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MASTER'S THESIS

Alice's Creation of the Carnival: A Carnavalesque
Reading of Three Parodic Poems in *Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland*

Alice som skaper av det karnevaleske: En karnevalesk
lesning av tre parodiske dikt i *Alice's Adventures in
Wonderland*

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Abstract

This thesis explores how the three poems “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” and “You Are Old, Father William”, which are part of the novel *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, can be read through Bakhtin’s theory of the carnivalesque. These poems are all recited by Alice herself, and are parodies of poems that were used for the purpose of rote memorisation and recitation in the educational system of Victorian Britain. The poems are therefore analysed in comparison to the poems of which they are parodies, and also in light of the official culture of British Victorian Era.

The findings suggest that all of the three poems are set in dialogue with the officialdom of Victorian Britain. The findings further manifest that particularly two of the poems are set in dialogue with the texts of which they are parodies. Through this dialogue, the carnivalesque elements of ‘grotesque realism’, ‘degradation’, ‘ambivalence’ and ‘decrowning’ can, to various extents, be found in the three poems and they display the ways in which the poems subvert the seriousness of the officialdom. The findings indicate that a carnivalesque reading of the poems may shed new light on the poems that occur within the novel, and that further research is encouraged on this field.

Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven undersøker hvordan de tre diktene “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” og “You Are Old, Father William”, som alle er del av romanen *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, kan leses gjennom Bakhtins teori om karnevalisme. Det er Alice selv som gjengir diktene, og de er parodier på dikt som det var forventet at skolebarn skulle kunne utenatt og gjengi i klasserommet i den viktorianske epoken. Diktene er derfor analysert i sammenheng med diktene som de er parodier på, men også i sammenheng med den offisielle viktorianske kulturen.

Funnene viser at alle tre diktene er i dialog med den offisielle viktorianske kulturen. Videre kommer det frem av analysen at særlig to av diktene kan sees i dialog med diktene de parodierer. Gjennom denne dialogen blir de karnevaleske elementene ‘grotesk realisme’, ‘nedbrytning av det abstrakte’, ‘ambivalens’ og ‘avkroning’ synlige, og viser hvordan diktene snur opp-ned på den seriøse offisielle kulturen. Funnene indikerer at en karnevalesk lesning av diktene kan være med på å kaste nytt lys over diktene som er en del av romanen, og at det oppfordres til videre forskning på dette feltet.

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1. Introduction

Written over one and a half century ago by Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is today one of the most celebrated children's books. In 2015, Lindseth and Tannenbaum noted that the novel has been translated to 174 languages, and that there are over 9000 editions and reprints of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871). Furthermore, the stories about Alice has also inspired numerous adaptations, e.g. movies, television series, comic books, music, theatre, and radio, just to name a few. 2015 marked the 150th anniversary of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and the large number of publications that year related to the adventures of Alice demonstrated the vast popularity and interest that the novel still attains. The recurring curiosity of Reverend Charles Lutwidge Dodgson and the exploration of his nonsensical writings under the pen name Lewis Carroll still prevails, and there are no indications of a decline in the interest of his life and his work. This thesis serves as an example of this, as it will attempt to offer yet another reading of what happened to Alice when she fell down the rabbit hole.

The novels about Alice have been the subject of an immense amount of research papers, especially in the field of children's literature, and perhaps even more so in the field of literary nonsense. For example, in an article on "The Decline and Rise of Literary Nonsense in the Twentieth Century" (2003), Michael Heyman affirms that "[t]he 1860s and 1870s marked a high point in the popularity of literary nonsense for children" (p. 13). He notes that Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear are the most significant writers of this genre, and that most of the literary nonsense for children has been influenced by these writers. Another scholar who has written about the nonsense works of these writers is Lisa Susan Ede, who in her dissertation, *The Nonsense Literature of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll* (1975), provides a philosophical and linguistic enquiry into their nonsense literature. Another scholar who examines the linguistic and philosophical aspects of nonsense, is Jean-Jacques Lecercle. In his work, *Philosophy of Nonsense* (1994), he places Carroll alongside Lear as central to our understanding of the genre, noting that "[a]nthologies of nonsense are built around a hard core of texts by Carroll and Lear" (p. 5). This concurs with Elisabeth Sewell's earlier seminal study *The Field of Nonsense* (1952) in which she states that "[f]rom now on, Nonsense for us will mean primarily the work of these two [Lear and Carroll], acknowledged masters of their craft, who practiced Nonsense deliberately, chiefly in words, and proffered it to the ordinary mind" (p. 4). The notion that Carroll and Lear form the basis of the nonsense genre is accepted so widely that Wim Tigges, in his book *An Anatomy of Literary Nonsense* (1988),

establishes a “Lear-type” (p. 165) and a “Carroll-type” (p. 196) of the genre, in which he studies other writers of nonsense.

These examples are obviously just a small sample of the vast number of scholarly works on literary nonsense, but they point to the fact that Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll are inextricably linked to literary nonsense. Put simply, research on literary nonsense has created an almost indisputable parallel between the nonsense genre and the writings of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. As this thesis explores the writings of Lewis Carroll, the nonsense writings of Edward Lear will not be further discussed in this thesis.

This thesis will revolve around a few selected sections from Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, more specifically three poems that can be found within the novel. Nevertheless, these three poems will not be analysed as literary nonsense, but rather in the carnival tradition, as theorised by Mikhail Bakhtin. In the process of reading research on *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, it was revealed that the majority of scholarly works involve literary nonsense, but, as will be shown below, very few attempts have been made on relating the works of Lewis Carroll to the carnival tradition. In the following section, I will present the aim for this thesis, and attempt to show why a reading of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in the carnival tradition may prove to be a valid and fruitful reading, and how it may provide an understanding of Carroll’s writings as something beyond its already established link to literary nonsense.

Almost a decade ago, Mark Hennelly Jr. (2009) claimed in his article “Alice’s Adventures at the Carnival” that “[i]t seems curious that this tangled tale, Lewis Carroll’s in the *Alice’s*, has never been linked to the Carnival tradition typified by François Rabelais’s *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-64)” (p. 103). In the article, Hennelly discusses how Lewis Carroll’s two novels about Alice, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, can be linked to Rabelais’ pentalogy of novels about Gargantua and Pantagruel. There is no coincidence that Hennelly explores the writings of Rabelais, as he is the writer who is most frequently linked to the carnival tradition.

Perhaps the most famous scholarly work about the carnival tradition and the notion of the carnivalesque is Mikhail Bakhtin’s *Rabelais and His World* (1965/1984b). This work considers Rabelais’ novels about Gargantua and Pantagruel, and links it to the festive ceremony that is the carnival. The carnival and other festive ceremonies, especially in the Middle Ages, were based on laughter and other comic aspects, and were, in many ways, in utter contrast to the serious official culture. Thus, the carnival can be seen as a subversion of the official culture, where social hierarchies and ready-made truths are overturned. Relating

this to literature, the carnivalesque aspects create a topsy-turvy world that subverts and upsets truths and norms that are manifested in the official culture, i.e. the daily life of a given culture.

Going back to Hennelly's article (2009), he expresses perplexity concerning the few links between Lewis Carroll's novels about Alice and the carnival tradition. His reading of the novels suggests that there are, indeed, similarities between the carnival tradition, as represented by Rabelais, and Carroll's novels, and he concludes his article by stating: "Simply tell Alice's story, and you'll make it a carnival tale" (p. 123).

This thesis shares Hennelly's curiosity about the few links between the *Alice's* and the carnival tradition. It seems peculiar that Bakhtin's exploration of the disruption of normative order and hierarchy that is found within the carnival has not been more excessively linked to Carroll's novels about Alice. One of the characteristics of the nonsense genre is a revolutionary and rebellious aspect. Heyman (2003, p. 13) postulates that the rebellious aspect of literary nonsense can be found in the genre's tendencies of breaking all rules of propriety and logic. Moreover, the character's often rebellious characteristics, as they are frequently characterised as unruly and wild, add to this revolutionary aspect. He asserts that Alice is, indeed, portrayed as a girl who does not follow the expected role of girls in the Victorian era, as her honesty, curiosity and impulsiveness break with the established decorum of the era (p. 16). These characteristics share a resemblance with Bakhtin's assessment of the carnivalesque, and this has triggered the aim to provide a carnivalesque reading of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Notwithstanding, in contrast to Hennelly, who rather generally explores the carnivalesque elements in both of the novels about Alice, this thesis will take on a distinctively different, and much more narrow approach. First and foremost, the aim for this thesis is not to attempt to conclude whether the notion of the carnivalesque can be typified through *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Instead, it will thoroughly investigate the extent to which three of the poems that are found in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* can be read through Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque. The three poems that constitute the material for this thesis are "How Doth the Little Crocodile", "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster", and "You Are Old, Father William". Chapter 2 will provide a detailed account of why these poems in particular have been chosen. The use of three poems as the basis for this thesis means that the findings in this thesis will not automatically be applicable to the rest of the novel, but the aim here is to show how one can, in detail, go about exploring Carroll's novel in relation to Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque. Hence, through this detailed analysis, I aspire to

highlight the possibility of conducting a carnivalesque reading of the *Alice's*, and by showing one way of approaching such a reading, the aim is to encourage more research on this link between Bakhtin and Carroll.

Additionally, Hennelly is interested in conducting a carnivalesque reading of the *Alice's* by linking it to Rabelais' novels about Gargantua and Pantagruel, which form the basis of Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque. This thesis, on the other hand, will not offer a carnivalesque reading based on the works of Rabelais. As Simon Dentith (1995) notes in his introductory reader *Bakhtinian Thought*, "the first thing that strikes any reader of *Rabelais and His World* is that the book's range extends well beyond its ostensible immediate topic" (p 63). Bakhtin's account of the festive life of the European medieval carnival through the writings of Rabelais formed the basis of the carnivalesque. As the theory of the carnivalesque has developed over the last decades, it has been applied to other cultures and periods of time outside the medieval carnival, which is precisely what will be done in this thesis. Victorian Britain is the period in which *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was written, and the carnivalesque reading in this thesis will therefore be done in relation to the Victorian Era.

The reason for looking at these three poems rather than the entire novel is because the poems that will be investigated in this thesis are parodies of poems that were frequently read by school children in Victorian Britain. In the Victorian Era, rote memorisation of poems was a widely used didactical approach to teach morals and reading (Robson, 2012, p. 40), and several of the poems that are parodied in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* were expected to be memorised by school children in the Victorian Era. Because these poems were read by school children in this period, it reflects one of the aspects that can be labelled the officialdom of Victorian Britain. In Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque, an important element is how the carnivalesque is in dialogue with the official culture. As the Victorian Era encompasses the period in which *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was written, Victorian Britain then becomes the official culture against which the texts will be read. Thus, because a parody is placed against the work of which it is parody, the parodies in Carroll's novel are placed against poems that are part of the official culture. For this reason, an exploration of three of the poems in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is deemed appropriate to link the novel to the theory of the carnivalesque.

Furthermore, the fact that the three poems that will be analysed in this thesis are, indeed, parodies, is essential to why they have been chosen as the material for this thesis. In the research field on literary nonsense, the use of parodies has been discussed by several researchers, and it has been established as an important part of the genre. Heyman (2003, p.

16), whose focus is on literary nonsense in children's literature, notes that nonsense is a different and difficult genre to fully master. He points to the decline in proper literary nonsense for children from the late nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century, where authors of nonsense for children did not really write nonsensical texts. Such texts missed the genre's point of having no point, hence the term non-sense. Too often, states Heyman, did these texts in the end make perfect sense, and the so-called nonsensical elements were merely humorous elements. Texts that labelled themselves as nonsense did often also turn out to be pure parodies. Heyman notes that texts that are purely parodies do, indeed, make sense, which prevents them from being nonsensical. A full discussion of the concept of 'sense' will not be done here, as it will merely drag this text down the rabbit hole, but Linda Shires' (1988) distinction between parody and nonsense can provide an understanding of how pure parodies cannot be nonsense. Shires identifies parody and nonsense by comparing them to a distorted mirror at a circus funhouse. She notes that parody is "the placement of distorted mirror image against an 'original' mirror image", whereas nonsense is "that which cannot be seen, or known, or held onto: the broken mirror, the broken image" (Shires, 1988, p. 268). This implies that pure parody cannot be nonsense, as parody is placed against the work of which it is a parody.

