encounter when away from home", they paradoxically achieve to transform unfamiliar and strange

places into familiar ones (Rustin and Rustin, "A New Kind of Friendship" 229). As argued by Levey, "home appears to be rooted in themselves, in their burgeoning sexual and emotional love for each other" (23). Viewed from this perspective, Lyra and Will's capability to make a home out of any place reinforces the emotive connotations of home on the one hand. On the other hand, it presents such oppositional concepts as familiar, unfamiliar, home, and not-home/away as fluid and interbedded rather than dichotomous.

Such interpretation is evinced in Lyra's fluctuating emotions when she visits Will's Oxford, as well. Lyra and Will's Oxfords appear to belong to different time-periods carrying similarities and differences. Even though Lyra seems to recognize it, she cannot easily relate herself to this version of Oxford. Thus, Lyra's feelings evoke a sense of belonging and non-belonging as well as familiarity and unfamiliarity at the same time:

> her childhood had been spent running about streets almost identical with these, and how proud she'd been of belonging to Jordon College, whose Scholars were the cleverest, whose coffers the richest, whose beauty the most splendid of all. And now it simply wasn't there, and she wasn't Lyra of Jordon anymore; she was a lost little girl in a strange world, belonging nowhere. (*SK* 70)

Nevertheless, as Lyra gets into the school building, her hopelessness vanishes in a very short time: "This was like home again. She felt Pan, in her pocket, enjoying it" (*SK* 82). Obviously, Lyra finds comfort in the presence of her *daemon,* Pan this time. However, as Margaret and Michael Rustin underline, Lyra's ability to adapt herself to the changing environments also relates to her independence, changeability as well as zest for knowledge and new experiences:

> Lyra's capacity to be at home in so many different worlds is another take on this fluidity of identity. She can adapt to Mrs. Coulter's

> sophisticated London life, to Ma Costa's canal boat, to the 'seamanlike' needs of the gyptian ship steaming to the North, and can enjoy all the potentialities within herself. ("Where is Home?" 96)

Lyra and Will develop ambivalent feelings towards home and away in the course of the narration. Thus, as Levey underlines, "[g]radually Pullman's understanding of home emerges […] as both familiar and alien" (19). Unlike conventional and conservative children's fantasy books, *His Dark Materials* does not present either family house or one's world as a sanctuary or a homeland for children. Both home and away prove to be equally protective and dangerous, familiar and unfamiliar, suppressive and liberating places, and they change their meanings constantly in line with the circumstances and personal experiences of the characters.

After Will takes possession of the subtle knife, which opens up windows into other universes, the duo finds it very easy to travel between different universes to evade dangers at any time. Lyra and Will use the knife so frequently and so many times that it becomes very difficult to follow which universe they are in. These frequent movements signify the children's homelessness as one of the central themes, and they also disrupt the conventional home-away or home-away-home pattern. As the story develops, one cannot easily distinguish home from away, or tell who belongs where. Nevertheless, these transitions help both Lyra and Will take an inward journey. They change and mature both physically and psychologically while moving back and forth between different universes. As Lyra and Will confront various dangers along the journey, they reflect on their relationships with their parents, their homes, and worlds. Furthermore, they question their own positions in life, try to define their expectations, and discover their sexualities. As Laura Feldt writes,

> The unsettling and blurring of the distinction(s) between the everyday world and the numerous alternative worlds stimulates reflection and

spiritual searching, just as it suggests that there are other realities than the everyday world, which are significant and valuable. (559)

The journeys in children's books conventionally come to signify a transition from child-like innocence to adult-like maturation. However, as Greenwell argues Pullman "is well known among critics for his complication and inversion of the innocence/experience hierarchy" ("Remodeling" 21). Therefore, Lyra and Will's experiences throughout their journeys do not kill the independent and free-spirited children within them. Experience that is gained through journey earns the children wisdom as well as maturation of the kind which help them acquire a better understanding of themselves, life, and their universes. As Feldt also highlights, "[i]n the end, readers [as well as the characters] are returned to the contemporary world, but with the experiences of multiple planes of reality, and a fascination of the idea of a deeper, unknown mystical force as a focus for individualized spiritual seeking" (561).

Lyra and Will's psychological maturation and increasing wisdom also help them reflect on their homes in retrospect. Towards the end of the narrative, Will expresses his wish to go back home as he feels himself guilty for leaving his ill mother. Lyra, however, appears to be more reluctant. Her reluctance can be read as her lack of a place that she can call home:

> "Mmm," said Will. "D'you think we'll ever go home?"
>
> "Dunno. I don't suppose I've got a home anyway. They probably couldn't have me back at Jordan College, and I can't live with the bears or the witches. Maybe I could live with the gyptians. I wouldn't mind that, if they'd had me."
>
> […]
>
> "Well, I've got to go home," he said.
>
> She thought he sounded unsure, though. She hoped he sounded unsure.

> […]
>
> But there's my mother. I've got to go back and look after her. I just left her with Mrs. Cooper, and it's not fair of either of them." (*AS* 408-412)

As exemplified by Lyra and Will's different thoughts about returning home, Pullman associates home with one's assuming his/her responsibilities to his/her own family, community, and environment. Therefore, home becomes not simply a place a person needs but one where s/he is also needed. As a result, even though Lyra and Will are able to create homely environments even in the most dangerous places, the idea of having a familiar place that waits for them becomes desirable. Even Dr. Malone prefers to go back to her own world although she knows that she will be in trouble for "smash[ing] up some property in the lab" and "forg[ing] an identity" (*AS* 457):

> "I …" Mary began, and found she hadn't considered that for a moment. "I suppose I belong in my own world. Though I'll be sorry to leave this one; I've been very happy here. The happiest I've ever been in my life, I think." (*AS* 430)

The characters' reactions actually link to the idea of belonging as valued by Pullman and emphasised by the characters in the course of the narration. As Levey affirms, "for Pullman, home and belonging are central concepts" and human beings "are most at home, on earth, when they are exercising all their faculties of reason, will, freewill, independence and maturity […]" (Levey 21). Therefore, as contradictory as it may sound, in Pullman's perspective, the idea of home also includes establishing interdependent physical bonds with places where one can relate herself/himself to both the place and the people in it. Stephen Thomson argues that "both Lyra and Will are defined as *belonging to* a lineage. And while they are supposed to be in some measure independent, there is also a notion of direct, genetic inheritance; that they are, constitutionally, their father's children" (153). Therefore, towards the end of the

narrative, the children inwardly yearn for returning to their native lands, or rather their roots, which make them who they are.

It is in this context that the narrative requires not only the children but also other characters to return to their own worlds, that is to say their home in the end. By the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, it is revealed that moral, political, religious as well as environmental deterioration experienced concurrently in all of the universes stems from the windows opened through the subtle knife for ages. Symbolizing consciousness and knowledge, the shadows of Dr. Malone's world, the *sraf* of the *mulefa* world, Dust of Lyra's world have been "leaking out of the worlds and into nothingness" through windows, emptying the good in all of these universes (*AS* 433). Although the portals enable the characters move between different worlds, this cosmic phenomenon actually upsets the balance between universes drawing them into corruption and catastrophe. In addition, Lyra and Will discover that human beings cannot survive in other universes, as they gradually lose their mental faculties and physical abilities. Will comes to recognize that his father's fatigue and unhealthy appearance result from his being away from his own world for too long:

> "He said —" Lyra began, gulping, "he said that people could spend a little time in other worlds without being affected. They could. And we have, haven't we? Apart from that we had to go into the world of the dead, we're still healthy, aren't we?"
>
> "They can spend a little time, but not a long time," Will said. "My father had been away from his world, my world, for ten years. And he was nearly dying when I found him. Ten years, that's all." (*AS* 435)

This reinforces the series' emphasis on belonging as well as protecting the cosmic balance within environment, universe, namely home. The only solution to bring peace to all of the worlds is to close the windows after every one goes back home safely:

> Xaphania had told Serafina Pekkala that when all the openings were closed, then the worlds would all be restored to their proper relations with one another, and Lyra's Oxford and Will's would lie over each other again, like transparent images on two sheets of film being moved closer and closer until they merged — although they would never truly touch. (*AS* 451)

The necessity to annihilate the bridges between the worlds draws attention to the distinctness, and most significantly the uniqueness of every universe in the sense of peoples' homes and homelands. As Thomson affirms, "at the close, everything is returned to its home because the separateness and wholeness of each world must be respected" (156). In addition, it also highlights one's responsibility to help protect the social, political, economic, and environmental balance at his/her home by working for the welfare of its people. Correspondingly, the children, representing the future of their worlds, are inculcated to surpass various problems in their homes through helping Dust reach its former status. Dust symbolizes knowledge and consciousness; therefore, Pullman prescribes wisdom, open-mindedness, kindness, and freedom not only for creating an ideal society/home but also for making its individuals feel themselves belonging to it:

> Conscious beings make Dust — they renew it all the time, by thinking and feeling and reflecting, by gaining wisdom and passing it on.
>
> And if you help everyone else in your worlds to do that, by helping them to learn and understand about themselves and each other and the way everything works, and by showing them how to be kind instead of cruel, and patient instead of hasty, and cheerful instead of surly, and above all how to keep their minds open and free and curious… Then

> they will renew enough to replace what is lost through one window. (*AS* 440-441)

Lewis ends *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the idyllic heaven and does not let children return home. No matter how much content Lewis' children are to be united in heaven, the ending actually creates a sense of pessimism, hinting at the insufficiency of the physical world in providing an ideal and favourable environment for the children. Nevertheless, as David Levey indicates, "the home reached by the characters as [*His Dark Materials*] concludes is not utopian, but starkly down-to-earth" (Levey 19). This actually makes the series a more realistic and optimistic representation of life itself especially when compared to Lewis' Romantic ideals. In *His Dark Materials*, the end of the journey does not bring titles, which prosper the family house of the hero or the heroine. Lyra and Will as well as Dr. Malone all go back to their daily monotonous lives being ready to face every obstacle. Dr. Malone offers Will help with his mother as well as a home. As to Lyra, she makes Jordan College her home again and accepts to start her education as a more responsible and knowing girl. Therefore, as Greenwell argues,

> key to Pullman's remodeling of home is that it makes room for movement away from the innocence conventionally associated with childhood and fosters opportunities more often associated with experience. True home is not simply the protective and often limiting place to which one might return after an adventure, but a vibrant, dynamic space that functions as an integral component to thoughtful and active participation in the world. ("Remodeling" 21)

In this regard, Pullman values the physical and the earthly world as the actual home of children. In an interview, he declines to think of heavenly realm or afterlife as the real home, an idea that Lewis seems to promote in *The Chronicles of Narnia.* Instead,

Pullman puts emphasis on the dignity of actively participating in and contributing to the material world:

> Firstly, a sense that this world where we live is our home. Our home is not somewhere else. There is no elsewhere. This is a physical universe and we are physical beings made of material stuff. This is where we live. […] Secondly, a sense of belonging, a sense of being part of a real and important story, a sense of being connected to other people, to people who are not here any more, to those who have gone before us. And a sense of being connected to the universe itself. (qtd. in Levey 21)

In this regard, even the rise of the dead in Pullman's narrative denotes a return to the familiar people and a reunion "with their planetary home" at the same time (McCulloch, *Cosmopolitanism* 110). Viewed from this angle, Lyra and Will's rescuing the dead people not only evinces Pullman's celebration of the earthly world, but it also hints at his critique of children's books, which idealize afterlife as the ultimate home. Such radical inscriptions eventually lay bare Pullman's criticism of religious and cultural discourses embedded in the conventional representations of home in children's literature. Lyra and Will's alienation to familiar spaces and attachment to unfamiliar ones thus epitomize Pullman's subversive attempt at reimagining new spaces for children's literature beyond the literary and cultural archetypes.