Nonetheless, parodies are frequently used in nonsense, and, as claimed by Heyman (2003, p. 16), are actually one of the few elements of sense in nonsense. However, he further asserts that the intertextuality of the parody is deliberately used almost randomly, and the purpose of the intertextuality is made unclear by the nonsense writer. This is supported by Lecercle (1994, p. 1), who also discusses the role of parody in nonsense, affirming that they constitute a prominent feature of the genre. Furthermore, Lecercle (p. 170) declares that in literary nonsense, there are sometimes explicit comments on the fact that it is a parody, as this is the case on several occasions in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In several instances, Alice attempts to recite poems she has learned at school, only to realise that they come out completely different. This means that a lot of literary nonsense does not hide the fact that it includes parodies, but the purpose of the parody is not apparently obvious. Lecercle differentiates between two kinds of parodic intertexts in literary nonsense, that being proper parody and pastiche. Proper parody refers to the cases to which the intertext is referenced by an annotation to the author of the parodied text. Pastiche, on the other hand, appear when the distance to the parodied text become larger, to the extent that the ascription of authorship becomes indistinct (Lecercle, 1994, p. 170). This brief rendition of parody, in itself and in literary nonsense, is obviously highly simplistic. As will be revealed below, parody will be an

important element in this thesis, and will therefore be more thoroughly accounted for in section 3.2. For now, it unveils that parody is frequently used in literary nonsense and that it has been carefully investigated by researchers on the field.

Precisely the fact that parody has been established as an important aspect of literary nonsense, despite its nature being contradictory to the nature of nonsense, is another reason for why this thesis aims to offer a carnivalesque reading of three parodic poems in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. While parodies are almost in opposition to the nature of literary nonsense, they are mentioned as important, and in fact essential, to the carnivalesque (e.g. Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, pp. 13-15, p. 21; Bakhtin, 1963/1984a, p. 127). This has further induced this thesis to offer a carnivalesque reading of some of the poetic parodies that occur throughout *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Based on the presentation and investigation above, the main question of this thesis reads:

How can Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque offer a new reading of three parodic poems in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?

1.1. Structure of the thesis

In this section, I will show how the thesis is structured and how I will embark on the question that is presented above. The thesis is divided into five main chapters, of which the introduction chapter is the first. This chapter introduces the aim and the background for the thesis and the presentation of the material that will be analysed and discussed.

In the second chapter, the three poems that constitute the material for this thesis will be presented, as will the context in which they appear in the novel. As the parodied poems will be part of the analyses, they will also be introduced here, in addition to a brief presentation of the authors of these text, as a means of situating them in the official culture of Victorian Britain.

The third chapter will offer the theoretical background of which the poems will be analysed, and it will be composed of two main sections. Section 3.1. will provide a theoretical enquiry into the theory of the carnivalesque, and is again composed of two main sub-sections. Initially, the carnivalesque, as put forward by Mikhail Bakhtin, will be accounted for, and it will mostly be based on his work *Rabelais and His World* (1965/1984b), as well as a few

paragraphs from his work *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963/1984a). Additionally, Dentith's (1995) introductory reader on Bakhtin will add to this probe into Bakhtin's carnivalesque. Section 3.1.2. will present the officialdom of Victorian Britain, herein the official culture of the Victorian school system and the educational philosophy of the time, as well as children's literature, including its frequent use of anthropomorphism. Large parts of this section will be based on the educational philosophy of John Locke, as he will be argued as one of the main sources of influence to the officialdom in which *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland* was written, which is what this section aims to establish.

Succeeding this is chapter 4, which is the analyses of the three poems. This chapter is structured into three sections that each analyses one poem and discusses the carnivalesque elements that can be found in relation to the parodied text, and also in relation to the Victorian officialdom. Both Carroll's poems and the poems of which they are parodies will be cited in full in the beginning of each section.

The fifth and last chapter is titled "Conclusion" but will also comprise a summary of the findings from the analyses with consecutive conclusions and concluding remarks. It is structured this way mainly because the aim for this thesis is not to conclude whether these poems can be labelled 'carnavalesque', but more precisely investigate some of the carnivalesque elements that can be found in the poems. Therefore, this chapter will conclude on the carnivalesque elements that have been analysed based on the criteria and approach of the thesis. Furthermore, a few notes will be made on the limitations of this study with some comments on how further research on this field can paint a broader picture on the relationship between *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and the theory of the carnivalesque, which in turn can contend or support the findings of this thesis.

2. Presentation of the material

This chapter will present and contextualise the material which will be analysed in this thesis, namely “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” and “You Are Old, Father William”. Moreover, as these poems are part of the novel *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, it will evidently be necessary to explore them in the light of the novel as a whole. Of course, this thesis will to a large extent analyse the poems as individual literary works, but to deny the context in which they appear would limit the interpretation and the analyses of the poems, thus decreasing the validity of this thesis. Accordingly, the following paragraph intends to present a brief summary of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

The opening scene of the novel depicts Alice sitting alongside her sister by the riverside, when she suddenly spots a White Rabbit with a waistcoat and a pocket watch running by her. She follows him down a rabbit-hole and ends up in a hallway full of locked doors. On a nearby table, she finds a key to a very small door, which leads to the most beautiful garden that Alice has ever seen. Unable to fit through the door, she sets herself a goal to reach the garden another way. On her journey, she meets different characters that inhabit Wonderland, among them the hookah-smoking Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, and the March Hare and the Hatter. After finally reaching the garden, owned by the Queen of Hearts, Alice joins a game of croquet, and encounters several characters, including the Gryphon and Mock Turtle. Eventually, she witnesses a trial, at the end of which, she wakes up by the riverbank, realising that it was all a dream.

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland contains several poems that occur throughout the novel. As three of these poems comprise the material for this thesis, it is deemed necessary to first look more generally at the poems that are found within the novel, and briefly review their function. On that account, the following will present the poems that occur in the novel and break down the selection process that resulted in the three aforementioned poems. Thereafter follows a brief presentation of the three poems that constitute the material in this thesis.

Throughout the first novel about Alice, a total of 11 poems can be found, including “All in the Golden Afternoon”, an introductory poem which is located in the preface of the novel. This is one of two poems in the novel that is not a parody, the second being “The Mouse’s Tale”, whereas the remaining nine poems are parodies.

In her book *Heart Beats: Everyday Life and the Memorized Poem*, Catherine Robson (2012) notes that rote memorisation and recitation of poems were exceedingly popular didactical approaches in the Victorian classroom, asserting that it “long constituted the

dominant method for teaching both reading and other subjects in Britain and the United States, and poetic material worked especially well, for a variety of reasons, in such a form of instruction” (p. 40). Of course, this only touches the surface, and a deeper investigation into why the memorisation and recitation of poems was so popular will be presented in section 3.1.2. For now, affirming that they were a common features in Victorian classrooms, provides an understanding of why *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* contains parodies of such poems, and it reveals that the texts that are parodied by Carroll were, for the most part, familiar to school children in the Victorian Era.

Moreover, as the subject of parody will also play a part in the selection of poems for this thesis, a note needs to be made on the terminology that will be used throughout the thesis. In order to avoid the slippery term ‘original’ when discussing parody, this thesis will borrow the terminology put forward by the French literary theorist Gérard Genette, namely ‘hypertextuality’. This term constitutes the relationship between the ‘hypotext’ and ‘hypertext’ (Genette, 1982/1997, p. 5), which, in this case, refers to the parodied text, and the parody, respectively. Genette is concerned with the different modes of intertextuality and the ways in which the hypertext is in dialogue with the hypotext. Precisely this dialogue between the texts is crucial to Bakhtin and his assessment of carnivalesque parody, and Genette’s terminology is therefore deemed appropriate in this thesis.

Though the children in the Victorian Era were likely to know the hypotexts, these are presumably not familiar to the modern reader of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Even shortly after the release of this novel, the unfamiliarity of the parodied texts raised the question of whether the meaning and the humorous aspects of the poems within the novel would be lost. When reflecting on the French translation of this novel, which was released in 1867, Carroll himself actually made a comment about this issue, noting that “[t]he verses would be the great difficulty, as I fear, if the originals are not known in France, the parodies would be unintelligible” (as cited in Haughton, 2009, p. 303). This implies that Carroll was under the impression that familiarity with the hypotexts was of utmost importance to fully grasp the poems that occur throughout the novel. This concurs with Bakhtin’s (1975/1981, p. 374) rendition of carnivalesque parody, in which he clarifies the importance of knowing the hypotext.

Lastly, the process behind the selection of the three poems that constitute the material for this thesis will be presented. As mentioned above, nine of the 11 poems in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* are parodies of other poems. In order to investigate the extent to which these poems provide carnivalesque elements, it is necessary to compare these poems to

the official culture of children's literature at that time, i.e. the literature which was regarded as proper and was believed to be most apt for the child reader in the Victorian Era. As rote memorisation was such a widely used technique in the Victorian Era, and it can therefore be argued that the poems which were expected to be memorised, are part of the official culture of children's literature in the Victorian Era. On that note, analysing the poems in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in comparison to the parodied texts, is believed to be a sufficient method to help answer the main question. Nonetheless, the analyses of the poems will not merely be comparative analyses, as they will also explore the poems independently. A further discussion on how the poems have been read in this thesis will be presented in chapter 4. Anew, as "The Mouse's Tale" and "All in the Golden Afternoon" are not parodies, but rather poems written entirely by Carroll, they will not be included in this thesis, as it evidently will not be possible to conduct comparative analyses in the same manner.

Furthermore, of the nine parodic poems, six of these are recited by characters in Wonderland, whereas the three other poems are recited by Alice herself, those being "How Doth the Little Crocodile", "You Are Old, Father William" and "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster". These are, indeed, the poems that will be analysed in this thesis. The fact that Alice is the one who misquotes three of the poems is key to the central argument of this thesis, as she is the only character in the novel who belongs to the official Victorian culture. This implies that Alice is, in fact, the one who creates the parody. Thus, an investigation of the three poems which are recited by Alice herself, allows this thesis to examine the extent to which the parodies she creates can be linked to Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque.

2.1. Presentation of the three poems

In this section, the three poems that comprise the material in this thesis will briefly be contextualised and presented as they appear in the novel. The analysis chapter of this thesis will be structured a bit differently than the sequence they appear in the novel, but that will be explained in the beginning of the fourth chapter. Here, the poems will be presented as they appear in the novel, starting with "How Doth the Little Crocodile".

"How Doth the Little Crocodile" is the first poem that occurs within the novel and is a parody of Isaac Watts' poem "Against Idleness and Mischief" (originally published in 1715). The poem is recited by Alice shortly after arriving in Wonderland, in an attempt to reconnect with herself after experiencing a series of perplexing events. Afraid that she is not herself anymore, Alice attempts to repeat things she has learned in school. After being unable to

remember the Multiplication-Table and Geography, she tells herself “‘I’ll try and say ‘*How Doth the Little—*’” (Carroll, 1865/2009, p. 19).¹ Carroll does not attempt to conceal the poem as a parody, as the first line of the hypotext reads: “How doth the little busy bee” (Watts, 1715/2004, song 20). Alice explicitly says that she will attempt to recite the poem, only to find out that it comes out all wrong: “[...] and she crossed her hands on her lap, as if she were saying lessons, and began to repeat it, but her voice sounded hoarse and strange, and the words did not come the same as they used to do” (Carroll, 2009, p. 19). This foreshadows that Alice’s attempt will be unsuccessful, which is confirmed after the poem: “‘I’m sure those are not the right words’, said poor Alice” (Carroll, 2009, p. 19).