To conclude, in *His Dark Materials*, the journey of the hero and heroine from home to the outer world becomes more than an archetypal implementation. It serves as a means to elaborate on various issues Pullman seems to be preoccupied with such as the hierarchies in family houses, the constructions of home, and the contrast between physical earth and spiritual realm. Pullman's representation of home and not-home/away duality paradoxically contrasts with and reinforces conventional associations at the same time, eventually adding up new meanings to them. Pullman

invites the readers to trace the ideological implications of home and circular journeys pertaining to children's literature. In the *Chronicles*, Lewis divides home and away from each other significantly and explores their different roles in the child characters' development. While Lewis acknowledges literary and cultural function of being away from home, he simultaneously celebrates the domesticity and sanctity of family houses in line with the moral framework of the narrative. Nevertheless, Pullman blurs the distinction between home and away unlike Lewis. Even though the children in *His Dark Materials* end the narrative where they have started, this does not fit the conventional representations of "returning home" that we often encounter in hero stories. Lyra and Will need to re-create their homes once again with the awareness they have gained through their journeys. As a result, central to the series remain the multiplicity of perception and the relativity of the meaning people associate with spaces in line with their personal experiences. Pullman reconfigures both home and its outside around these ideas, and he shows that the meanings of such spaces can be fluid, fluctuating, and interchangeable in many cases.

3. 5. Contesting the Gendered Binaries in *His Dark Materials*

"The powers of this world are very strong.
Men and women are moved by tides
much fiercer than you can imagine,
and they sweep us all up into the current.
Go well, Lyra; bless you, child; bless you.
Keep your own counsel." (*Northern Lights* 74)

In *His Dark Materials,* Pullman employs gender roles and gender stereotypes subversively as much as Lewis abides by them in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In line with Pullman's radicalism against normative values, the books transgress the conventional notions of womanhood and manhood, as well as other interrelated dualities such as femininity and masculinity, motherhood and fatherhood, which inform what can be called conventionally didactic children's books. This tendency not only destabilizes patriarchal hierarchies and power relations between genders but also showcases the series' compatibility with social transformations, changing human relations, and postmodern problematization of grand narratives such as patriarchy. Even though Pullman relies heavily on gender stereotypes such as witches, harpies, wise old men, domestic women, and male warriors, he presents those stereotypical characters in ways that eventually dismantle patriarchal discourse. As a result, Pullman's *His Dark Materials* epitomizes how children's literature can deconstruct and restructure the binary relationship between genders through innovative implementation of the narrative elements of fantasy genre, thereby refurnishing the ideological precepts of patriarchal society and its literary tradition.

As Danielle Bienvenue Bray writes, Pullman creates a "story in which the child characters defy a masculine/feminine gender binary" declining to abide by the gender norms and gendered expectations (161). In *Northern Lights*, Lyra negates the attributes

of ideal-femininity, which are dictated to her first by the authoritative, dogmatic, and patriarchal Jordan College. Raised in the conservative environment of Jordan, where men are powerful administrators and women are either domestic governesses or moderate lecturers, Lyra is aware of how a girl should behave and look to be approved. Nevertheless, she stubbornly declines to do so preserving her curious and free-spirited personality. When Lord Asriel warns Lyra about her messy outlook, she courageously counterattacks, drawing attention to the discrimination between men and women not only in Jordan but also in the entire society:

> "Dirty," said Lord Asriel, pushing her hands away. "Don't they make you wash in this place?"
>
> "Yes," she said. "But the Chaplain's fingernails are always dirty. They're even dirtier than mine."
>
> "He's a learned man. What's your excuse?"
>
> "I must've got them dirty after I washed." (*NL* 38)

While women are strictly forbidden to the male scholars' Retiring Room, Lyra does not hesitate to sneak into it, which actually comes to symbolize her trespassing into the male domain (*NL* 4). Moreover, she makes friends with the kitchen boy Roger, gets into fights against the Gyptian kids, and walks on the roofs of the college with no fear. Lyra's such unruly actions render her an unladylike girl, who needs to be educated gender-wise according to the male scholars and the college-women who have already been domesticated by the system. In this context, Lyra's governess, Mrs. Lonsdale's warnings embody the expectations of the patriarchal college from an ideal woman, which are to be silent, moderate, and subservient to the rules of the male-dominated institution:

> Look at you! Just look at your skirt - it's filthy! Take it off at once and wash yourself while I look for something decent that en't torn. Why

> you can't keep yourself clean and tidy… […] The reason for this is you're going to have dinner with the Master and his guests. I hope to God you behave. Speak when you're spoken to, be quiet and polite, smile nicely and don't you ever say Dunno when someone asks you a question. (*NL* 64-65)

With Mrs. Coulter's arrival to Jordan College to adopt Lyra, the series reveals another layer of the womanhood and manhood dichotomy. Pullman juxtaposes domestic and mundane women of the college against Mrs. Coulter who embodies a powerful, physically beautiful, hence potentially dangerous woman figure. When Lyra meets Mrs. Coulter, she finds it very odd that a female scholar can look so powerful and beautiful at the same time since she was brought up in a male-dominated environment where education and academy are associated with the old, wise, authoritative, and relatively formidable male scholars:

> [Lyra] regarded female Scholars with a proper Jordan disdain: there *were* such people but, poor things, they could never be taken more seriously than animals dressed up and acting a play. Mrs. Coulter, on the other hand, was not like any female Scholar Lyra had seen, and certainly not like the two seriously elder ladies who were on the other female guests. (*NL* 67)

Lyra's thoughts about female scholars reflect not the state of mind she has been exposed to in Jordan. However, Mrs. Coulter achieves to impress Lyra not only with the way she speaks and looks but also with her independent character and scholarly status as she often goes to the North as an explorer. Lyra shouts out with admiration saying that "She is a remarkable lady. She's wonderful. She's the most wonderful person I've ever met" (*NL* 69). Hence, Mrs. Coulter becomes a role model and an object of admiration for

Lyra being a single woman with powers even on the patriarchal Jordan College. Lyra is at once excited by the make-over Mrs. Coulter gives her:

> And they went shopping. Everything on this extraordinary day was a new experience for Lyra, but shopping was the most dizzying. […] And the clothes were so *pretty…* Lyra's clothes had come to her through Mrs. Lonsdale, and a lot of them had been handed down and much mended. She had seldom had anything new, and when she had, it had been picked for wear and not for looks; and she had never chosen anything for herself. And now to find Mrs. Coulter suggesting this, and praising that, and paying for it all, and more […]. (*NL* 78)

Nevertheless, Mrs. Coulter's expectations from Lyra turn into a different and actually a more powerful kind of suppression since Mrs. Coulter tries to create a miniature of herself, in other words, a feminine and polished lady in Lyra. As Mrs. Coulter is about to introduce Lyra to her circle, she advises:

> Now the first guests will be arriving in a few minutes, and they are going to find you perfectly behaved, sweet, charming, innocent, attentive, delightful in every way. I particularly wish for that, Lyra, do you understand me? "Yes, Mrs. Coulter." "Then kiss me." (*NL* 88)

In this respect, Mrs. Coulter represents the other side of the coin in terms of gender stereotypes and expectations of the patriarchal society from women. Even though Mrs. Coulter achieves to play crucial roles in the male-dominated governmental system, her polished outlook and self-inflicted rigidness represent a reluctant requirement to survive in the patriarchal order. Lyra yet experiences a kind of enlightenment in time. Her *daemon*, Pan's words come as a shock to Lyra: "[Mrs. Coulter is] just making a pet out of you" (*NL* 86). Considering that Pan is Lyra's soul and mind, Pan's views represent Lyra's own thoughts which she has repressed until that moment.

> Lyra turned her back and closed her eyes. But what Pantalaimon [her daemon] said was true. She had been feeling confined and cramped by this polite life, luxury it was. She would have given anything for a day with her Oxford ragamuffin friends, with a battle in the Claybeds and a race along the canal. (*NL* 86)

Lyra's reaction to such confinement shows that Lyra rejects both of these female stereotypes, as she obeys neither the rules of Jordan College nor the criteria of Mrs. Coulter for being a lady. Even though Lyra's decline of gendered identities is not appreciated by either party, her individual and rebellious choices make her a heroine indeed. Lyra determines her own path and goals by giving away the safety she would have through adopting gendered roles. Therefore, Lyra follows her conscience and makes it her priority to rescue the kidnapped children from the patriarchal government, the Magisterium.

Pullman's depiction of Lyra as the central character in *Northern Lights* also negates male-heroism. As Diane M. Duncan writes,

> […] the heroes in Pullman's narratives are often fiercely independent girls who are intelligent and remarkably resourceful, and with an insatiable appetite for adventure and self-knowledge. They come across as indomitable, feisty young women in fast-moving plots where fear and terror are frequently encounters alongside some achingly painful decisions in their journey towards wisdom and self-consciousness. (274)

Nevertheless, this does not mean that Pullman embraces an entirely feminist discourse through the portrayal of an assertive female protagonist. While *Northern Lights* revolves mainly around Lyra's adventures, the focal character becomes Will Parry in the second volume, *The Subtle Knife,* which concentrates on Will's enmity with the

Magisterium. In the course of the narration, Lyra and Will prove to be so analogous to each other that their relationship eventually creates a sense of equilibrium, rendering them the heroine and the hero of equal importance. Lyra and Will both strive to find their missing fathers, and they have problematical relationships with their mothers, who turn out to be physically present and emotionally absent. While this already entails a mutual understanding between Lyra and Will, their battle against the Magisterium makes them comrades more than friends. Furthermore, in each book, Lyra and Will are paired with their magical gadgets, respectively the golden compass and the subtle knife. In this regard, the series balances their physical powers, as well. Lyra and Will finally become co-protagonists in the last book, *The Amber Spyglass,* where they share the responsibility to save multiple universes from the wrath of the Authority.

Viewed from this perspective, Pullman reimagines the trope of heroism reiterated in conservative and often medievalist children's fantasy books, which put male experience to the centre. As Laura Miller explains, *His Dark Materials* is "founded upon the ideals of the Enlightenment rather than upon tribal and mythic yearnings for kings, gods, and supermen. Pullman's heroes are explorers, cowboys, and physicists" who can be female or male (n. pag.). Therefore, Pullman does not promote male-heroism nor does he solely prioritize female experience. Instead he creates a narrative which does not associate power and heroism with a specific sex.

Will similarly defies the conventional associations of ideal masculinity and male stereotypes that reinforce the patriarchal order. Lyra and Will are represented as interdependent characters who complement each other in different aspects of life. Their interdependence transgresses the binary relationship between genders as they equally and alternately participate in domestic and public spheres. The most significant proof of such subversion becomes Will's taking over the domestic duties which are managed by the governesses in Lyra's Oxford. As Lyra is not used to handling domestic chores, Will

turns into her nurturer: “We’ve got to eat, so we’ll eat what’s here, but we’ll tidy up afterward and keep the place clean, because we ought to. You wash these dishes. We’ve got to treat this place right” (*SK* 26). Anna Tso interprets the reversal of female and male roles in the children’s relationship as a contestation against “the association between women and the private, domestic sphere” (33). As Tso argues, “the ideological notion of women being ‘the angel in the house’ is broken, satirized and inverted” through Lyra who is “incompetent in handling domestic chores”; and Will who is a “keener housekeeper and carer” (33).

Nevertheless, after Will gets wounded while fighting to gain the possession of the subtle knife, Lyra takes on the role of a nurturer and carer this time practicing things she has learned from Will:

> Then Will next became aware of things, it was completely dark, and his hand was hurting more than ever. He sat up carefully and saw a fire burning not far away, where Lyra was trying to toast some bread on a forked stick. There were a couple of birds roasting on a spit as well […]. (*SK* 267)

As Danielle Bienvenue Bray indicates, “Lyra and Will, who are on their own for substantial portions of their quest, develop a mutually nurturing relationship with each other” (169). Therefore, their relationship arguably embodies an ideal female and male partnership which is based on interdependency not the superiority of one to the other. As Maria Nikolajeva emphasises, we do not see Will as “the female heroine’s faithful squire. He is on a quest of his own”, hence Lyra and Will’s “consciousness are presented to the reader as enhancing and complementing each other” throughout the narrative (Nikolajeva, “Fairy Tale” 149). Accordingly, Lyra finds relief in not only having someone to trust but also being someone who is trusted: “Will had appeared out of nowhere in order to help her; surely that was obvious. The idea that *she* had come all

this way in order to help *him* took her breath away" (*SK* 80). Protecting and nurturing one another, Lyra and Will counterbalance the gender binaries which, as Derrida argues, engender hierarchies. As highlighted by Bray, "[a]lthough the ways in which [they] perform gender around each other shift, what remains constant [becomes] their ability to find complementary, reciprocal roles to perform" (172).

The idea of the complementariness of men and women is supported even by the nature of *daemons,* which usually appear as the opposite sex of their human partners. As the physical embodiments of people's souls, mind, and inner state, the *daemons* reinforce the idea that genders are interdependent. As ironical as it may sound, even the patriarchal society depicted in the narrative considers this quality of the *daemons* ordinary. When Dr. Grumman, then-John Parry, enters into Lyra's Oxford, he discovers that his *daemon*, that is to say his soul, is a female bird. His excitement at this discovery is telling of Pullman's celebration of both genders as part of a whole - a greater design: "Can you imagine my astonishment, in turn, at learning that part of my own nature was female, and bird-formed, and beautiful?" (*SK* 213-214). Reminiscent of the Jungian concepts of *anima* and *animus*, the *daemons* represent, in Hunt and Lenz's words, "the opposite sexual energy in the male and female psyches, respectively" (139). Therefore, they arguably showcase women and men, womanhood and manhood, masculinity and femininity as different yet closely related and connected concepts. As a result, Pullman's created fantasy world obscures the distinction between genders, pure gender roles, and gendered view of human psyche through the coexistence of male physicality and female spirituality or *vice versa*, and it simultaneously mocks the patriarchal mind-set, which marginalizes and disparages the female.

Pullman's destabilization of gendered binaries is evinced through adult characters, as well. Pullman pairs male and female adults as it is the case with Lyra and Will. The adult characters' relationship with the other sex, their positions and roles

within the society, as well as their relationship with the children contrast with the conventional power relations between genders. For instance, Mrs. Coulter appears to be an embodiment of *femme-fatale* at once. She even seems to parallel Lewis' White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, who gives an magical Turkish Delight to Edmund. Mrs. Coulter similarly offers "chocolatl" to Lyra to earn her sympathy and trust, evoking the seductive feminine evilness: "I've got more chocolatl than I can drink myself. Will you come and help me drink it?" (*NL* 43). Nevertheless, Pullman complicates the archetypal *femme-fatale* figure since the conventional understanding of evil proves insufficient to decipher Mrs. Coulter's character and motivations behind her actions. Her utilisation of female sexuality is justified in terms of her self-confidence and self-gained power within the patriarchal society and male-dominated government. Unlike Lewis, who portrays female sexuality and beauty as dangerous to the masculine power, Pullman leaves a space for understanding Mrs. Coulter's ways. Mrs. Coulter achieves to survive in the patriarchal society first by marrying a wealthy politician, then giving up on her own daughter, and finally becoming a part of the Magisterium's evil plans. As such, Mrs. Coulter turns out to be an ambivalent character who is in-between the stereotypical *femme-fatale* and self-sustained powerful woman. Mrs. Coulter's character often evokes a sense of sympathy felt by the readers and the characters alike. The ambivalence of her character eventually shows gender stereotypes as suppressive renditions which fail to represent characters fully and properly.

In a similar vein, Lord Asriel does not obtain all the necessary qualities of ideal manhood either, and he remains to be an ambivalent character whose goodness or evilness cannot be grasped easily by both the characters and the readers. He does not represent the ideal and chivalric masculinity that is often the case in children's fantasy literature. Contrary to the archetype, Lord Asriel makes an enemy out of the mother of his child. Focusing too much on his personal, political, and scientific pursuits, he

discards the value of love, family, and friendship. Like Mrs. Coulter, Lord Asriel also shifts between being the embodiment of powerful masculinity and a self-centred man. Their relationship accordingly fluctuates between a romantic tension and a subtle fight over gaining power over one another. Contrasting each other in their economic, political, scientific, and religious views, both Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter reject to act in accordance with their genders in their relationship, and their denial of gender roles makes them fierce rivals.

Such unsettled relationships define other female and male interactions in the series, reinforcing the novels' subversive treatment of gendered binaries. Farder Coram, a respected elderly Gyptian, and Serafina Pekkala - the queen of the witch clan - similarly part their ways after the death of their son, and they decide to pursue their own goals in life. Even Lyra and Will separate their ways in the end as they have to return to their own worlds to ensure peace. As such, the series depicts hardly any character - except the Gyptians - who can form a healthy relationship with the opposite sex. The lack of a happily united couple in *His Dark Materials* becomes a subversive response to the prototypes of children's literature such as fairy tales, folk tales, fables, and epics, which celebrate gender roles. As such, *His Dark Materials* arguably becomes a critique of a literary tradition which promotes patriarchal standards of gender. It diverges from the tradition largely by celebrating the individualism of its female and male characters who equally pursue their own interests free from the gendered constraints.

The transgression of the binary relationship between genders correspondingly results in the destruction of conventional parental roles. Most outstandingly, Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel do not meet the standards of ideal motherhood and fatherhood. As Duncan highlights, "Lyra has two parents who are selfishly and ruthlessly fixated upon their own political ambitions to create new worlds in which children have no part" (278). Mrs. Coulter is like neither Mrs. Beaver nor Susan of Narnia books when it

comes to her relationship with not men and children. Her abandonment of Lyra as a baby and her role in the *intercision* project show that Mrs. Coulter lacks any maternal feelings. In the same vein, Lord Asriel also negates the associations of fatherhood in the traditional sense. As Colin Manlove highlights, Lyra's "mother proves evil" but in the same way "her father, towards whom she has devotedly travelled, spurns her" too (*The Fantasy* 188-189). Lord Asriel introduces himself to Lyra as her uncle and rejects to form any kind of emotional bond devoting himself entirely to his own dangerous businesses. His attitude towards Lyra, which is simultaneously rejective and protective, makes him an ambivalent character as a father figure. In the end of *Northern Lights*, he sacrifices Roger to expose Dust in order to open a door into alternative universes, and this actually makes him an equal of Mrs. Coulter in declining to be sensitive with children.