“How Doth the Little Crocodile” consists of two stanzas, each comprising four lines. The first stanza portrays a crocodile that swims around in the Nile, attempting to appear attractive. The second stanza depicts the Crocodile eating and toying with little fish in a malicious and mischievous manner. On the contrary, the hypotext, “Against Idleness and Mischief”, is made up of four stanzas, each of them being four lines long, making the poem twice as long as the hypertext. The first two stanzas of the poem describe the diligent and hard-working nature of the bee, while the two last stanzas relate this behaviour to humans. The two last stanzas put forward an explicit moral lesson, which suggests that humans should emulate the hard-working nature of the bee.

The hypotext is written by Isaac Watts and is part of the collection *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children* (1715/2004). Today best known for his many hymns, Isaac Watts (1674 – 1748) was also theologian, logician, and a writer of children’s poems (Wakely-Mulroney, 2016, p. 103). To the present time, his most famous poems are “Against Idleness and Mischief”, and “The Sluggard”, both from the same collection. Both of them are parodied in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, which, in all probability, is why they are his best-known poems today. Carroll’s parody of the latter poem is titled “‘Tis the Voice of the Lobster”, which will also be analysed in this thesis. Robson (2012, p. 43) notes that *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children* was recurrently reprinted and used in classrooms until the middle of the nineteenth century, affirming that school children reading *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* shortly after its release were likely to know the hypotexts of the poems in the novel.

In addition to writing children’s poems, Watts also published textbooks on logic, most famously *Logic: or the Right Use of Reason in the Enquiry After Truth with a Variety of Rules*

¹ References to the novel will from now on be referred to as (Carroll, 2009).

to Guard Against Error in the Affairs of Religion and Human Life, as well as in the Sciences (first published in 1724). In this book, Watts frequently alludes to John Locke, using his 1693 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* as a basis for much of his arguments, and his praise of Locke is apparent throughout the textbook (Watts, 1724/1802). For this thesis, a research into Watts' writings on the subject of logic will not be done. The mere reason for stressing his position in a Lockean tradition, is to attempt to argue that his poems for children also follow a Lockean tradition. This concurs with Katherine Wakely-Mulroney, who states that a lot of Watts work was influenced by Locke, and that he was a "self-styled devotee of Locke" (2016, p. 103). Moreover, the reason for situating Watts in this tradition, is to manifest his poems as being in line with children's literature of that time, which, as will be argued, was highly Lockean, i.e. it aimed to instil moral lessons and educate, as well as please the child reader.

The second poem that Alice attempts to repeat is "You Are Old, Father William", which occurs in the fifth chapter of the novel, "Advice from a Caterpillar". In this chapter, Alice encounters a hookah-smoking caterpillar, to whom she expresses confusion after the series of perplexing events she has experienced while residing in Wonderland. She tells the Caterpillar about her failed recitation of "How Doth the Little—", and he then tells her "[r]epat 'You are old, Father William'" (Carroll, 2009, p. 42).

"You are old, Father William" are the first words of the parodied poem (Madden, 1972b, pp. 457). Its actual title is "The Old Man's Comforts, and How He Gained Them" and is written by Robert Southey, but despite not using the actual title, there is no doubt about which poem Alice attempts to recite. After Alice has said her version of the poem, the Caterpillar utters "[t]hat is not said right" (Carroll, 2009, p. 45), which emphasises the fact that the poem is a parody.

"You Are Old, Father William" consists of eight stanzas of which every other stanza is a question by a young man, followed by Father William's answers to these questions. The questions are related to Father William's ability and reason for performing different actions, such as standing on the head and doing back-somersaults. The hypotext comprises six stanzas that also present questions by a young man with subsequent answers by Father William. Here, the questions are related to Father William's ability to stay healthy and positive, and each answer by Father William contains a moral lesson related to the importance of staying healthy and to think about the future.

Robert Southey (1774 – 1843) was an English writer and literary critic and his works include poems, novels and literary reviews (Madden, 1972a, p. xv). Robson (2012, p. 27) finds that the writings of Southey are today scarcely read, whereas his works held a prominent

place in the nineteenth century. His poem “The Old Man’s Comforts and How He Gained Them” was first published in *The Annual Anthology* in 1799 (Haughton, 2009, p. 307), and while it is not easy to situate the use of precisely this poem in the Victorian classroom, Robson (2012, p. 62) notes that Southey’s work was used in volumes that provided extracts from works that were deemed appropriate for the purpose of memorising poems by heart. This places Southey’s poems as central to the didactical approach of rote memorisation of poems. By this, it is reasonable to suggest that “The Old Man’s Comforts, and How He Gained Them” was familiar to the child reader in Victorian Britain. At least, the “*faux-naïf* didacticism”, as Haughton (2009, p. 307) labels it, that is found in the poem was likely to be well-known to the child reader.

Lastly, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” will be presented, and it can be found in the tenth chapter of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, titled “The Lobster Quadrille”. Here, Alice is in the company of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, and they perform the Lobster Quadrille to her, a dance which is apparently known to most creatures under sea in Wonderland. Shortly after watching and listening to the Lobster-Quadrille, Alice tells them about her day in Wonderland, and how curious of a day it had been. She tells them about her journey, and her meeting with the different creatures of Wonderland, including the hookah-smoking Caterpillar. She precedes to explain how the Caterpillar had asked her to repeat “You Are Old, Father William”, but in her attempt, the words were mixed up and the poem ended up coming out completely different. The Gryphon and Mock Turtle are particularly intrigued by this, and the Gryphon therefore asks Alice to repeat “’Tis the Voice of the Sluggard”. Alice starts reciting the poem, “but her head was so full of the Lobster-Quadrille, that she hardly knew what she was saying, and the words came very queer indeed” (Carroll, 2009, p. 91), again foreshadowing that the poem will be a parody.

“’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” is a parody of Isaac Watts’ poem “The Sluggard”, which is included in the same collection as “Against Idleness and Mischief”, namely *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language, for the Use of Children* (1715/2004). Based on the presentation above of Isaac Watts and of this collection, it can anew be argued that this poem was familiar to the children in the Victorian Era.

The hypertext comprises two stanzas, each of the stanzas being composed of 8 lines. Yet, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” may actually be perceived as two different poems, as they tell two separate stories. The first stanza depicts an almost flamboyant lobster that is conceited and overconfident in the absence of predators, but as soon as they are around, he is revealed as a timid prey. The second stanza, on the other hand, tells the story of a Panther and

an Owl who are observed, by a first-person narrator, sharing a pie in a garden. Additionally, the two stanzas are not continuously told by Alice, as she is interrupted by the Gryphon after finishing the first stanza, which further emphasises the notion that each stanza functions as an individual poem.

The hypotext, Isaac Watts' "The Sluggard", consists of five stanzas, each being four lines long. Thus, the hypotext consists of 20 lines, whereas the hypertext is composed of 16 lines. "The Sluggard" tells the story of a lazy and idle person, through a first-person narrator. In the first four stanzas, the first-person narrator tells the tale of the Sluggard, and describes his encounters with him, before, in the last stanza, relating this behaviour to himself. In the last stanza, the first-person narrator reflects on his own life, noting that he could have had the same fate, if it were not for the people around him who taught him to be diligent and to pursue knowledge. Hence, in the last stanza, the moral of the hypotext appears rather explicitly, i.e. that early focus on hard work and reading is necessary to foster industrious people who can contribute to society.

As seen in the presentation of the three poems, there are some noteworthy parallels between all three poems that Alice attempts to recite. The initial similarity is that every time she tries to quote a poem, one of the characters, or Alice herself, explicitly comments that it has been misquoted. This only happens when Alice is the one who recites a poem, it does not appear to happen when any of the other characters repeats a poem. Moreover, the mentioning of the hypotext prior to the parody is also something that only happens on the three occasions that Alice is the performer of the poems. Although the hypotexts are not mentioned by the actual titles, but rather by the first, or part of the first line, it is still no doubt which poem that is being parodied. The last similarity between the poems that Alice presents is that they are all linked to the confusion Alice experiences while she is in Wonderland. These aspects that can only be found in the cases where Alice recites a poem, suggest that Alice's link to the officialdom of Victorian Britain has an influence on the poems and on the parts of the novel that encompass the poems.

3. Theory

This chapter will attempt to present the necessary theoretical framework to conduct a carnivalesque reading of the three poems that Alice attempts to recite while being in Wonderland. For this purpose, the first section will study the theory of the carnivalesque which will form the basis for the elements that will be analysed in relation to the poems. That section will first look at the carnivalesque, as theorised by Bakhtin, before the officialdom of Victorian Britain will be established in section 3.1.2. Furthermore, as these poems are parodies, an exposition of the theory of parody will be presented in section 3.2. As the introduction chapter touched upon, the nature of parody is contradictory to that of nonsense, whereas parody is commonly associated with the carnivalesque. This will be mirrored in the section on parody, which can then help lay the foundation for how the poems can be read as carnivalesque. For this reason, there are several aspects of the carnivalesque, as presented in section 3.1.1. that will be elaborated on and further discussed in section 3.2.2., which inspects carnivalesque parody.

3.1. Carnivalesque

In this section, I intend to provide an enquiry into the notion and the theory of the carnivalesque as put forward by Russian philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin (1895 – 1975). The term ‘carnivalesque’ was originally defined and used by Bakhtin in his work *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (1963/1984a), but the term is more commonly associated with his renowned work, *Rabelais and his World* (1965/1984b). Although nineteenth-century scholars before Bakhtin attempted to understand the phenomenon of carnival in Russian literature, he was the first to fully grasp its essence (Pomorska, 1984, pp. x-xii). However, Bakhtin was mostly interested in exploring the carnivalesque as a medieval phenomenon, but as will be shown below, research on literature has extended the term and applied it much more broadly than that originally put forward by Bakhtin. Therefore, this section will also look at how the carnivalesque can be applied to the period and culture in which *Alice’s Adventure in Wonderland* was written, namely the British Victorian Era.

Rabelais and His World was first published as a book in 1965, and translated to English by Hélène Iswolsky in 1968. As the title of the book indicates, it explores the writing of the French Renaissance writer François Rabelais, who, according to Bakhtin, is one of the greatest creators of European literature, yet the “the least popular, the least understood and appreciated” writers of world literature (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 1). Notwithstanding, Simon

Dentith (1995, pp. 63-64) notes that the topic of *Rabelais and His World* exceeds way beyond that of Rabelais' works. It provides a foundation for how the carnival, as a social institution, can be used as a basis of exploring European cultural, social and personal history. Bakhtin is interested in the carnivalesque, which for him is related to the carnival and other festive occasions during the Middle Ages, and as the carnivalesque is extended to literature, the notion of carnivalised literature has emerged. Despite the idea of the carnivalesque originally being related to the Middle Ages, it has, in the aftermath of the success of Bakhtin's work, been developed further than that of the Middle Ages. Dentith (1995) affirms that carnivalised writing can be seen as writing that has "taken the carnival spirit into itself and thus reproduces, within its own structures and by its own practices, the characteristic inversions, parodies and decrowning of carnival proper" (p. 63). This implies that the carnivalesque and carnivalised literature are not exclusively linked to the medieval carnival, but that the idea of the carnivalesque is applicable to any given period and culture. This is precisely what this thesis will do; that is, it will explore the theory of the carnivalesque in the Victorian Britain.

First, however, it is necessary to look at how Bakhtin assesses the carnivalesque in the Middle Ages, before it can be applied to the Victorian Era. As a result, the following will offer an investigation into the way in which Bakhtin accounted for and applied the theory of the carnivalesque. This section will touch upon the social institution that is the carnival, the tradition of folk humour, grotesque realism, the aspect of laughter, and the carnivalistic act of decrowning.

3.1.1. Bakhtin's carnivalesque

In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963/1984a), Bakhtin assesses that carnivalised literature is linked to a wide range of genres from Menippean satire, which arose around the third century B.C., to Dostoevsky in the nineteenth century, and is based on carnivalistic folklore in ancient times of in medieval times (p. 107). Nevertheless, to Bakhtin, Rabelais is the writer who truly engages in the carnival tradition and his works form the basis of *Rabelais and His World*, which is, to a greater extent than the aforementioned work, dedicated to the carnival tradition and the notion of the carnivalesque. The latter work will therefore be the primary source for this exposition into Bakhtin's carnivalesque.

Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 3) states that Rabelais has been misunderstood by those who have studied his work, and that the only way to truly understand his writings is through the light of the tradition of medieval folk humour. This tradition has, according to Bakhtin, been

scarcely investigated and analysed, and he consequently takes it upon him to provide a study of this tradition. The following will look into the tradition of folk humour as it, in many ways, lay the foundation of the theory of the carnivalesque.

Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 5) posits three forms that manifest the folk culture of humour: ‘ritual spectacles’, ‘comic verbal compositions’, and ‘various genres of billingsgate’. The first of the forms, ‘ritual spectacles’, includes carnivals, comic shows of the marketplace, and other festive occasions, which from now will collectively be labelled ‘carnival’. Bakhtin states that the carnivals were important events in the medieval times, both for the everyday man, and for institutions, such as the Church. It is important to grasp the nature and the role of the carnival in order to understand the theory of the carnivalesque, and the following quote from Bakhtin encapsulates precisely this:

They [the carnivals] offered a completely different, nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical aspect of the world, of man, and of human relations; they built a second world and a second life outside officialdom, a world in which all medieval people participated more or less, in which they lived during a given time of the year.
(Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, pp. 5-6).

The idea of the second world is important here, as it points to the existence of two worlds, i.e. one world which comprises the serious official culture, and a second world which is the world that exists within the carnival. Carnivals were based on laughter and comic aspects, where people dressed up, e.g. as clowns, fools, dwarfs and giants. This represented a complete opposition to the humourless and serious official culture. The carnival was also known for subverting the hierarchy that existed in the official culture, “[t]he suspension of all hierarchical precedence during carnival time was of particular significance” (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 10). This temporary removal of hierarchy during the carnival led to a form of communication that only prevailed in the duration of the festive occasion. Simply put, the carnivalesque is, as the name suggests, based on the carnival, which is a topsy-turvy world where the serious and dismal official culture and the hierarchical roles within are subverted.

Another important element that needs to be addressed from Bakhtin’s quote above, is the aspect of temporality. Bakhtin (1965/1984b, pp. 9-10) notes that the carnival world exists outside officialdom for a given period of time during the year. This implies that the carnivalesque is temporary, i.e. it is not something that can prevail permanently. As the

carnavalesque is dependent on the serious official world, it will fade back into the serious officialdom after the carnival ends.

The second form of folk culture humour that Bakhtin presents, is the ‘comic verbal compositions’. He notes that this form comprises the comic literature and texts that were present in medieval times, which were largely inspired by the carnival and the carnivalesque. Moreover, the majority of these texts are parodies and parodic texts, which existed orally, in Latin, and in the vernacular. Parodies have a carnivalesque character, as the comic aspect is often a result of a subversion of the official culture (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, pp. 12-13). This form of folk humour will be elaborated on in section 3.2.2, as it is directly linked to parodies and accordingly composes an important element of this thesis.

The third and final form of folk culture humour is ‘various genres of billingsgate’, i.e. different types of profanity. This is related to the language and way of communication that was frequently used in festive occasion, such as the carnival. This language tended to be rather abusive and foul, and included a type of language which was not deemed appropriate in the official speech (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p 15-16). Again, this emphasises the carnival as an arena where the rules of the official culture were subverted. However, in this thesis, the ‘various genres of billingsgate’ will not be excessively discussed nor looked into in the analyses of the three poems in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. At first glance, the type of language used in Lewis Carroll’s poems does not appear to disrupt or subvert the appropriate language of Victorian officialdom. In the three poems that are analysed in this thesis, there are few examples of language that can be regarded as foul or as profanity. This is likely because *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* falls into the category ‘children’s literature’, and an excessive use of swear words or other forms of billingsgate is therefore not to be expected. Nonetheless, it needs to be stressed that this is not a conclusion of the way in which these poems engage in this carnivalised use of language, as it is not based on a sufficient amount of research on this form of folk humour, nor is it based on an adequate analysis of the various genres of billingsgate in the poems. Still, in the analysis of “You Are Old, Father William”, one example will be given on a certain utterance that might fall into the form of folk humour that Bakhtin labels ‘various genres of billingsgate’. Apart from this one example, the other analyses will not be concerned with this specific carnivalesque aspect.

Above, the tradition of medieval folk humour has been briefly assessed, and it portrays a complete opposition to the dismalness and seriousness of the contemporary officialdom. The tradition of folk humour was particularly apparent in the carnivals, and is thus important

to the carnivalesque theory. The following will explore another important element in the carnivalesque and in carnivalised literature; that is, 'grotesque realism'.

Dentith (1995, pp. 64-65) maintains that *Rabelais and His World* favourably proclaims the aesthetic of the grotesque and the body-based elements, which are put forward by Bakhtin almost as a means of challenging the dismal and serious elements of the official culture. The grotesque and body-based elements are deeply rooted in the tradition of folk humour and in the carnivalesque. Rabelais is known for his portrayals of the human body, including food, drink, defecation and sexual life, and it is often presented in an exaggerated manner. In the poems in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, there are several instances of such portrayals, and particularly food and eating are prominent features in the poems. While the body-based elements such as sexual life and defecation are not found in the material that is analysed in this thesis, the portrayal of food plays a central part in the poem, and the manner in which it is portrayed will therefore be discussed in the analyses of this thesis.

Bakhtin (1965/1984b, pp. 18-19) calls the aesthetic of the grotesque and body-based elements that are found in Rabelais' work and in the carnival, the 'material bodily principle', and he notes that the way Rabelais depicted this in his work has been misunderstood for centuries. The material bodily principle in Rabelais' work is deeply rooted in the tradition of folk culture humour. These images of the material bodily principle put forward by Rabelais, and other writers of the Renaissance, provide an aesthetic concept which has the characteristics of the folk culture humour, and this concept is labelled by Bakhtin as 'grotesque realism'. Accordingly, the material bodily principle in grotesque realism is linked to the carnival and other festive gatherings. Thus, the exaggerated representation of the grotesque and body-based elements is considered positive, as it is linked to comic and festive aspects. Furthermore, the material bodily principle in grotesque realism represent something universal, rather than something private, isolated and egoistic.

An important element in grotesque realism is what Bakhtin calls degradation. That implies to degrade, or break down, the aspects of what is regarded as correct in the official culture. It includes breaking down the correctness of the high culture, and the abstract and spiritual, down to the material level. Bakhtin asserts two meanings of the word degradation, by defining 'up' and 'down' in two different ways. Firstly, he declares 'up' as being heaven, and 'down' as being earth. Degradation will then imply bringing something down to earth, i.e. materializing the spiritual. Secondly, Bakhtin notes that one can apply 'up' and 'down' to the human body, which can then be translated into the face and head, and the genital area, respectively. Parody is used by Bakhtin as an example of grotesque realism that degrades its

subject to the material level. Parody includes degrading something that is viewed as correct, and bringing it down to earth as something material, e.g. turn its subject into flesh and bone. Relating something that is viewed as correct to the genital organs of the body is another form of parody that frequently arise in grotesque realism (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, pp. 19-21). Parody as part of grotesque realism will be elaborated further in section 3.2.2., which discusses carnivalesque parody in more detail.

Another essential aspects of the carnivalesque is laughter, and Bakhtin dedicates an entire chapter to the exploration of laughter in Rabelais' work. This paragraph will not explore the role of laughter in his work, but rather look at how laughter is assessed in the carnivalesque. Through the aspect of carnivalesque laughter, the notion of ambivalence also becomes important to study, as Bakhtin argues that laughter in the carnivalesque is, indeed, ambivalent. Ambivalence is related to the combination of the serious and the comic. Going back to the idea that the carnivalesque is dependent on two worlds, i.e. the official world and the carnival world, Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 96) notes that the seriousness of officialdom coexists with the comic and laughing aspects of the carnival world, and that the carnivalesque is inherently dependent on the dialogue between these worlds. This means that laughter is dependent on the seriousness of officialdom, and to quote Bakhtin: "True ambivalent and universal laughter does not deny seriousness but purifies and completes it. Laughter purifies from dogmatism, from the intolerant and the petrified; it liberates from [...] didacticism, naïveté and illusion, from the single meaning, the single level" (1965/1984b, pp. 122-123). To conclude on laughter and the comic aspect, it can be affirmed that these aspects are quintessential to the carnivalesque. The carnival represents laughter, humour and the comic aspect, and is set in dialogue with the seriousness of officialdom.

The notion of dialogue is also central to the understanding of Bakhtin's carnivalesque. While the carnival is "the people's second life, organized on the basis of laughter" (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 8), it is still inherently dependent on the officialdom. As seen above, its role is to turn the life of officialdom upside-down, to create a topsy-turvy world outside of the official culture. This involves the subversion of the accepted and appropriate aspects of the life outside the carnival, and this can only be done through dialogue with the officialdom. By that, the carnivalesque cannot be enclosed and static, it needs to be in constant dialogue with officialdom. By taking into account the dissimilarities between different cultures and eras, this becomes rather evident. Aspects that are inappropriate and can be labelled carnivalesque in a given culture might be accepted and part of the officialdom of another culture. On that note, the dialogue between officialdom is of utmost significance when exploring the extent to

which a text can be labelled carnivalesque. Not only in relation to the officialdom of a given culture is dialogue an important aspect. Bakhtin (1975/1981, p. 374) also notes that a parody needs to be read in dialogue with the text of which it is a parody, i.e. the hypotext. The aspect of dialogue in carnivalesque parody will be discussed further in section 3.2.2., as his rendition of dialogue and dialogicity closely resembles that of intertextuality.

Lastly, this section will briefly touch upon term ‘decrowning’, before it will be further discussed in section 3.2.2 in relation to carnivalesque parody. In *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (1963/1984a), Bakhtin maintains that decrowning is a prominent carnivalistic act; namely a ritual that was, in one way or another, featured in the carnival, and he labels this ritual the “mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king” (p. 124). Simply put, decrowning is linked to the ways in which the king, for example, someone at the top of a hierarchical ladder, is decrowned and replaced by someone else, i.e. the decrowning double. The one who is decrowned, then, is stripped of his royal clothing and becomes ridiculed and beaten (Bakhtin, 1963/1984a, pp. 124-125). The idea of decrowning represents essentially a shift and renewal of authority, and in the carnivalesque sense, this points to the subversion of hierarchical roles, which is an important element in the theory of the carnivalesque. For now, it will be sufficient to conclude that ‘mock crowning and the subsequent decrowning of the carnival king’ is the way in which the authority is replaced and mocked by a decrowning double, which includes a hierarchical subversion.

Ultimately, this section has examined some of the most important elements of Bakhtin’s account of the carnivalesque. Of course, this could be addressed to an exceedingly greater extent, but for the purpose of this thesis and the main question it aims to answer, the enquiry above is deemed sufficient for this objective. In the attempt of understanding how the carnivalesque can be explored in Carroll’s poems, it is, however, not enough to grasp Bakhtin’s assessment of the carnivalesque. As *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* was written in the Victorian Era, the next section will consider the officialdom of this period, which will allow for an analysis of the carnivalesque elements later.

3.1.2. The officialdom of Victorian Britain

In the attempt to apply the notion of the carnivalesque to the British Victorian Era, one must identify the official culture of this era, e.g. the norms, cultural practices, laws, use of language, literature and socio-economic factors. In the establishment of the officialdom of the Victorian Era, it will be possible to account for what can be described as the carnivalesque,

and in turn look at how this appears in the reading of the three poems that will be analysed later. As Bakhtin states, the carnival is based on the idea of two worlds, i.e. the official world and the carnival world, and they are inherently dependent on each other, which means that the official world needs to be established. Of course, it is not fruitful nor place in this thesis to consider the entire official culture of the Victorian Era, and this section will consequently explore the aspects that are relevant to the analyses of the poems. These aspects will include the officialdom of children's literature, herein the overtly moralistic intentions of children's literature in the Victorian Era, as well as the use of anthropomorphism. Also, the general educational philosophy will be discussed, which include the widely used techniques of rote memorisation and recitation of poems in the Victorian school system. Lastly, the hierarchical position of authority, and the hierarchical structures of the Victorian Era will be briefly touched upon. This section will begin by discussing the use of rote memorisation and recitation as didactical approaches and the morals that these poems aim to instil.