Will's relationship with his parents also reinforces such subversion. Will adopts parental roles at home taking care of his ill mother and protecting her from possible dangers. The only thing Will knows of his father is that he is an "explorer" and he "vanished long before Will was able to remember him" (*SK* 9-10). Will creates an ideal father image in his mind, who is alive yet "lost somewhere in the wild" and this image leads him to fantasize about rescuing his father sometime in the future (*SK* 10). Nevertheless, the revelation of Will's father's identity as Dr. Grumman, a shaman in Lyra's Oxford, disagrees with both Will's fantasies and the father-proper. After finding out a window into other universes, John Parry, now Dr. Grumman, settles in Lyra's Oxford, and he adapts himself well to the life there. Even though he mentions that he could not find the way back, his narration of his own story reveals that he got over his past and previous life long time ago:

> I found myself, for the most part, greatly concerned. I missed some things about my own world, to be sure. […] I loved my wife dearly, as I

> loved my son, my only child, a little boy not yet one year old […] But I might search for a thousand years and never find the way back. We were surrounded forever. However, my work absorbed me. I sought other forms of knowledge. (*SK* 214)

Although these characters do not perform conventional parental roles, their ambivalent and dynamic personalities make it very difficult to simply define them as good or bad mothers/fathers. When Will and his father finally meet, his father, now a shaman, cures his wounded fingers with a fatherly affection. In a similar vein, "[b]y the end of volume two, *The Subtle Knife*, we feel more confident that Lord Asriel is a godlike superhero" since he starts a battle against the Authority (Newby 72). In *The Amber Spyglass*, Lord Asriel shows signs of a caring father figure sending his men to save Lyra from the Authority's army which is on its way to kill her. Nevertheless, the most radical hence perplexing transformation concerning parenthood is seen in Mrs. Coulter's character. She undergoes a gradual change especially in terms of her attitude towards Lyra. In the *Amber Spyglass*, Mrs. Coulter completes her full transformation into a protective and nurturing mother figure by stopping taking sides with the Magisterium and striving hard to protect Lyra. Mrs. Coulter puts Lyra to sleep by drugging her and hides her in a cave. She gives up on her luxurious life, finds herself at the mercy of a village girl, and turns sceptical against the dogmatic Magisterium:

> she wondered what in the world she thought she was doing, and whether she had gone mad, and over and over again, what would happen when the Church found out. The golden monkey was right. She wasn't only hiding Lyra: she was hiding her own eyes. (*AS* 6)

As Will finally achieves to save Lyra from both the army of the Authority and Mrs. Coulter, Mrs. Coulter shows a strong flow of emotions for the first time, which simultaneously weakens and empowers her as a woman. Even though she betrays the

insensitive yet strong woman she created in the first place, her true personality comes to surface at this moment belying all the negative qualities she has been equalled with: "Lyra! Lyra, my love! Mt heart's treasure, my little child, my only one! Oh, Lyra, Lyra, don't go, don't leave me! My darling daughter - you're tearing my heart—" (*AS* 143). However, the change in Mrs. Coulter's character should not be read as Pullman's eventual celebration of domesticity or gender norms. Mrs. Coulter's transformation into a protecting mother elucidates her dynamism, complexity, and multifaceted personality as a female character. Therefore, Mrs. Coulter's transformation from an evil woman into a caring mother obscures the distance between female stereotypes. Mrs. Coulter is neither a destructive woman nor a domestic goddess, who are both inferior to the ideal masculinity. Contrarily, Mrs. Coulter is both of them at the same time. As Maria Nikolajeva underlines,

> It is hard to understand her motivation, and her ultimate reformation, ostensibly driven by her sudden maternal instincts, is psychologically implausible. [But] Human nature is enigmatic and inconsistent, and the character of Mrs. Coulter is a good illustration. A fairy-tale character cannot possibly go through a similar transformation; an evil stepmother cannot be reformed. ("Fairy Tale" 148)

The characters' dynamisms and individualistic differences stem mainly from Pullman's humanitarian, egalitarian, and arguably anti-patriarchal viewpoint. However, as Nikolajeva argues, it simultaneously links to postmodern scepticism of grand narratives and postmodern emphasis on obscurity, fluidity, and deconstruction of binary oppositions:

> the portraits of Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel reflect a typical young person's contradictory feelings toward her parents. […] Such utter ambiguity of character is based on the postmodern concept of

> indeterminacy, of the relativity of good and evil. By intuition, we decide that forces who wish to kill Lyra are evil, while those who seek to hide and protect her are good. However, the motivation of both sides is equally dubious. […] Nothing and nobody are what they seem to be in Pullman's trilogy, and the reader is not given any clues. ("Fairy Tale" 149)

As a result, neither Mrs. Coulter nor Lord Asriel acts in accordance with the normative behaviour patterns set by the patriarchy. Their multifaceted and changeable personalities epitomize the fluidity and interchangeability of gender roles in contemporary societies. Thus, their conflict negates simple categorizations as inferiority and superiority, evilness and goodness, rightness and wrongness, morality and immorality, rendering the narrative a web of ambivalences.

Pullman's rejection of conventional gender stereotypes such as evil stepmother and chivalric men becomes manifest in his depiction of the witch clan, as well. Pullman's witches differ considerably from Lewis' Narnian witches. Pullman's witches are physically and mentally strong characters, and their magical powers are of the healing and liberating kind, which they use for good causes such as saving human-children from the theocratic government. They show the ability to sympathize with the victimized characters unlike Lewis' witches who lack empathy. Serafina Pekkala, for instance, identifies with the human characters' struggle so much that she even questions herself thinking that "Was she becoming human? Was she losing her witchhood?" (*SK* 48). The witches' sympathy for humans especially for children yet functions as a transgressive force against the conventional configurations. Like Lewis' witches, Pullman's witches also threaten the order of the male-dominated government, but conversely, they do so for the welfare of the society. Compared to the oppressive Magisterium, the community of witches is egalitarian and democratic. As the narrator

affirms, “[t]he witches were democratic, up to a point; every witch, even the youngest, had right to speak, but only their queen had the power to decide” (*SK* 53). As it can be inferred from the quotation, the egalitarian witches reject the hierarchy between not only womanhood and manhood but also adulthood and childhood. The witch community thus dignifies womanhood as capable of ruling and governing peacefully, and it also shows that younger members of the community can have a right to speak about matters related to life, government, and society. As such, the witch clan in *His Dark Materials* values independence, and even their “power to separate themselves from their daemons” and to send them “far abroad on the wind or the clouds, or down below the ocean” becomes a symbol of their free-spirited personalities (*NL* 164-165).

Contrary to the evil witch archetype, Pullman’s witches have romantic relationships with the male humans. This also contests the dichotomy between the masculine rationality and dangerous dark feminine witchcraft. The love affairs between Serafina Pekkala and Farder Coram, Lord Asriel and Ruta Skadi, John Parry and Juta Kamainen show that the witches are capable of establishing emotional bonds with human beings contrary to the Narnia witches who seduce and utilise men for their evil plans. Additionally, Pullman’s witches prove to be even more maternal than the female human beings in the books belying the stereotype. For example, Ruta Skadi blames Mrs. Coulter for her false motherhood and maintains that “Mrs. Coulter was a lover of Lord Asriel’s […] Of course, Lyra is their child … Serafina Pekkala, if I had borne his child, what a witch she would be! A queen of queens” (*SK* 275). As a result, Pullman’s reimagined witches contest the witch-archetype, showing female sexuality as multidimensional and complex. The witches in *His Dark Materials* are not simply the enemies of men, manhood, and masculinity as it is the case in many children’s literature, and they do no directly thwart the ideal womanhood which is associated with motherhood and domesticity. They find balance between emotion and reason, and they

act with common sense when it comes to take decisions. As such, they enter into the male domain yet still protect their feminine qualities. Their counterbalance of different qualities of femaleness hence serves to challenge the literary tradition which trivializes womanhood and femininity through female stereotypes.

Last but not least, *His Dark Materials* probably subverts gender binaries most significantly through its re-inscription of the myth of Adam and Eve, where we see the establishment of hierarchies between genders on a religious basis. As Tso indicates, the Biblical sources imply that

> Adam is primary and normative, whereas Eve is and adjunct, less important, perhaps even deviant. More noticeably, the woman is created for the sake of man. […] She is a helpmate to cure man's loneliness. Such male-centeredness becomes more apparent when it is described that Eve, the first woman, is only a derivative made from Adam's rib, whereas Adam is made from the breath of God. (31)

In Biblical sources, Eve is dangerous and inferior because she represents female sensuality, impulsiveness hence weakness. Nevertheless, Lyra, representing the new Eve, is not a dependent of Will who correspondingly embodies the new Adam. Tso writes, "the new Eve is the first and foremost character to be introduced to the readers" (33). Therefore, she never becomes an inferior of Will as epitomized in their interdependence throughout the narrative.

Pullman transgresses the image of Eve as the seduced and seducer through Lyra, the New Eve, whose willingness for seduction becomes an emancipating and enlightening force for the humanity. After Lyra and Will escape to the idyllic and Edenic nature of the *mulefa* world in *The Amber Spyglass*, they start to experience a kind of sexual attraction towards each other. Mary Malone tells them the story of how she quitted being a nun and how she discovered her sexuality through the taste of

marzipan. Dr. Malone's experience becomes a stimulus for Lyra to recognize her own feelings for Will: "As Mary said that, Lyra felt something strange happen to her body. She felt as if she had been handed the key, she felt other doors opening deep in the darkness, and lights coming on" (*AS* 396). In this context, Mary Malone plays the part of the serpent in Pullman's narrative. Even though the Authority thinks that she is "guided by the powers of evil" to tempt Lyra, Mary Malone actually contests the image of the monstrous and evil serpent, serving as the tutor and guide for children as they go through maturation and sexual awakening (*AS* 68). Such transgression challenges the religion-based marginalization of women, and it also shows the awareness of sexuality, consciousness, and maturation as things that should not be feared of but welcomed.

Lyra, the new Eve, "strives for reason, justice, autonomy and freedom" which are qualities culturally and archetypically attributed to men, and in so doing she negates the deceptive Biblical Eve who directs Adam to sinning (Tso 33). As such, through Lyra's character, Pullman shakes the religious foundations of the association between woman and emotion, woman and desire, woman and deceitfulness. As Lyra and Will spend their last moments together before parting to go back to their own worlds, they enjoy the natural beauties of the *mulefa* world. They symbolically re-enact the story of temptation through eating the forbidden fruit:

> "I'm hungry," Will said.
>
> "Me too," said Lyra, though she was also feeling more than that, something subdued and pressing and half-happy and half-painful, so that she wasn't quite sure what it was. [...]
>
> Then Lyra took one of those little red fruits. With a fast beating heart, she turned to him and said, "Will..."
>
> And she lifted the fruit gently to his mouth.

> She could see from his eyes that he knew at once what she meant, and that he was too joyful to speak. Her fingers were still at his lips, and he felt them tremble, and he put his own hand up to hold hers there, and then neither of them could look; they were confused; they were brimming with happiness.
>
> Like two moths clumsily bumping together, with no more weight than that, their lips touched. Then before they knew how it happened, they were clinging together, blindly pressing their faces towards each other. (*AS* 416-417)

This also refurnishes the biblical Adam, who is the tempted hence the victimized part in the myth. Contrary to Adam, Will is not deceived by Lyra, but he accepts the fruit as a sign of their mutual bond, their shared discovery of sexuality, and accession of consciousness. Therefore, as M. O. Grenby points out, Lyra and Will "have equal cosmic significance becoming the new Adam and new Eve" (176). Indeed, Lyra and Will share the responsibility in the re-formation of the religious myth and refurnishing the gender binary inherent in this religious discourse. As such, as Stephen Bigger and Jean Webb articulate, Pullman's world becomes "the world of *knowledge* of good and evil, a re-mythologizing of the biblical Garden of Eden myth in a positive direction, with a focus on *including* rather than *excluding*" (408-409). Lyra and Will's joint awakening increases their appreciation of and integration with the Edenic nature, thereby contrasting with the Biblical story which shows the female as the main reason behind the expulsion. Pullman's version of the myth hence functions as a means to contest various hierarchies between the female and the male, displaying both genders as interdependent and independent at the same time.

To conclude, there are many levels of Pullman's subversion of the binary relationship between genders in *His Dark Materials*. The series denies various cultural,

literary, archetypal as well as religious associations between gender-related dualities including manhood and womanhood, masculinity and femininity, reason and emotion, public space and domestic space, fatherhood and motherhood, protector and nurturer, tempted and temptress. Even though Pullman relies on conventional gender stereotypes, both female and male characters do complicate those stereotypical renditions, coming into the fore with their unique and individualistic personalities. Hence, they do not represent a singular idea or a quality that is exclusively associated with their genders. Instead they combine and counterbalance gender-associated qualities such as political power, physical strength, sexual attractiveness, domestic sensibilities, and ambition. This intertwinement eventually rejects the patriarchal norms and separations, balancing the power between gendered oppositions. Obviously, Pullman recognizes that the dualistic representations of gender are central to children's fantasy literature not only for gender appropriation but also for conventional didacticism to be effective on a younger readership. Nevertheless, he seems to be critical of such absolutist didacticism conveyed through children's books as it seems to obstruct individualism and increase marginalization when children's literature actually needs to be the most liberating and emancipating. In this respect, Pullman's *His Dark Materials* attacks not simply gender binaries but a literary tradition which promotes and celebrates standardized gender roles. As a result, Pullman's considerably experimental re-representation of the binary relationship between genders demonstrates children's fantasy literature as a versatile, dynamic, and multifaceted form of literature where didacticism can be reshaped and can serve varied perspectives. *His Dark Materials* elucidates how children's books can deal with controversial subject matters such as gender and sexuality in a quite transgressive manner by remoulding conventions and experimenting playfully with the narrative instruments of the fantasy genre.

3. 6. Blurring the Distinctions between Body and Soul in *His Dark Materials*

“FROM WHAT WE ARE,
SPIRIT; FROM WHAT WE
DO, MATTER. MATTER AND
SPIRIT ARE ONE.” (*The Subtle Knife* 249)

Pullman’s depiction of a variety of anthropomorphic animals, mythological figures, and purely imagined species interacting with human beings from different time periods renders the narrative extremely rich in colour and imagery, hence complex in terms of appearances. On the other hand, widely read by literary critics as an attack against institutionalized religion, *His Dark Materials* also gives references to such abstract issues as spirituality, faith, sin, the creator, and angelic beings. Pullman’s portrayal of *daemons*, that is to say human’s souls, in the form of animals and his presentation of Dust as a symbol of consciousness or original sin show the series’ intense engagement with the dualistic relationship between physicality and spirituality as well as body and soul. Nevertheless, Pullman’s anti-Christian and radical discourse plays a significant role in his treatment of such dualities. As evinced through Pullman’s depiction of *daemons* and Dust as measurable and perceivable entities, *His Dark Materials* does not draw clear-cut distinctions between physical and spiritual matters; instead, it presents such dualistic concepts as rather intertwined and interconnected. As such, Pullman’s narrative brings an alternative and actually a subversive way of considering such serious subject matters as morality, beauty, deformity, monstrosity, afterlife, soul, and body. Therefore, this section aims to reveal how Pullman’s narrative disrupts the religion-based hierarchy between physicality and spirituality, body and soul, and it problematizes normative moral values associated with such concepts through experimental and radical representations.

Pullman's most radical and actually experimental implementation in terms of breaking the traditional dichotomy between physicality and spirituality or body and soul obviously becomes his depiction of *daemons* as the physical manifestation of soul. Although the *daemons* initially seem to be animal companions of humans, their nature, their bond with the humans, and their physical qualities reveal them to be symbolizing something abstract, sacred, divine, and spiritual. As Colas highlights,

> [t]hroughout life […] the daemon and human remain connected by what is characterized most frequently as an invisible bond or link. In part, this bond may symbolize the constant mutual companionship of human and daemon: talking, worrying, caring, conspiring, arguing, testing, and playing. (50)

In this regard, the trilogy draws attention to various qualities of the *daemons* to highlight the mutuality between them and their human counterparts. For instance, humans and *daemons* cannot stay away from each other. The *daemons* change their shape in line with the psychological moods of their human counterparts during childhood but they take their permanent form when one reaches adulthood. Most importantly, as indicated in *Northern Lights* "*[d]aemons* might touch each other, of course, or fight; but the prohibition against human-daemon contact went so deep that even in battle no warrior would touch an enemy's daemon. It was utterly forbidden" (*NL* 143). This detail, on the one hand, underlines the vital importance of the *daemons* in the existence of human beings. On the other hand, it signifies *daemons* as exclusive to their human bodies and defines them as the private half of an individual.

In the *Chronicles*, Lewis presents body and soul as different and separate parts of a living being. Occasionally, Lewis makes use of body, physicality, and appearances as mirrors to one's internal goodness or evilness, specifically in his representations of the female characters. Nevertheless, the dignity and essentiality of the soul and the

transience of physical body remain central to his narrative. Even though appearances archetypally give hints regarding one's character in Narnia books, Lewis condemns putting so much importance on looks, and he values soul, internal goodness, and morality over physicality. Pullman subverts Lewis' religion-oriented representation of body and soul duality. Although Pullman presents body and soul as different entities through *daemons*, he simultaneously and paradoxically draws attention to their integrity and wholeness. Subversively, Pullman shows not the body but the physical manifestation of soul as the reference point for understanding one's character, mood, and moral stance. Such subversive implementation correspondingly complicates the archetypal relationship between appearances and internal morality, which characterizes Lewis' Narnia books. In *His Dark Materials*, the conventional attributes of beauty, deformity, and monstrosity do not necessarily determine the characters' morality. Instead, the characters' appearances combined with the form of their *daemons* become effective in making sense of a character's personality and his/her role in the development of events. For instance, the first novel introduces Lord Asriel as,

> a tall man with powerful shoulders, a fierce dark face, and eyes that seemed to flash and glitter with savage laughter. It was a face to be dominated by, or to fight: never a face to patronize or pity. All his movements were large and perfectly balanced, like those of a wild animal, and when he appeared in a room like this, he seemed a wild animal held in a cage too small for it. (*NL* 13)

Lord Asriel's physical appearance and gestures parallel the physicality of his *daemon*, which is a snow leopard. Lord Asriel's *daemon* becomes a symbol of his physical and psychological power, his association with North, his determination, and endurance. Moreover, when Mrs. Coulter first appears, she seems to be the perfect embodiment of *femme fatale*, in other words, the monstrous feminine. Mrs. Coulter is described as "[a]

lady in a long-yellow-red fox-fur coat, a beautiful young lady whose dark hair falls shining delicately under the shadow of her fur-lined hood" (*NL* 42). At first, Mrs. Coulter's clothing and bodily features appear to be symbolizing her evil personality as it is the case with the Narnian witches. Nevertheless, the archetypal inferences of the monstrous female body prove inefficient in understanding her motivations thoroughly. Ironically, Mrs. Coulter's physicality becomes a means for her to gain power. In this regard, instead of her physical beauty and sexuality, Pullman makes use of her *daemon*'s changing mode to give hints about her character.

In the first book of the series, Mrs. Coulter's *daemon*, the golden monkey reflects her association with the evil plans of the Magisterium and her sinister personality with his little black hands, "perfect horny claws", and "movements gentle and inviting" (*NL* 42). The golden monkey's aggressive attitude and his trying to keep Lyra's *daemon* under his control represent Mrs. Coulter's desire to protect and command Lyra at the same time. Nevertheless, as Mrs. Coulter transforms into a milder person and a loving mother in the course of the narration, her *daemon*'s aggressiveness also yields to a protective and caring attitude. In *The Amber Spyglass*, as Mrs. Coulter drugs Lyra in a cave so that she will not be caught by the Magisterium, the golden monkey also keeps an eye on Lyra's *daemon*, Pan. As such, the change in the golden monkey's mood and attitude becomes a proof of the sincerity and good intentions of Mrs. Coulter.

The *intercision*, which is an act of severing the invisible bond between a human and his/her *daemon* through a guillotine, also renders such dualistic concepts as concrete and abstract, physical and spiritual, visible and invisible rather complex, complicated, and highly paradoxical. As Colas draws attention,

> the invisible bond linking human to daemon […] seems to serve as kind of conductor of sensation and affect. […] Destroying the invisible bond

> that links daemon to human, intercision reduces the human to something like an automaton and the daemon to an equally unlively "wonderful pet." […] Curiosity and imagination, interest and intellect, affect and expression then all appear to depend upon the integrity of the invisible, but material, bond between human and daemon. (52)

As pointed out by Colas, the interdependence between humans and their *daemons* as well as the simultaneously invisible and material bond between them make the concept of *daemon* an embodiment of soul, mind, and psychology at the same time. Pullman situates intellect, emotions, and other mental abilities at the juncture of body and soul. While Pullman's depiction of *daemons* shows his recognition of a metaphysical part of human beings, it simultaneously rejects the traditional and religious hierarchies between body and soul, thereby emphasizing their co-existence and interconnectedness. In this respect, Pullman's main focus of criticism becomes the Christian notion of soul, which is immortal, incorporeal, divine, and in close relationships with morality. As a matter of fact, Pullman acknowledges human beings' need for religion and the idea of soul. Accordingly, he writes that

> the religious impulse — which includes the sense of awe and mystery we feel when we look at the universe, the urge to find meaning and a purpose in our lives, our sense of moral kinship with other human beings — is part of being human, and I value it. (qtd. in Padley and Padley 327).