In her book about the use of rote memorisation of poems in the classroom, Robson (2012, p. 1) notes that memorisation and recitation of poems or extracts of longer works held a prominent position in the school system of most English-speaking countries for the majority of the nineteenth century, and the British Victorian Era is thus no exception. Robson (2012, p. 40) further clarifies that the function of poetry was two-sided; on one hand, it was used for the purpose of developing literacy, and on the other, it was used for advanced learners to engage with poetry that was regarded as prestigious.

Yet, memorising poems by heart was not the sole purpose in the educational system, it was equally important to be able to recite and perform the poems. Therefore, recitation is closely tied to rote memorisation of poems and are dependent on each other. The ways in which poetry was recited, i.e. the posture and use of language, was also highly important and would be assessed by the teachers, often being included in the grading of the performance of the school children (Robson, 2012, pp. 7-8).

Nonetheless, one of the major reasons for the development of rote memorisation in the Victorian Era predates the spread of mass education. Going back to the period when education merely served as a means of understanding the Bible and other religious texts, poetry was believed to be ideal text to use in the development of literacy. The rhymes and rhythm in poetry were believed to cater to the playfulness and pleasure of the child, and in turn speed up the process of developing literacy, which again would allow the children to engage in the religious texts. Furthermore, the adhesive effect of poetry was used to instil

religious values to the children before they were able to read the official texts of the church (Robson, 2012, pp. 40-42).

One pedagogue whose educational philosophy had a massive influence on the use of verses and repetition in the British school system was Isaac Watts. Robson (2012, p. 42) notes that his collection *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children* (1715/2004) had a vast influence on poetry and rote memorisation in the British educational system. Although his work was published over two centuries before the Victorian Era, it was still used and re-printed in the nineteenth century. In the preface to his collection, Watts (1715/2004, preface, pt. 2) argues that the poetic form appeals to the child reader, and that repetition and memorisation cause the child to remember the poems for a longer time. This belief was installed in the educational system for centuries, and the obligatory recitation of poems decreased throughout the 1920s (Robson, 2012, p. 9). This paragraph only touches the surface of the history of education and of rote memorisation of poems in the Victorian Era, and it is not the intention to explore it further here. However, it affirms how the use of rote memorisation was so deeply rooted in the educational system even before the Victoria Era, and that it continued to be widely used in this period. Applying this to the carnivalesque, then, it is safe to say that the use of rote memorisation of poetry belonged to the official culture of education in the Victorian Era.

Notwithstanding, the fact that Isaac Watts' poems and philosophy was apparent in the Victorian educational system does not mean that it prevailed in the officialdom of children's literature in the Victorian Era. As stated above, the use of rote memorisation in the Victorian Era was the result of the educational system that was first brought to life over two centuries prior. During this time, children's literature experienced an extreme upturn (Pickering, 1981, p. 138), and the goal of accessing the official texts of the Church was no longer the primary one. The religious message that was so deeply imbedded in the eighteenth century did not attain the same focus in the Victorian Era, but the moral lessons of the poems were all the more important. The importance of the moral lessons in Victorian children's literature can be understood by looking at the educational philosophy of John Locke, who, as will be shown, was exceedingly influential to the use of children's literature in the Victorian Era. In the following section, John Locke's educational theory will be presented, in addition to his views on children's literature. Due to his massive influence on children's literature in the Victorian Era, his philosophy can offer an understanding of the official culture of children's literature, which, in turn, can provide an account of how Lewis Carroll's poems subvert the officialdom of children's literature.

3.1.2.1. John Locke and the officialdom of children's literature

Samuel Pickering found in his work *John Locke and Children's Books in Eighteenth-Century England* (1981, p. xi) that John Locke's influence on children's literature in the eighteenth century was greater than that of religion, and that his philosophical and theoretical contributions largely shaped children's literature from eighteenth-century Britain and onwards. Seth Lerer (2008, p. 105) also acknowledges John Locke as a vastly influential contributor to English literature, and particularly to children's literature. In his book *Children's literature: A Reader's History, from Aesop to Harry Potter*, Lerer dedicates a chapter to Locke and his role in children's literature. Here, Lerer puts forward Locke's philosophy and view of the child and the child reader, and so will the following paragraphs.

Lerer (2008, pp. 105-109) notes that Locke bases his philosophy on the idea that the child is born as *a tabula rasa*, i.e. a blank slate. This implies that at birth, human beings have no innate ideas, and that all the knowledge of the world is learned through experiences with the outside world. Additionally, Locke was under the impression that pictures, toys and models could provide assistance to the child in the process of gaining knowledge. He was also convinced that education should contribute to pleasure and delight in addition to knowledge. The idea that the child is born without innate ideas implies that the child becomes a product of the education with which it has been brought up. The portrayals of characters and objects in children's literature become crucial. Writers of children's literature offered practical and realistic portrayals of the world to tell stories of growth, as stories containing a large number of superstitious elements might lead the child reader to believe it to be true. Moreover, Locke's idea that objects could benefit the child in the educational process was mirrored in a large number of children's literature. Objects that could be used by the child for the sake of pleasure, or for the sake of acquiring knowledge, was labelled by Locke as "playthings", and children's literature following a Lockean philosophy were filled with objects and other elements which allowed the character to grow.

These playthings could, among other things, include animals, and these animals were often anthropomorphised, i.e. they were given human attributes. Anthropomorphised animals aimed to please and instruct the reader, and as will be further elaborated on later, it was believed that the animals would be better suited to instil moral lessons. Lerer (2008, pp. 7-8) notes that John Newbery, the first to establish a press committed to children's literature in England, founded his press in the tradition of John Locke. In her book *Talking Animals in*

British Children's Fiction, 1786-1914, Tess Cosslett (2006, p. 13) finds that one of Newbery's most recognized children's books, *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes* (1795), uses talking animals as 'playthings', supporting the child reader to engage in play and instruction. The use of anthropomorphised and talking animals in children's literature will be further discussed later, as is it of particular importance related to two of the poems that will be analysed, namely "How Doth the Little Crocodile" and "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster". Briefly summarised, Carroll uses anthropomorphised animals in these two poems, and parts of the analyses will therefore be dedicated to exploring the carnivalesque elements that are created through the use of anthropomorphism.

Before discussing the role of animals and anthropomorphism in children's literature, it is first necessary to look at Locke's assessment of children's literature and on the function that literature can have in children's education. He explicitly commented on the literature he believed was best suited for children and put forward the literature he believed would best benefit the child reader, both in terms of acquiring knowledge and in delighting them, namely fables. Fables, and especially Aesop's Fables, thus constitute some important elements of what was regarded as appropriate children's literature, and the following will briefly look into *Aesop's Fables* and Locke's recognition of it.

In his acknowledged and recognized work *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (originally published in 1693), Locke claims that the fable is the ideal reading material for children. He explicitly mentions *Aesop's Fables* as the recommended literary work for children, believing it to best suited to delight and educate the reader:

When by these gentle ways he begins to be able to *read*, some easy pleasant Book suited to his Capacity, should be put into his Hands [...] To this purpose, I think, *Aesop's Fables* the best, which being Stories apt to delight and entertain a Child, may yet afford useful Reflections to a grown Man. (Locke, 1693/1989, pp. 211-212)

Seth Lerer (2008, pp. 35-36) confirms that Aesop's link with children's literature is inextricable, and ever since the time of Plato, around 400 years BCE, his fables have been considered the very fundament of children's literature. Furthermore, Lerer maintains that the historical Aesop, and his actual writings, remain unexplored, but Aesopica, i.e. the transmissions and translations of his tales, has been thoroughly studied. Aesopica deals with the ways in which Aesop's fables have been used and re-used, read and re-read, written and re-written for millennia, in order to make it suit the ideology of the given period. So to speak,

the history of Aesopica can be viewed as the history of language and of textual transmission. This is supported by Robert Temple (1998, p. ix) who notes that Aesop is perhaps the best known author of the Greek antiquity and that his fables have had a massive influence on children's literature, despite the textual transmissions of his work share little to no resemblance with his actual work. For instance, the morals that pervade in the Victorian transmissions of Aesop's Fables did not occur in the actual writings.

Nevertheless, the common denominator of Aesopica remains the vernacular. The fables have been written and read in the language of the subordinate, e.g. slaves, servants, or maids, and is perhaps some of the reason for its immense popularity as children's literature (Lerer, 2008, p. 36). It might also explain why John Locke recognized the fables of Aesop as "some *easy pleasant Book*" (Locke, 1693/1989, p. 212, emphasis added). In relation to Locke, Aesopica becomes highly noteworthy. Locke published his own version of Aesop (Cosslett, 2006, p. 10), and this version can then be seen as a transmission of what he regarded as important when it comes to children's literature. Locke was under the impression that pictures and illustrations would encourage the child reader, as it would entertain and aid in the acquiring of knowledge. For that reason, illustrations of the animals are included in Locke's version of Aesop (Lerer, 2008, p. 109).

The history of *Aesop's Fables* and of Aesopica show that the transmissions of the fables tell more about the contemporary society than of Aesop's actual writings. As a result, Locke's devotion towards the fables and Locke's Aesopica becomes more relevant to this thesis than the actual fables written by Aesop. One of the key factors to why the fables were seen as suitable for children to read was the animal characters. Locke was overall concerned with animals and animal cruelty. He frequently linked the treatment of animals to moral, claiming that one cannot be a caring and sympathetic human being if one treats animals badly (Lerer, 2008, pp. 108-109). Cosslett (2006, pp. 10-11) maintains that Locke's arguments against animal cruelty was that it would lead to cruelty against men, and he asserted that a child could more easily develop good moral and compassion toward human beings through animals. This brings the current section to the use of animals and anthropomorphism in children's literature.

Firstly, animal characters were believed to satisfy and entertain the child reader. In Locke's vision that the child should read "some *easy pleasant Book*" (Locke, 1693/1989, p. 212, emphasis added), animals were thought to provide the 'pleasant' aspect. Moreover, as the fables contain, often explicit, moral lessons, animals were regarded as the ideal communicator of these lessons. Secondly, despite containing talking animals, the fables did

not contain too many superstitious elements, in contrast to, for instance, fairy-tales. It was believed that the child reader was able to distinguish between the talking animals in the text, and animals in real life, whereas the concern with fairy-tales was that the child reader might be led to believe the superstitious elements (Cosslett, 2006, pp. 9-11). Due to the belief that the child is born as a blank slate, the child could believe the superstitious element if there were too many of them.

By the late eighteenth century, reading material for children had extended further than only fables. The selection of children's literature had increased, and there were numerous genres available. However, following the philosophy of Locke, the anthropomorphised animals were still commonly used by the authors of children's literature, believing it appealed to the child reader, and it could more effectively instil moral lessons. Pickering (1981, p. 3) notes that the animal character has had, and still has, a central position in modern children's literature, and that the stories for children would appear underpopulated without these animal characters. Nonetheless, by the late eighteenth century, the anthropomorphised animal caused a dilemma for many of the authors, as there was an increased focus on the natural historical information in the text, and the importance of its accuracy. As Cosslett (2006, pp. 37-39) notes, the authors wanted to use anthropomorphised animals to please the child reader, at the same time as they were afraid that the children would actually believe the animals could talk. This paradox was often solved through explicit messages reassuring the child reader that animals are, indeed, unable to talk, either mentioned in the preface, in the dialogue between the characters, or told by the story's narrator. This dilemma continued for many authors of animal stories throughout most of the nineteenth century as well, but the reassurance that animals cannot talk was more frequently implicitly integrated in the text, rather than an explicit message (Cosslett, 2006, p. 5).