Nevertheless, Pullman appears to find normative ideas, values, and morals stemming from religious discourse rather limiting and suppressive. As such, he puts into question the clear-cut distinctions and dogmatic hierarchies between soul and body, material and spiritual as well as the creator and other livings. As Fiona McCulloch contends, "unlike Plato, who privileged the soul's divinity over debased bodily matter" Pullman thinks

that "the material body (envied and desired by corrupt deities like Metatron) is the crux of humanity's potential, revered for its very paradisiacal earthiness" (*Cosmopolitanism* 110). As such, the physicality of the human's souls, as it is embodied in the *daemons*, arguably invites the reader to search for morality, ethics, and spirituality in the physical world we inhabit rather than being focused on the abstract notion of soul and the image of an eternal afterlife. Accordingly, in a radio interview, Pullman puts emphasis on the dignity of the physical world and the physicality of living creatures by giving critical references to Tolkien and Lewis' fiction:

> Tolkien was like Lewis a sort of thoroughgoing Platonist in that he saw this world, this physical universe as a fallen star created no doubt by God but marked and weakened and spoiled by sin […] Well I passionately disagree with this. The physical world is our home, this is where we live, we're not creatures from somewhere else or in exile. This is our home and we have to make our homes here and understand that we are physical too, we are material creatures, we are born and we will die. ("Faith and Fantasy" n. pag.)

That Pullman depicts both *daemons* and human beings as unable to live after the death of the other arguably serves to celebrate the value of life lived on earth at present. Furthermore, it also resists the essentiality of the soul and the transience of the body, highlighting the interconnectedness and the interdependence of both parts in one's existence.

Pullman's disruption of the conventional dichotomy between body and soul also becomes manifest in his depiction of the armoured bears' relationship with their armours. In *Northern Lights*, Pullman introduces the community of armoured bears of Svalbard and Iorek Byrnison, the former king of the bears. Lyra seeks the physical help and guidance of Iorek in her expedition to the North to save the abducted children from

the experimentation centre. Nevertheless, she comes to learn that Iorek is also a victimized character as he is deceived by the usurper Iofur Raknison into killing another armoured bear. As a result, Iorek loses his title as the king of armoured bears, and he is also expelled from the community. Lyra finds Iorek in misery as a drunken bear working for food in town amidst human beings away from his hometown and natural habitat. Iorek's misery, however, stems mainly from the fact that his armour is stolen. Lyra finds out to her surprise that the armoured bears do not have *daemons* in animal forms like human beings and witches; because, their souls, as they claim, are their armours. When Lyra asks Iorek why he does not make a new armour for himself, he explains that

> "Because it's worthless. Look," he said and, lifting the engine-cover with one paw, he extended a claw on the other hand and ripped right though it like a tin-opener. My armor is made of sky-iron, made for me. A bear's armour is his soul, just as your daemon is your soul. You might as well take *him* away—" indicating Pantalaimon — "and replace him with a doll full of sawdust. That is the difference. Now, where is my armour?" (*NL* 196)

In this regard, the narrative draws a parallelism between the existential interdependence of human beings/their *daemons* and bears/their armours. On the one hand, the individualized armours ensure physical strength and protection to the bears. On the other hand, they represent their identity, their lineage, determining who they are. As the symbols of the bears' souls and mental faculties, they also affect the bears' personality and attitude. The main reason behind Iorek's change into a bad-tempered, aggressive, sulky, and psychologically depressed character thus becomes his deprivation of his armour. Therefore, even though Lyra is intimidated by Iorek, she simultaneously finds grief in his armourlessness, in other words, soullessness:

> Lyra's heart was thumping hard, beach something in the bear's presence made her feel close to coldness, danger, brutal power, but a power controlled by intelligence; and not a human intelligence, nothing like a human, because of course bears had no daemons. This strange hulking presence gnawing its meat was like nothing she had ever imagined, and she felt a profound admiration and pity for the lonely creature. (*NL* 179)

Lyra's sympathy towards Iorek disrupts the traditional associations between monstrous physical body and internal evilness, which mark children's fantasy literature. Most importantly, it creates an analogy between the severed children, Lyra and Iorek, helping them identify with each other. In return, Iorek can also sympathize with the severed children as a bear who knows how it feels to be soulless hence numb, ghostly, and weak. This mutual identification makes them comrades indeed. When Lyra finds Iorek's stolen armour with the help of the alethiometer, Iorek gathers his former physical and psychological strength, comes to her senses, and re-acquires his joy to live and fight for his title as well as Lyra's mission:

> Without [the armour] he was formidable. With it, he was terrifying. It was rust-red, and crudely riveted together: great sheets and plates of dented discoloured metal that scraped and screeched as they rode over one another. The helmet was pointed like his muzzle, with slits for eyes, and it left the lower part of his jaw bare for tearing and biting. (*NL* 198)

As implied in the given-quotation, Iorek's armour assumes a perfect harmony with his body parts. The armoured bears are complete with their armours just as human beings are with their *daemons*. Hence, like the *daemons*, the armours of the bears signify a private sphere and have connotations such as sacredness and spirituality. Therefore,

their disavowal brings a great dishonour to a bear's existence, personality, and the dignity of their species, as it is the case with Iofur Raknison, who desperately desires "to be a human being, with a daemon of his own" and eventually turns into a fool by losing his bear-abilities (*NL* 334). As a result, the armoured bears intensify Pullman's disruption of the Christian view of body and soul. The armoured bears prove to be another playful and innovative implementation in Pullman's "attempt to construct an alternative theological vision that is particularly attuned to the secular humanistic climate of the twenty-first century" (Bird 189).

The eponymous dark materials, which are variably referred to as Dust, dark matter, dark particles, and *sraf* also play a significant role in Pullman's disruption of the boundaries between physicality and spirituality, offering alternative ways of considering such serious issues as faith, sin, morality, immorality, consciousness, divinity, spirituality, and science.[36] Dust remains to be an ambiguous and mysterious concept almost until the end of the narrative as it is differently interpreted and explained by the characters depending on their moral and ideological perspectives. The Magisterium considers Dust "the physical evidence for original sin" and "a physical proof that something happened when innocence changed into experience" (*NL* 371-373). As Anne-Marie Bird draws attention, the Magisterium's view of Dust "emphasiz[es] not only its earthiness or sinfulness but also foreground[s] the consequences of human physicality" (189). That Dust gathers around the adults makes the Magisterium associate it with the original sin, awareness, and sexual awakening. The Magisterium's religion-centred interpretation condemns physicality, physical interaction, and physical world as the source of evil and corruption. This also explains why the Magisterium

[36] Pullman names the title of his trilogy after a line in John Milton's *Paradise Lost.* Even though the characters do not refer to Dust, the ambiguous particles, as dark materials in the narrative, it is quite clear from the context that the title of the series is a direct reference to Dust.

considers scientific exploration of Dust heresy and Lord Asriel, who achieves to capture the physical appearance of Dust, a heretic.

Nevertheless, for the scientists and sceptics like Lord Asriel and Dr. Grumman, Dust comes to denote physical, magnetic, and energetic particles, which attach not only to living beings but also to objects. For them, Dust should not be feared of as a religious concept, but it needs to be searched into and experimented with as a cosmic and physical phenomenon. Lord Asriel's discovery that Dust opens up portals into other universes makes Dust a powerful means to reject religious dogmatism, which painstakingly recognizes only the physical world and the spiritual. In *The Subtle Knife*, Dust gains additional meanings in line with the emergence of the Specters of Cittagazze, thereby complicating the physical and spiritual quality of it more profoundly. That the Specters attack Dust gathering around the adults makes Dust a mysterious object of fear and horror. Nevertheless, in *The Amber Spyglass*, Dust's nature and function are explained more profoundly when Dr. Malone achieves to observe it through the spyglass she makes in the *mulefa* world. In the beginnings of *The Subtle Knife*, the narrative presents Dr. Malone's complex computer system in her Oxford laboratory, where she investigates Dust. Even though her computer, which proves to be similar to Lyra's alethiometer, assures Dr. Malone that "matter and spirit are one", Dr. Malone remains to be doubtful about the dark matter as she cannot see or measure it (*SK* 249). However, in the *mulefa* world, Dr. Malone recognizes Dust's atomic, energetic, and chemical nature through the spyglass: "When she looked through it, she saw those drifting golden sparkles, the *sraf*, the Shadows, Lyra's Dust, like a vast cloud of tiny beings floating through the wind" (*AS* 244). More important than this, Dr. Malone comes to acknowledge Dust's spiritual aspect in terms of its endowing one with consciousness, knowledge, and dignity.

The *mulefa*'s relationship with Dust also gives way to multiple inferences about dualities such as body and soul, physicality and spirituality, morality and immorality, scientific knowledge and religious divinity, visibility and invisibility, and monstrosity and beauty. The *mulefa*'s unique physicality - "diamond-shaped frame, with a limb at each of the corners" - initially shocks and scares Dr. Malone (*AS* 109). Their use of seed-pods as wheels yet adds another uniqueness and strangeness to their physical appearance rendering them creatures that are in-between animals and monsters. Nevertheless, as Dr. Malone gets to know the *mulefa* life, nature, and physiology, she starts to see the *mulefa* as an exemplary community which finds spirituality in their physical qualities and which finds practicality in Dust. In this regard, Pullman intertwines physical and spiritual, body and soul more forcefully through the *mulefa*, arriving at new meanings rather than divisions. As Bird maintains, Pullman's "deconstructive strategy […] entails the creation of something that defies binary logic — that is, a concept that includes both the physical and the metaphysical, and yet somehow also goes beyond their scope" (190).

While the Magisterium and Lord Asriel consider Dust a symbol of the original sin and atomic pieces respectively, the *mulefa* see it as a source of consciousness and knowledge, hence associating it with divinity and sanctity. Their use of their body parts to absorb Dust from seed-pod trees arguably shows such abstract concepts as soul, mentality, psyche, and knowledge as contained in the physical body and the physical nature:

> The wheels were seedpods. Perfectly round, immensely hard and light — they couldn't have been designed better. The creatures hooked a claw through the center of the pods with their front and rear legs, and used their two maternal legs to push against the ground and move along. While she marveled at this, she was also a little anxious, for their

> horns looked formidably sharp, and even at this distance she could see intelligence and curiosity in their gaze. (*AS* 78)

As hinted at by Dr. Malone's observation, this simultaneously primitive and complex mechanism becomes a perfect mirror of the interconnectedness of spirituality and physicality, an idea suggested throughout the narrative. At this juncture, as Marie-Anne Bird writes, "Dust is transformed from a conventional metaphor for human physicality/mortality into an ambiguous, almost mystical presence in which everything coexists", and it represents "a rejection of the idea of division and separation as a means of making sense of the world" (190-191). As a result, the simultaneously physical and spiritual nature of Dust "disturb[s] traditional hierarchies […] namely, the value-laden binaries of innocence-experience, good-evil, and spirit-matter that lie at the core of the Fall myth" (Bird 189). Unlike the Magisterium, which sees evil in the nature of Dust, the *mulefa* make use of it for social, moral, and cultural development and improvement. Moreover, the *mulefa* are "so practical, so strongly rooted in the physical everyday world" that they do not put the idea of afterlife at the centre of their lives (*AS* 198). Their priority becomes to keep up the balance of the physical world and to find a solution to the ecological catastrophe that threatens their physical existence.