The moral education and explicit moral lessons that frequently occurred in children's literature in the nineteenth century were, as seen above, often taught through and by anthropomorphised animals. In addition to the use of animals as 'plaything', to use Locke's term, and the belief that animals were better suited to instil moral lessons, the use of anthropomorphised animals also served as a literary device in the fight against animal cruelty, and to function as a means of voicing the animals. Following the Lockean tradition, animals became a testing ground for human's compassion against other humans. According to Locke, "they who delight in the suffering and destruction of inferiour Creatures, will not be apt to be very compassionate, or benigne to those of their own kind" (Locke, 1693/1989, p. 180). As noted by Cosslett (2006, p. 10), this statement sums up the line of reasoning which was

recurring through the eighteenth century. The statement also posits another noteworthy aspect, namely that animals are inferior to humans. Hence, the fight against animal cruelty was predominantly anthropocentric, and in children's literature, animals mostly served as instructional devices, believing it would more effectively instil compassion and moral. The following paragraphs will not examine nor discuss the anthropocentric implications of the use of anthropomorphism in children's literature, as that requires, and deserves, a thesis of its own. Yet, these paragraphs will explore the ways that anthropomorphised animals have functioned as a literary and didactic device to instil moral lessons, and to fight animal cruelty.

Although Locke's argument of teaching compassion towards animals was anthropocentric, this changed throughout the nineteenth century, and the notion of voicing animals became less anthropocentric and more focused on the animals. Locke's philosophy still prevailed, but the debate on animal cruelty was more centred on the animals, and it also attained more focus in the Victorian Era.

Amy Ratelle (2015, pp. 21-25) argues that children's literature was an important medium in the fight against animal cruelty. She affirms that a lot of children's literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth century anthropomorphised animals as a means of giving them a voice. The notion that the animals cannot speak, and that they do not have anyone to speak up for them, resulted in the idea of animal advocacy. This implies that humans need to take on the voice of the animal and speak up on their behalf, and in a literary form, this was done through anthropomorphism.

The genre that perhaps most explicitly did this, was the animal autobiography. Cosslett (2006, p. 63) declares the animal autobiography as one of the most widespread genres of animal literature, and she states that most of these stories were written for children. The animal autobiography is simply a story that is written in first person through the animal's point of view. As with the fables, it was believed that the child excused the anthropomorphic device which allowed the animals to speak and think. As the first-person point of view gives access to the animals' thoughts, it was believed that children would gain sympathy for the animal, resulting in moral growth, and a benevolence towards animals.

Nonetheless, the notion of animal advocacy, both in the animal autobiography and in other literary works, were often based on domesticated animals and other animals that in one way or another was useful for humans. However much the use of animals intended to function as an advocacy for the animals, the anthropocentrism still prevailed (Cosslett, 2006, pp. 72-74). Although *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is not an animal autobiography in any way, and despite the novel's protagonist being a human, the notion of animal advocacy in

children's literature in the nineteenth century postulates the officialdom of Victorian children's literature.

Not only in literature did the debate on animal welfare flourish. In the book *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* (2005), Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman has collected essays from several contributors who collectively aim to find how and why humans think with and through animals. Paul White, one of the contributors, explores in the chapter "The Experimental Animal in Victorian Britain" (2005), some of the different animals that inhabited Victorian Britain, noting that the number was at its highest during this Era. Zoos and menageries became more and more popular and were available to the majority of middle- and upper-class citizens, as was the case with pet ownership. Also, the experimental animal, i.e. the animals used in experiments for research purposes, were a big part of the Victorian Era. One of the most heavily debated uses of animals in research experiments was vivisection. Lewis Carroll himself, or rather the private person of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, was an animal right activist and he was heavily engaged in the debate against vivisection (Collingswood, 1898/2004, chapter IV). While this thesis does not intend to analyse or discuss any of the three poems in relation to his personal involvement in the fight against animal cruelty or the use of vivisection, it does highlight and situate the officialdom and circumstances in which *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was written. It also clarifies that Lewis Carroll as a writer was engaged in this specific aspect of the officialdom of Victorian Britain. Hence, as children's literature was particularly interested in instilling moral lessons based on the writer's own personal beliefs and investments, it becomes noteworthy to establish that Lewis Carroll was equally engaged in the officialdom.

In the case of pet ownership, it was mostly limited to upper-class citizens prior to the nineteenth century, but throughout the nineteenth century, it became a common phenomenon among the middle-class citizens as well (White, 2005, p. 59). The manners in which the more 'exotic' animals in zoos and menageries were anthropomorphised differed from that of the domesticated animals, and especially those who are usually kept as pets. James Serpell (2005) states that the "human-pet relationship are unique because they are based primarily on the transfer or exchange of social rather than economic or utilitarian provisions between people and animals" (p. 131). The role of the pet appears to function as social support for humans, and this is only possible through anthropomorphism. Serpell (pp. 127-128) notes that human's relationship with their pet functions as an emotional, social and physical enrichment, and it is the use of anthropomorphism that allows humans to benefit from having a pet. It is the attribution of human emotions, e.g. love, understanding and admiration, that allows humans to

experience social support from their pets. Alice actually serves as an example of this through the way she talks about her pet cat Dinah, “‘Dinah’ll miss me very much to-night, I should think!’ (Dinah was the cat.)” (Carroll, 2009, p. 11). Anew, this part of the novel is not directly linked to any of the poems, but it situates Alice as part of the officialdom, and the way she talks about her pets keeps her in line with the manner in which pets were characterised in Victorian Britain.

However, none of the two poems with animal characters that comprise the materials for this thesis contain animals that are usually considered domesticated; the Crocodile, the Lobster, the Panther and the Owl are not usually kept as pets. At least crocodiles and panthers are animals that belonged to zoos and menageries. Sofia Åkerberg (2001) notes that animals in the zoological gardens were “not seen as animals by the Victorian public but as symbols and signs of imperialism and commodities” (p. 18). Åkerberg further states that the relationship between humans and animals cannot be denied as an indication of the superiority that humans believe they have over other animals. This belief is highly seeming in the zoological gardens in the nineteenth century, as it clearly demonstrates the power of humans over animals through the caging and captivation of animals (pp. 18-19). This was the only experience that the Victorian public had with these exotic animals, and they thus became the opposition to the domesticated pets.

These paragraphs have touched on the view on animals that arose in the Victorian Era. The domesticated pets, the exotic animals in zoos and menageries and the experimental animal demonstrate the official view on the animals in this period. This will be discussed in the analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile” and “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” as these poems have anthropomorphised animal characters. Nonetheless, the following will move back to children’s literature and some of the hierarchical ideas that existed in the officialdom, starting with animal characters.

One of the features that Cosslett (2006) explores is the hierarchy between the characters of the stories. She maintains that it is one of the central features of eighteenth and nineteenth-century animal stories, and that it frequently functions as an analogy of the social hierarchy of that time. She echoes Margaret Gatty, who’s utterance rather bluntly expresses the hierarchical ideas of the time: “Animals under man – servant under masters – children under parents – wives under husbands – men under authorities – nations under rulers – all under God” (Gatty, 1907, as cited in Cosslett, 2006, p. 2). On that note, anthropomorphised animals in children’s literature postulate a noteworthy perspective on the hierarchical ideas, as the perspective is from someone ‘lower’ down the hierarchy, that being children and animals.

This perspective allows loyal or suffering animals to appear 'higher' on the hierarchical ladder than, say, the man who causes the animal the pain and suffering. Hence, the idea of the carnivalesque becomes applicable, as the hierarchies are subverted (Cosslett, 2006, pp. 2-3).

This can be linked to Bakhtin (1963/1984a) and his assessment of decrowning. Following Cosslett's notion that children's literature containing anthropomorphism subverts the hierarchical order, one can affirm that the abusive man is decrowned and the child or the anthropomorphised animal becomes the decrowning double, i.e. they take the hierarchical position of the man. Notwithstanding, this does not automatically apply to the perspective of mocking and the humorous elements that Bakhtin declares are important parts of the carnivalesque and of decrowning, and a truly Bakhtinian decrowning is therefore dependent on some sort of mockery or laughing aspect (1963/1984a, pp. 124-125). This will not be discussed in more detail here, but it simply highlights the humorous and laughing aspect that is required in a Bakhtinian carnivalesque reading.

What the following section will, in fact, do, is to discuss some of the carnivalesque elements that arise through such subversions of hierarchical structures. In dialogue with Tess Cosslett (2006), this paragraph will put forward the way of reading the theory of the carnivalesque that will be used in relation to the poems from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Cosslett (p. 37) notes that children's literature that contain anthropomorphised animals in which the moral education and animal advocacy are important aspects, are actually involuntarily carnivalesque. This is argued through the notion of the carnivalesque hierarchical subversion that was discussed above, but also in the sense that the natural historical facts attained focus in the nineteenth century, and thus the use of anthropomorphism subverts the focus on the correctness of the natural historical facts. Cosslett (2006, p. 49) further relates this to stories that are more overtly carnivalesque, and she notes that animal stories for children that draw on carnivalesque traditions are set in a fantastic and comic world which only exists within the literary work. This implies that the anthropomorphised animals in these stories exist within the space of the story, a space that does not necessarily need to follow the hierarchical ideas of the time. Cosslett states that this, in fact, results in stories "that label themselves as carnivalesque are more affirmative of hierarchy" (2006, p. 49). This argument by Cosslett assesses the notion that the subversion of hierarchical structures and the carnivalistic act of decrowning are, actually, affirmative of hierarchies. The act of decrowning is based on the officialdom of the culture outside the carnival, which implies that decrowning is dependent on the hierarchy of the official culture, of which it is a subversion.

Lastly in this section of the theoretical chapter, some of the hierarchical positions that existed in Victorian Britain will be touched upon, especially linked to Christianity and the position of the church. “You Are Old, Father William”, which is the last poem that will be analysed in this thesis does not have any animal characters, which means that the previous rendition of animals in children’s literature and in the officialdom overall will not be applicable to that poem.

Gatty’s statement of hierarchy which was presented above ends with “All under God”, and this implies that religion held a prominent position in the officialdom of the Victorian Era. Carol Engelhardt Herringer (2008, p. 27) states that around 50 percent of the population in this period were weekly church-goers and that an even higher number were frequent readers of religious texts. While it will not be fruitful in this thesis to engage in a detailed exploration of the history of religion and Christianity in the Victorian Era, it is useful to note that the majority of the Victorian population were religious and that the role of the church was closely linked to the educational system in this period (Chapman, 2013, p. 422).

This concurs with Robson’s (2012) findings, as she asserts that religion and Christianity held a significant position in the educational practices of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. She also notes that religion was not the sole purpose of education in these centuries, as “various secularizing forces came into play in the later eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries in Britain and the United States”, but still, the fundamental religious and Christian mission “cannot be overstated [...] religious, or at the very least, moral, imperatives were for a very long period a tremendous driving force behind and within mass education” (p. 42). This means that, alongside the moral lessons of children’s literature, the religious messages were almost equally important to the texts read by children in the Victorian Era, at least in the texts read in the classroom.

This section on the officialdom of Victorian Britain has put forward some of the notions and aspects of the official culture in which *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* was written. The focus has been on children’s literature and the educational system that prevailed in this period which are regarded as essential in order to analyse the way in which the three poems are in dialogue with the officialdom.

3.2. Parody

In this section on parody, the aim is to offer an understanding of the nature of written parody, and perhaps most importantly, understand parody as part of the carnivalesque tradition, as put

forward by Bakhtin (1963/1984a; 1965/1984b). In order to understand how Bakhtin assesses parody as part of the carnivalesque, it is necessary to examine how other scholars have developed parody as a literary form. As will be evident in the following section, parody has been accounted for in many different ways, and by understanding some of these expositions, it will be easier to grasp the status of parody in Bakhtin's assessment of the carnivalesque. Bakhtin offers a subversive account of parody which emerges from the carnivals and medieval folk humour. This characterisation of parody differs from that of other scholars, and understanding these differences will, indeed, clarify the nature of carnivalesque parody.