The *mulefa*'s physicality initially evokes associations with monstrosity, nevertheless, "Mary has the wisdom to recognize the *mulefa* as intelligent beings, with language, society, customs, and self-consciousness" (Fitzsimmons 215). Although Dr. Malone's admiration of the *mulefa* physiology echoes Lucy's liking for the deformed Duffers in Lewis' *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* they differ in their tone. Lucy's childlike liking includes a sense of sympathy combined with mercy, and it serves to emphasise the value of finding goodness in one's character not in their physical appearances. Contrarily, Dr. Malone's adoration of the *mulefa* physicality, in line with her identity as a scientist, stems from the dignity she finds in the harmony, balance, and

mutuality they form between body and soul. In line with her changing ideas towards the *mulefa*, Dr. Malone's language also goes through a transformation, involving a sense of admiration and respect at the same time:

> So they had language, and they had fire, and they had society. And about then she found an adjustment being made in her mind, as the word *creatures* became the word *people*. These beings weren't human, but they were people, she told herself; it's not *them*, they're *us*. […] *Even though you look so bizarre and horrible, you are like us, because you have* […] something like *sraf*, or *sarf*. (*AS* 109-198)

The dignity Dr. Malone finds in the *mulefa* physiology and spirituality stimulates a self-questioning in Dr. Malone about humanity, that is to say her own species. In this regard, Dr. Malone's referring to the *mulefa* as "people" can be read as a critique of anthropocentrism. Accordingly, Dr. Malone's theory that evolution has taken another path in the *mulefa* world serves as a rejection of both the anthropocentric point of view and religious discourse, inviting the readers to contemplate on multiple possibilities beyond normative hence suppressive viewpoints and their representations in literary texts.

Towards the end of the trilogy, Pullman's focus shifts to the Authority and his spiritual and physical nature. In the first two volumes of the trilogy, the Authority remains to be an ambiguous figure, whose divine power over the government causes dogmatism, the horrific *intercision* project, thereby drawing all of the universes into a moral and ethical downfall and chaos. However, Pullman seems to devote *The Amber Spyglass* to refurnish and subsequently overthrow the spiritual and physical connotations of the Authority. In the beginning of the novel, Pullman radically rewrites the creation myth. As the rebellious angels tell the story of how the angels, the Authority, and Dust came into being in the first place, the characters and the readers

become assured of the fact that the Authority's power has always been an illusionary one:

> The Authority, God, the Creator, the Lord, Yahweh, El, Adonai, the King, the Father, the Almighty — those were all names he gave himself. He was never the creator. He was an angel like ourselves — the first angel, true, the most powerful, but he was formed of Dust as we are, and Dust is only a name for what happens when matter begins to understand itself, Matter loves matter. It seeks to know more about itself, and Dust is formed. The first angels condensed out of Dust, and the Authority was the first of all. He told those who came after him that he had created them, but it was a lie. One of those who came later was wiser than he was, and she out the truth, so he banished her. We serve her still. And the Authority still reigns in the Kingdom, and Metatron is his Regent. (*AS* 28)

Pullman's version of the creation myth rejects the ultimate divinity, morality, and spirituality associated with the creator and makes the Authority closer to Satan since he turns out to be a tyrannical angel, who is after materialistic power and authority, hence the name. However, Pullman creates the main ironical subversion in the fact that the Authority is himself consisted of condensed Dust, which he now considers an evil force. This revelation shows that Dust denotes atomic particles and the essence of all living beings, angelic beings, objects as well as earth and nature. In this context, Dust, as the smallest particle of everything, creates a cosmic equilibrium, by which the narrative denies the hierarchy between not only the creator and the created ones but also the spiritual and the physical.

When Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter finally confront the Authority in person, they find out that he is wretchedly and powerlessly caged in a litter box by Metatron, the usurper archangel:

> Mrs. Coulter was close enough to see the being in the litter: an angel, she thought, and indescribably aged. He wasn't easy to see […] but she had the impression of terrifying decrepitude, of a face sunken in wrinkles, of trembling hands, and of a mumbling mouth and rheumy eyes.
>
> The aged being gestures shakily at the intention craft, and cackled and muttered to himself, plucking incessantly at his beard, and then threw back his head and uttered a howl of such anguish that Mrs. Coulter had to cover her ears. (*AS* 354)

As Jonathan and Kenneth Padley point out, "the Authority bears no resemblance to the classical Christian expression of God" (328). The Authority's corporeal and "locative presence" rejects the idea that "God is Spirit" and it also contradicts the classical theistic principle of God's omnipresence (Padley and Padley 329-330). His old age similarly negates the idea of immortality attributed to the Christian God and shows the loss of trust in his divinity. On a symbolic level, however, the Authority's old age becomes a symbol of the incredulity felt towards grand narratives in postmodern times.

Anne-Marie Bird writes that "like Nietzsche, Pullman clearly believes in the realities of the world we live in rather than those situated in a world beyond" (189). Accordingly, he kills the Authority in a very Nietzschean manner. When Lyra and Will eventually release the Authority from his crystal litter box, he transforms into Dust and dissolves into air, which echoes the Biblical expression, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (*The Holy Bible* 16):

> Will cut through the crystal in one movement and reached in to help the angel out. Demented and powerless, the aged being could only weep and mumble in fear and pain and misery, and he shrank away from what seemed like yet another threat. […] Only a few moments later he had vanished completely, and their last impression was of those eyes, blinking in wonder, and a sigh of the most profound and exhausted relief. Then he was gone: a mystery dissolving into mystery. (*AS* 366-367)

The physical extermination of the Authority brings the depletion of his divine authority and spiritual significance altogether, only to strengthen Pullman's problematization of creating divisions and normative hierarchies based on scriptural predications. As the Padleys argue, "Pullman does not wholeheartedly dismiss the notion of religion as a thing which is necessarily a force of evil", especially through killing off the Authority (327). Instead, by blurring the distinctions between physicality and spirituality, concrete and abstract concepts, Pullman provides a "subtle reconstruction of traditional doctrines" (Padley and Padley 326).

To sum up, Pullman's subversive representations of the binaries of body and spirit, physicality and spirituality render him a rebel against not only grand narratives, dogmatic religion, and normative hierarchies but also children's books like the *Chronicles* that occupy its readers' minds with such suppressive distinctions. At this critical juncture, Pullman resorts to the narrative elements of fantasy, and he inscribes and structures them in an extremely imaginative, entertaining yet transgressive manner. The playful and often intriguing animal *daemons*, shimmering Dust, the massive polar bears, and the geometrical bodies of the *mulefa* all enable Pullman to explore serious subject matters through subtle, symbolic yet playful ways for a readership of both children and adults. The blurred distinctions between abstract and concrete subject

matters conform to Pullman's radicalism as a children's writer, who values liberation, imagination, and humanism. As a result, even though "Pullman has been both celebrated and demonized for challenging grand narratives", his radical fiction for children highlights the insufficiency of the conventional didacticism in representing the contemporary child's relationship with the transforming social, economic, religious, and cultural dynamics of the present world (McCulloch, *Cosmopolitanism* 109).

CONCLUSION

This study has aimed to discuss children's fantasy literature as a versatile, multifaceted, and multifunctional form of literature, which has shown transformations and evolutions as a result of the major changes experienced in social, cultural, ideological, and literary concerns. The historical surveys of the development of fantasy literature, children's literature, and children's fantasy literature provided in the first chapter show that all of these literary forms were abandoned and ignored for too long in the literary arena. Especially, children's fantasy literature, which brings together two marginalized and disdainful factors, fantasy and childhood respectively, remained at the margin and was kept out of the canon even after it was recognized as a literary genre. However, the revelation of its pedagogical functions, the recognition of its affinity with ideologies as well as the correlation seen between the real life and fantasy worlds have not only accelerated literary production but also reinforced scholarly interest in the texts of children's literature.

Children's fantasy literature is now recognized as a literary form which elaborates on extremely serious subject matters in the most covert and powerful ways. The variety of its sub-genres and the complex technical and thematic taxonomies evince the fact that children's fantasy literature provides its writers with a variety of narrative possibilities that may facilitate to convey extremely divergent and controversial messages. Beneath the simplistic and innocent surface texts, children's fantasy literature fulfils ideological functions, which work rather effectively and intricately. In this regard, children's fantasy literature serves as a powerful device through which authors impose different moral and value systems on readers, thereby helping determine and shape not only children's but also an entire society's ideas and assumptions concerning such matters as religion, gender roles, politics, and other societal issues. Therefore, children's fantasy literature continues to contain the paradoxical nature of the concept of

fantasy manifest even in its etymological sources. Children's fantasy literature signifies visibility and imagination, showing and hiding at the same time by encoding messages in-between the conventional motifs and colourful imagery that it inherits from fairy tales, folkloric and mythological sources. While it provides a detachment from the everyday reality through its narrative elements, it simultaneously and paradoxically continues to refer to a medley of social, economic, cultural, and even literary concerns. Thus, the narrative elements of fantasy genre function as a means to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct values, moral standards, norms, and dominant discourses in the text.

The separate examinations of a similar set of dualistic representations in children's fantasy series of Lewis and Pullman show that both authors also recognize children's fantasy literature as a powerful literary medium in celebrating or promoting certain ideological viewpoints. Even though the differences between Lewis and Pullman's discourses seem to stem mainly from their divergent ideas about religion, their works for children are nourished and shaped by how they perceive life, humanity, and the world, representing a world-view, ideological stance, and a moral system in their own rights. In this context, Lewis and Pullman's fantasy series display that literature for a young audience can be interwoven with overly controversial cultural and social assumptions and biases beneath the simplicity of language and straightforwardness of the content. Furthermore, the interpretations of the dualities in each series elucidate two divergent and polarized directions which children's fantasy literature might embrace in exerting its didactic and ideological function. The analyses of each series lay bare how children's fantasy literature might celebrate, or criticise and subvert normative ideas of morality, power, gender relations, religion, and standardized behaviour patterns through its experimental and innovative representations of dualistic

ideas and concepts. They accordingly show that children's fantasy literature cannot be considered free from ideology.

Lewis' Narnia books aim to inculcate in children the values of Christianity as well as the normative societal and cultural relations of the Western culture through oppositions, binary patterns, and various acts of "othering." In Narnia books, the elements of the fantasy genre such as witches, dragons, magic, and secondary world image all serve to establish and reinforce patriarchal, white, and Christian ideology. In line with Lewis' Romantic and patriarchal ideals, the *Chronicles* celebrates the superiority of men over women, nature over urban spaces, physical moderateness over beauty, powerful God over weak human beings, and innocent childhood over experienced adulthood. Lewis appears to give no space to uncertainties in building the moral grounds in his narrative. The gendered, spatial, and religious hierarchies remain to be intact and definite in Narnia books, thereby providing a single and limited perspective towards such controversial issues. In this respect, Narnia books exemplify how children's fantasy literature might be conservative and structured on overt didacticism. Even though the books implement fantasy elements rather playfully to maintain the suspense and entertainment until the end, they represent an unchangeable and unalterable moral system at the core.

Pullman's *His Dark Materials* contrarily elucidates both the transformable and transformative power of children's fantasy literature. While Pullman resorts to folkloric, religious, mythological sources, which are similar to those in Narnia books, he simultaneously traces and destabilizes the ideological imprints conveyed through those instalments by giving experimental arrangements to them. As a result, Pullman's unique and transgressive implementations put forward a system of values, which negates and contrast with the conservativeness we see in Narnia books. As supported by various examples in this study, Pullman criticises conventional and conservative distinctions

between binary oppositions but he does not simply reverse the power relations between them. In fact, Pullman criticises drawing boundaries and clear-cut distinctions between binary patterns and dualistic concepts that give way to gendered, racist, spatial biases, and assumptions, which determine and reinforce dominant discourses. As such, *His Dark Materials*, unlike Narnia books, does not create hierarchies between man and woman, natural and urban settings, childhood and adulthood, domestic and public spheres, and it eventually achieves fluidity and interdependence between such opposing concepts. As a result, Pullman's subversive discourse renders his series extremely radical, highlighting the versatile and multifaceted nature of contemporary children's fantasy literature. Pullman's refurbishment of conventional motifs, images, and archetypes in the light of up-to-date concerns, postmodern views, and contemporary elements lays bare children's fantasy literature as a changing, evolving, and formable genre.

It should be noted that changing trends, the destabilization of normative values, and radicalism that we come to see through the analyses of dualistic representations in *His Dark Materials* do not come to signify a decline in the didactic function of children's literature, which has been its central motivation since its birth. Children's fantasy literature may still abide by conventional and conservative didacticism promoting normative values. That is still one possibility. On the other hand, didacticism might take different shapes in children's literature. Indeed, the role of children's literature in the moral, psychological, and academic development of children remains to be central in children's literature even in the most radical and subversive texts like Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. The children's books, which we can call radical or subversive with regard to norms, also offer various value systems. Nevertheless, they convey messages that are more compatible with contemporary societies and contemporary social relations. In this context, they situate the child and childhood in the

changing societal relations of this new age more suitably. Although they recognize the cultural and literary richness of conventional motifs, images, and patterns, they investigate the ideological imprints lurking behind them and point at their inefficiency in defining children's relationship with the world they inhabit.

The subversive re-appropriations of dualistic patterns in radical children's literature hence display that children do not and actually should not comprehend their environment as either white or black, right or wrong but as a web of relations which offers multiple and multifarious ideas and perceptions that do not give way to simplistic divisions and hierarchies. Like *His Dark Materials,* Roald Dahl's children's books such as *Revolting Rhymes*, *Matilda*, *The Witches*, and *The BFG* add subversively alternative meanings to the traditional fairy-tale motifs and characters, contesting their conventional associations with goodness or evilness. Dahl rearranges the recurring elements of children's fantasy literature such as witchcraft, monsters, and purely innocent and beautiful princesses in contemporary ways, thereby inviting the reader and the critic to question the normative messages hidden in these leitmotifs. In his postmodern children's book, *The Daydreamer*, Ian McEwan finds his inspiration in Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and displays grotesque transformations of a child into a grown-up, baby, a doll, and a cat, disrupting our assumptions of childlike innocence and goodness through considerably shocking representations. Contemporary young-adult vampire stories such as Stephen Myers' *The Twilight Saga* or dystopian young-adult narratives such as Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* similarly blur the distinctions between conventional notions of goodness and evilness, simultaneously questioning the literary sources of the genre.

These radical texts of children's literature not only display the dynamism of literary production for younger people in the face of literary and social transformations, but they also elucidate the continual exchange and interaction between literature for

younger people and literature addressed to a general audience. As exemplified through the analyses of Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, specifically children's fantasy literature is extremely responsive to literary and cultural changes, and social problems, which need to be looked into in critical terms. Even though children's literature protects the cultural heritage that it comes from and continues to nourish from it, it simultaneously and paradoxically turns back to it with a more critical and responsible gaze taking into consideration how children may define themselves within this changing and evolving genre.

As mentioned earlier, there is obviously a growing interest in children's literature as part of both literary production and popular culture today, and this can be well observed in the appeal to children's literature-inspired theme parks and manufacture products. Undoubtedly, children's literature owes its growing popularity to movie adaptations. There are traces of Disney figures and *Harry Potter* characters, or references to Tolkien's *The Hobbit* everywhere. Specifically, children's fantasy literature, which was once a marginalized and allegedly non-literary genre, is ironically turning into a crossover fiction enjoyed equally by children and adults at the same time. In the meantime, the academia is also engaging critically with both the canonical texts and contemporary ones providing interpretations and readings from a medley of different critical perspectives. The universities are opening up institutes to support the study and research of children's literature, organizing academic events that bring together writers, translators, publishers, scholars, and publishing journals, which are devoted solely to the study of children's books. These developments and the increasing interest in children's literature are heralding further studies, which are yet-to-come.

Even though there is a global interest in the studies of children's literature, this doctoral study emerged out of the gap seen in the English departments in Turkey encountering very few studies focusing on children's literature. Therefore, this

dissertation not only aims to make a contribution to the criticism of children's literature on a global level, but also intends to stimulate further studies and research on British children's literature in Turkish universities. Although this dissertation focused on Lewis and Pullman, who luckily achieved to receive critical acclaim, there is a huge number of imaginative children's books on the shelves which wait to be explored, interpreted, and read in critical terms. As shown through this study, they are similarly interwoven with many ideological imprints in various degrees and various directions in-between their colourful covers and we should not forget that our children will be made through these books just like the way we were made through the stories we once read and listened to as kids.

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ÖZET

Fantezi çocuk edebiyatı ikilik örüntüleri arasında hiyerarşiler yaratarak, var olan hiyerarşileri güçlendirerek ya da bu ikilikler arasındaki hiyerarşileri irdeleyerek ve yıkarak okuyucusuna farklı ideolojik, toplumsal, kültürel ve ahlaki mesajlar iletebilmektedir. Bu bağlamda fantezi çocuk edebiyatı sadece çocukların değil toplumun tamamının düşünce yapısının, varsayımlarının, fikirlerinin ve toplumsal meselelere dair görüşlerinin belirlemesi ve şekillenmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu sebeple, bu doktora tezi C.S. Lewis'in *Narnia Günlükleri* ve Philip Pullman'ın *Karanlık Cevher* serilerini kadın ve erkek, doğa ve kültür, doğal ve kentsel mekân tasvirleri, yetişkinlik ve çocukluk, ev ve dışarısı, ruh ve beden, güzellik ve canavarlık gibi ikilikleri temsil ediş biçimleri açısından incelemektedir. Belirtilen serileri karşılaştırmalı olarak inceleyen bu tez çalışması fantezi çocuk edebiyatının değişen toplumsal, ekonomik, kültürel, tarihi ve edebi şartlar ya da yazarların bireysel farklılıkları neticesinde fantastik unsurları farklı, deneysel ve yaratıcı şekillerde kullanan çok yönlü, değişken ve evrilmekte olan bir tür olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, her serideki ikilik temsillerinin ideolojik, dini, cinsiyetle ilişkili ve sosyo-ekonomik alt metinlerini inceleyerek fantezi çocuk edebiyatının çeşitli önemli konuları ele almada ve bir dizi değeri ve ahlak ilkesini çocuk alıcısına dayatmada güçlü bir araç niteliği taşıdığını tartışır. Bu amaçla, bu çalışma Lewis'in *Narnia Günlükleri*'ni ikilikler arasındaki geleneksel güç ilişkilerine sadık kalan muhafazakâr fantezi çocuk edebiyatı örneği olarak incelerken, Pullman'ın *Karanlık Cevher* serisini ikilik örüntüleri arasındaki normatif hiyerarşileri sorunsallaştırarak ve sarsarak alternatif ve radikal bakış açıları sunan yıkıcı bir metin olarak okur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: fantezi çocuk edebiyatı, C. S. Lewis, *Narnia Günlükleri*, Philip Pullman, *Karanlık Cevher*, ikilikler.

ABSTRACT

Children's fantasy literature can convey different ideological, social, cultural, and moral messages to its readers by creating and reinforcing, or problematizing and dismantling hierarchies between dualistic patterns. In this regard, children's fantasy literature plays a significant role in determining and shaping not only children's but also an entire society's mind-set, assumptions, ideas, and views of societal issues. Therefore, this dissertation analyses C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* in terms of their representations of such dualities as woman and man, nature and culture, natural settings and urban settings, adulthood and childhood, home and away, body and soul, beauty and monstrosity, and other related dualistic patterns. This dissertation study, which reads the given series comparatively, aims to show children's fantasy literature as a versatile, changeable, and evolving genre, which may utilise the narrative instruments of fantasy in extremely different, experimental, and imaginative ways in line with the changing socio-economic, cultural, historical, and literary circumstances, or personal differences of the authors. Analysing the ideological, religious, gendered, and socio-political subtexts of dualistic representations in each series, this study argues that children's fantasy literature might function as a powerful apparatus in exploring various serious subject matters and imposing a set of values and morals on its child-recipients. To this end, while it examines Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* as an example of a conservative children's fantasy literature, which abides by the conventional power relations between dualities, it reads Pullman's *His Dark Materials* as a subversive text that problematizes and dismantles normative hierarchies between dualistic patterns, offering alternative and radical perspectives.

Key words: children's fantasy literature, C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Philip Pullman, *His Dark Materials*, dualities.