Thus, the initial section will briefly touch upon some of the different kinds of written parody, and look at some of its characteristics. Thereafter follows a probe into the way in which parody has been assessed by Bakhtin, which forms what can be labelled 'carnivalesque parody'.

3.2.1. Theory of parody

In 2000, Simon Dentith published a comprehensive introductory guide to parody, appropriately titled *Parody*. This section will start off by exploring some of his thoughts concerning parody, as his aim is to present the different ways in which parody have previously been explained. Dentith asserts that the term 'parody' offers some challenging notions in the attempt to provide a definition. He introduces his book by looking at how parody can function in oral communication, before asserting that his account of parody will mostly be related to its written form. Similarly, this thesis investigates parody as a written form of communication, and therefore, the term 'parody' will from now on be concerned with written form of communication. Despite the challenges of defining parody, Dentith ends up with a preliminary definition of the term, which he notes is a wide and inclusive one: "Parody includes any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice" (2000, p. 9). His aim for this definition is to make it as broad as possible, as so to encompass all the different aspects that have been discussed by other scholars in relation to parody. Some of the noteworthy aspects of this definition include the word 'imitation', which is central to parody, and points to the fact that parody is inherently dependent on someone or something it can model. However, simply imitating someone or something is not the same as parody, hence the word 'polemical', which refers to the ways in which parody is often written in a contentious mode. Dentith further clarifies that the degree of ruthlessness and brutality in parody vary, which is reflected in the word 'relatively' (p. 9), and this is something that will be evident later when discussing Bakhtin's

notion of parody in relation to the carnivalesque. Also, Dentith's use of the word 'cultural' is worthy of mention, as it points to the importance of being familiar with the specific cultural practices that are being imitated. Parody is unattainable if one does not understand the cultural practice that is being parodied. This will also be further addressed in Bakhtin's rendition of the carnivalesque parody.

In an attempt to understand parody, it can be fruitful to draw a line between the word 'imitation' and the term 'intertextuality'. Dentith (2000) affirms that intertextuality "can be characterised initially as the interrelatedness of writing, the fact that all written utterances – texts – situate themselves in relation to texts that precede them, and are in turn alluded to or repudiated by texts that follow" (pp. 4-5). The ways in which different kinds of intertextual allusions are used in parodies can in turn provide an understanding of the different kinds of parodies. The use of intertextuality in parody vary from texts that clearly and deliberately allude to another text, to texts that have a more general allusion, such as integrated norms in society, language, e.g. dialects and sociolects, or a genre. The former type of parody is labelled by Dentith (2000, p. 7) as 'specific parody', whereas the latter is 'general parody'. He actually exemplifies specific parody with one of the poems that will be analysed in this thesis, namely "How Doth the Little Crocodile". As previously touched upon, two of the poems that comprise the material in this thesis are parodies of poems by Isaac Watts, whereas the last is a parody of a poem by Robert Southey. Although the titles of Watts' and Southey's poems are not mentioned in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, they are referred to by the first words of the The fact that these poems allude so deliberately to the poems of which they are parodies, make them clearly fit into the category 'specific parody'.

However, the characterisations between specific and general parody merely provide grounds for what the parodies allude to; that is, the relationship between the two texts. Another distinction can be made between the different modes of intertextuality, i.e. the manner in which the parody has transformed the text of which it is a parody. This has been most famously accounted for by the French literary theorist Gerrard Genette in his work *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1982/1997). In this work, one of his aims is to provide a more narrow definition of parody and differentiate between the cultural forms of parody, travesty, pastiche, caricature, transposition and forgery. Genette (1982/1997, p. 24) asserts that the term 'parody' posits a challenging and even "onerous" confusion, as it covers such a wide range of different literal functions. He claims that it would be more favourable to distinguish between the different kinds of parody, which he does through the use of charts. He differentiates the types of parody by looking at their function, i.e. whether or not they are

satirical, and their relation, i.e. whether they transform the hypotext through imitation or transformation. He does not use the word ‘parody’ as an umbrella-term for the different terms, he rather carefully distinguishes parody from the other forms. Thus, he ends up with a chart that concludes parody to be a non-satirical textual transformation, whereas pastiche is a non-satirical imitation. Travesty is a satirical transformation, whereas caricature is a satirical imitation (Genette, 1982/1997, p. 27). The difference between transformation and imitation can be linked to that of specific parody and general parody, as presented above.

Transformation is, then, somewhat similar to specific parody, whereas imitation is more closely related to general parody.

Going back to Dentith’s (2000, pp. 12-13) introductory guide on parody, he again uses one of the poems that will be investigated in this thesis, i.e. “You Are Old, Father William”, to illustrate a parody in Genette’s terms. Based on Genette’s review of these different, but closely linked forms, the three poems that comprise the material for this thesis can be labelled ‘parodies’, as they transform the hypotexts in a playful and humorous manner. One can, however, note that it is possible to detect somewhat of a critical objective in Carroll’s poems towards the moralisation that can be found in the hypotexts, but that discussion will not be reviewed here. Instead, a few comments on how Carroll’s poems can be read as a critique will be presented in some of the analyses. Equally, Genette’s display of the different forms of parody will not be discussed further here, but the reason for situating Carroll’s poems in relation to Genette’s account of parody is to show how one can look at the way in which the hypertext has transformed or imitated the hypotext in an attempt to define the different types of parody. It can be noted here that this thesis will not differentiate between these different kinds of parody, but it demonstrates how the dialogue between the hypertext and the hypotext can be used to identify certain types of parody. This is important because Bakhtin also assesses the carnivalesque parody by looking at intertextuality, although he applies the terms ‘dialogue’ and ‘dialogicity’, as opposed to intertextuality. This will be further explored in section 3.2.2.

Before Bakhtin’s assessment of parody and his notion of carnivalesque parody will be accounted for, this section will lastly touch on one of the aspects on parody as put forward by Linda Hutcheon. Her work *A Theory of Parody: The Teaching of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (2000) puts forward the claim that parody, particularly that of the twentieth century, is not necessarily polemical, and that the parodied text should be seen as a model, rather than a target (p. 103). This will not be dwelled on too much here, but one of her arguments is that a great deal of parody in the twentieth century is “repetition with difference” (p. 101), an

argument that can be linked to Bakhtin's account of parody. As will be shown in the next section, Bakhtin dismissed modern parody, claiming it has a truly negative character (1965/1984b, p. 21), and Hutcheon argues that a lot of parody in the twentieth century resemble the carnivalesque parody, as they do not bring forth the polemical intentions of earlier parodic traditions.

3.2.2. Carnavalesque parody

Bakhtin's discussion of parody as part of the carnivalesque tradition can be found both in *Rabelais and His World* (1965/1984b) and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1963/1984a). Yet, Dentith (2000, p. 22) notes that Bakhtin's rendition of parody cannot be regarded as a theory of parody, as he does not attempt to theorise parody, he rather aims to establish parody as a cultural form in the carnival tradition. This emerges from the notion that parody is based on the distinctive circumstances of the official culture, meaning that the parody is set against the officialdom. This is fitting with Dentith's definition of parody in the preceding section, but it also poses some aspects that needs to be noted. First, when looking at Dentith's definition, it states that parody includes "a *relatively* polemical allusive imitation of another culture" (2000, p. 9, emphasis added). As Dentith comments on his definition, he includes the word 'relatively' precisely because not all parody is written in an attacking manner. In Bakhtin's review of parody in the carnival tradition, parody is not primarily used as a means of attacking the official culture. As Bakhtin's representation of the carnival tradition is based on medieval folk humour, he notes that parody from this period is unique in its form and differs from modern literary parody, which Bakhtin claims has a "solely negative character and is deprived of regenerating ambivalence" (1965/1984b, p. 21). 'Ambivalence' is an important word here, and to Bakhtin, it is necessary in his rendition of parody. In the carnivalesque, ambivalence is "the combination in one discourse of praise and abuse, of the serious and the comic" (1963/1984a, p. 120). In Bakhtin's view, the dialogue becomes essential here, as ambivalence relies on the dialogue between the parody and that of which is it a parody. The carnivalesque parody is a dialogue between the parody and the officialdom, and because the carnival exists within the officialdom, not as something negative, but rather something positive, the carnivalesque parody then becomes what Hutcheon (2000) calls "the paradox of its authorized transgression of norms" (p. 74). Hutcheon claims this is a fundamental concept of parody as a whole, but here, it will be discussed in relation to the carnivalesque parody. Although this term is put forward by Hutcheon not as something

carnavalesque per se, it is deemed useful here, as it postulates an important aspect of the carnivalesque, namely that the carnivalesque parody is in constant dialogue with officialdom, and that it does not produce a solely negative character, and it does, in fact, regenerate ambivalence.

Moving on, another aspect of the carnivalesque parody that needs to be addressed is grotesque realism. As touched upon in the section on Bakhtin's account of the carnivalesque, grotesque realism is the exaggerated representation of the material bodily principle, i.e. the representation of food, sex, defecation and the body. Also, degradation is an important element of grotesque realism, which implies bringing the abstract down to the material level. Thus, the degradation that is involved in medieval parody is what, according to Bakhtin, makes parody different in the carnivalesque tradition. As degradation is strictly topographical, i.e. 'up' and 'down', it therefore entails to take the abstract and spiritual down to the material level, often through the use of grotesque realism. In medieval parody, this would often be related to sacred, religious texts, such as extracts from the Bible or the Gospels (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 14). Applying this to the Victorian Britain, then, these sacred texts can be linked to the poems that were expected to be memorised in the classroom, and abstract notions can be seen as the moral lessons that were so deeply imbedded in contemporary children's literature. On that note, the carnivalesque parody, as put forward by Bakhtin, will be applicable to the three poems that will be analysed in this thesis.

Moreover, in the discussion on the carnivalesque parody, the second form of folk culture humour that Bakhtin presents, i.e. the 'comic verbal compositions', needs to be further expanded on. In the section on the carnivalesque, it was noted that this form of folk humour is mainly linked to parodies, both oral, in Latin, and in the vernacular. Parodies have a carnivalesque character, according to Bakhtin, as the comic aspect is often a result of a subversion of the official culture. He maintains that parodies have several similarities to the carnival, e.g. where monks, hierarchs or scholars could take on a more joyful and less serious role. An example given by Bakhtin on such a parody is "Monkish Pranks", which he declares as one of the more popular parodies of the medieval times (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 13). Additionally, Bakhtin notes that parodies of sacred works were frequent in the folk culture of humour, that being religious works, such as prayers, funeral orations or hymns, as well as other serious texts, such as council degrees and wills (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 14). Again, this emphasises that carnivalised parodies are often parodies of texts that have abstract elements and have a serious and sacred position in the official culture. In the Victorian Era, the overtly moralistic poems that were expected to be memorised in school are examples of

these kinds of official texts. Moreover, the poem “You Are Old, Father William” presents an example of the way in which someone who represents an official and serious role in this period, has been the subject of a parody.

These paragraphs will expand on the notion of the decrowning double, as briefly touched upon earlier. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin notes that parody is a fundamental part of the carnivalised genres. In the medieval carnival, parody was widely used and was “like an entire system of crooked mirrors” (1965/1984a, p. 127). Here, Bakhtin asserts that the carnival is full of parodies, and that carnival often constituted pairs that parodied each other to various degrees, which he labels ‘parodying doubles’. This parodying double, or the ‘decrowning double’, is, according to Bakhtin, a common phenomenon in carnivalised literature. This carnivalesque act is labelled ‘mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king’, which suggests that the creation of a decrowning double is dependent on someone being decrowned, which again relies on dialogue and ambivalence.

Ambivalence, which is the dialogue between the serious and comic, allows for the creation of a decrowning double. The one who is decrowned represents the serious officialdom whereas the decrowning double becomes the comic aspect of the carnivalesque. The comic and humorous aspect of the decrowning double is generated through the laughing aspect and becomes a mocking of the one who is decrowned. Hence, it relies on the dialogue between the one who is decrowned and the decrowning double, again emphasising the importance of dialogue in carnivalesque parody. Anew, this is related to the subversion that exists within the carnival and in the notion of the carnivalesque, and Bakhtin affirms that “[p]arodying is the creation of a *decrowning double*; it is that same ‘world turned inside out’” (1963/1984a, p. 127).

The theoretical chapter will end with a further emphasis on dialogue, and particularly the importance of dialogue in relation to carnivalesque parody. The significance of dialogue in the carnivalesque has already been accounted for, but here it will be directly linked to Bakhtin’s evaluation of parody.

Lars Kleberg (1991) discusses how Bakhtin sees parody as a dialogue between one text and another, and notes that parody is dialogical, as opposed to polemical and critical. Kleberg (pp. 98-99) states that Bakhtin’s assessment of parody rejects the possibility of it being monological, i.e. it cannot stand on its own. Instead, parody is double-voiced, it is in constant dialogue with the text of which it is a parody. More importantly, the parody is not only in dialogue with the *text* of which it is a parody, but also the officialdom of a specific culture or period. In the case of the poems in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, it is rather

obvious that the poems are in dialogue with the poems they are parodying, hence the previous labelling of the poems as ‘specific parodies’. But this thesis also aims to argue that the poems are in dialogue with the officialdom of Victorian Britain and the officialdom of contemporary children’s literature.

Kleberg (1991, p. 98) presents a quote from Bakhtin, in which Bakhtin assesses the importance of knowing the context or the text that is mirrored in the parody. This quote is equally fitting for the purpose of this thesis, as it highlights an important aspect of this thesis, and it will in turn provide an understanding of the importance of situating the officialdom of Victorian Britain and children’s literature.

Except in those cases where it is grossly apparent, the presence of parody is in general very difficult to identify (that is, difficult to identify precisely in literary prose, where it rarely is gross), without knowing the background of alien discourse against which it is projected, that is, without knowing its second context. In world literature there are probably many works whose parodic nature has not even been suspected. In world literature in general there are probably very few words that are uttered unconditionally, purely single-voiced (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 374).

This quote from Bakhtin expresses the importance of knowing the context with which the parody is in dialogue. Bakhtin also comments on the difficulty of identifying parody, except in cases where it appears rather clearly. The fact that Carroll’s poems allude so deliberately to the poems of which they are parodies might suggest that the quote above is not applicable in this thesis. However, as stated the poems that are parodied by Carroll are not known to the majority of the modern reader of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. This means that, although Carroll’s poems are specific parodies, the texts they parody are not ‘grossly apparent’, and by that, it becomes important to establish the parodied texts.

4. Analyses of poems

In this chapter, the three poems that are recited by Alice in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* will be analysed in relation to Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque with a particular focus on carnivalesque parody. This chapter is structured by poems, meaning that one poem will be dealt with, before moving on to the next poem. In the novel, "How Doth the Little Crocodile" is the first poem to be recited by Alice, which is followed by "You Are Old, Father William". The last poem Alice recites is "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster". This chapter will not follow the same order as they appear in the novel. The first analysis will be of "How Doth the Little Crocodile", whereas the second will be of "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster". This will be done because these two poems contain animal characters, and will therefore include some analytical aspects that will not be found in the analysis of the last poem, "You Are Old, Father William".

Each analysis will start by exploring the parodied text and relate it to the officialdom of Victorian Britain, herein looking at the way it follows the official culture of children's literature, its relevance to the officialdom of the educational system. Following that, the parodies that are found in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* will be analysed in relation to the aspects of Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque and of the carnivalesque parody that have been presented in the theoretical chapter of this thesis. To repeat, the purpose here is not to conclude whether or not these poems can be labelled 'carnavalesque', it is rather to examine some of the carnivalesque elements that can be found in the poems. The aim is to encourage more research on this field, and this will be further elaborated on in the conclusion chapter.

The reading of the poems will largely be based on the poems as individual pieces of works. This means that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as a novel will not be included in the analyses to a great extent. Nonetheless, the poems cannot be completely removed from the context in which they appear. This means that the sections of the novel that occur before, during, and after the poems are recited will be included, as they posit central arguments to the analyses and the discussion.

Moreover, in the process of reading, the hypertext and hypotext have been analysed comparatively in the attempt to consider the differences and similarities between them. These comparative analyses inspect the ways in which the hypertext is in dialogue with the hypotext which allows for a discussion on the carnivalesque elements that arise in the parody. Notwithstanding, the poems that are recited by Alice have also been analysed and discussed in comparison to the officialdom of Victorian Britain and of Bakhtin's assessment of the

carnavalesque. Also, some of the findings from each analysis will be compared to each other, and particularly the findings related to the use of animals in the first two analyses. This is to avoid repetition and to highlight the different ways in which the carnivalesque elements function in the poems. In addition, some of the findings from the analyses of the first two poems will be discussed in comparison to the last poem in order to call attention to the opposing aspect of the parodies.

4.1. Analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile”

In the second chapter of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, which is titled “The Pool of Tears”, Alice has started growing taller after drinking from the little bottle she had previously found with the label “DRINK ME!”. This bewilders Alice who, as a result, starts repeating some of the things she has learned in school, such as the multiplication-table and Geography. Unsuccessful at that, she utters “I’ll try and say ‘*How Doth the Little—*’” (Carroll, 2009, p. 19). This situates the classroom-like situation of the officialdom in which she is familiar with the poem, and this is further emphasised as the narrator notes “and she crossed her hands on her lap, *as if she were saying lessons*” (p. 19, emphasis added).

In this situation, Alice is by herself and her recitation of the poem is without any listeners. This implies that there is no-one around to make a remark on her attempt or to comment on the manner in which she performs the poem. Still, her posture is similar to that which was expected in the recitation of poems in officialdom, and this highlights the focus that memorisation and repetition of poems attained in the officialdom. Also, before Alice starts to recite the poem, the narrator notes that “her voice sounded hoarse and strange” (Carroll, 2009, p. 19), which calls attention to the expectations of reading aloud in the classroom or to the teacher in a clear and distinct manner.

Alice herself declares that she will attempt to recite “How Doth the Little—”, which are the first words of Isaac Watts’ poem “Against Idleness and Mischief”. Below, the both Carroll and Watts’ poems are cited in full.

Lewis Carroll “How Doth the Little Crocodile”

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!

(Carroll, 2009, p. 19)

Isaac Watts “Against Idleness and Mischief”

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads the wax!
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labour or of skill
I would be busy too:
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play
Let my first years be passed,
That I may give for every day
Some good account at last.

(Watts, 1715/2004, song 20)

As the title of the hypotext, “Against Idleness and Mischief”, indicates, the moral of the poem suggests that one should not take part in idleness and mischief, and the last two stanzas of the poem further emphasise this moral lesson. The first two stanzas of the poem depict a bee and describe its diligent nature, making it the symbol of the industrious, and the last two stanzas relate the hard-working nature of the bee to human behaviour. The portrayal of the Bee in the first two stanzas, and the explicit moral lesson in the two last stanzas keep the poem in a Lockean tradition, as the animal was believed to delight the child reader, and more effectively instil moral lessons. In accordance with Lockean philosophy, the bee as a symbol of dedication and hard work, may be regarded as a “plaything”, i.e. a supporting element in the poem used to engage the child reader in play and instruction.

Nevertheless, the Bee in Watts’ poem cannot be defined as anthropomorphised. The Bee has not been given human attributes, its work has merely been described and portrayed by the author. The depiction of the animal manifests the narrator’s outside view of the Bee,

and the manners in which it operates. The lines that display the actions of the bee, e.g. “gather honey all the day”, is in line with its natural activities, and the adverbs “skilfully” and “neat” merely present how the work of the Bee is perceived from a human point of view. As the last two stanzas of the poem are related to humans, one can indisputably confirm that the poem does not use anthropomorphism as a literary device.

In contrast to the hypotext, “How Doth the Little Crocodile” only has two stanzas, that being the two stanzas that depict the animal, in this case the Crocodile. The stanzas that explicitly attempt to instil a moral lesson are excluded in the hypertext, resulting in the poem solely being a characterisation of the Crocodile. Initially, this analysis will look at the carnivalesque elements that arise through the exclusion of the last two stanzas that are part of Watts’ poem. It will, in the following, be argued that the exclusion can, in itself, be related to the carnivalesque. Furthermore, the following will put forward the idea that the exclusion of the stanzas influences the presentation and description of the Crocodile and thus adds carnivalesque features to Carroll’s poems.

As stated, the two last stanzas in the Watts’ poem aim to present an explicit moral lesson, and also a religious message. In children’s literature, clearly stating the moral lesson follows a Lockean tradition, and it further shadows an Aesopic tradition. Aesopica relates to the transmissions and translations of Aesop’s fables, and despite the hypotext of this analysis is not a fable, the tradition of this genre is apparent in the last two stanzas. Although the word ‘moral’ is not used, as it typically is in fables, the two first stanzas differ so drastically from the last two, that the moral explicitness of the hypotext becomes quite evident. Locke mentioned Aesop as the ideal literary work for children, and one of the reasons was the explicit moral lesson it aimed to instil. It can therefore be said that Watts’ poem follows a Lockean tradition, and is situated in the officialdom of children’s literature in Victorian Britain.

Moreover, the children in the Victorian school system were expected to memorise poems, and Watts’ poem was, as previously affirmed, used for this purpose. This places Watts’ poem as part of the serious literature of the officialdom of Victorian school system, and because of that, the poem can be seen as a sacred text in this period. As seen in Bakhtin’s review of the tradition of folk humour, the ‘comic verbal compositions’, which mostly comprised carnivalesque parodies, were usually parodies of texts that were sacred. Sacred does not strictly relate to the spiritual or the holy in this case, but rather to texts that have a serious and official character. The abstract elements of the sacred texts are degraded in the carnivalised parodies, and in Carroll’s parody, the abstract element of the moral is left out.

Hence, the exclusion of the moral becomes a degrading of the abstract, and this is in line with carnivalesque parody.

As well, the moral is not the only abstract element that is excluded from the last two stanzas of Watts' poem. In addition to providing a moral lesson, these stanzas contain a religious message as well. The religious warning that Satan will punish the lazy and the idle, which is expressed in the third stanza, also mirrors the seriousness of the officialdom. Again, leaving out these messages create a subversion of the officialdom, thus creating carnivalesque elements.

Additionally, in the hypotext, the moral lesson of the poem is expressed in the title, whereas the hypertext does not really contain a title. Before reciting the poem, Alice says that she will “try and say ‘*How doth the little—*’” (Carroll, 2009, p. 19), which is the first words in the first line of both the Carroll's poem and Watts' poem. In the parody, the exclusion of the title already implies that the moral lesson is not the purpose of the poem, as the title of the parodied text is excluded. Concludingly, it can be argued that the exclusion of the last stanzas and of the title, which both offers moralistic lessons, has created an element of degradation, as the abstract moral lesson has been left out.

Regardless, this calls for a brief further discussion, as it might appear that this conclusion contradicts the element of dialogue that is essential in the carnivalesque parody. As the moral stanzas of the hypotext are not included in Carroll's parody, it can be argued that this dismisses the dialogue with officialdom. By that argument, it will be impossible to be in dialogue with something that has been excluded, as it is evidently no longer there. However, this poem by Carroll has previously been labelled a 'specific parody', and this was argued by the explicit references to the hypotext that can be seen prior to Alice's failed recitation. Bakhtin also claims that parody is difficult to identify without knowing the background of which it is projected (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 374), and precisely for this reason, the background, i.e. the officialdom of children's literature and the educational system in Victorian Britain, have been accounted for in this thesis. The enquiry into the use of rote memorisation manifested that it was a common didactical approach used in the classroom, and prior to Alice's failed recitation, a classroom-like situation is situated: “and she crossed her hands on her hands on her lap, as if she were saying lessons, and began to repeat it [the poem]” (Carroll 2009, p. 19). This means that, although the last stanzas and the title are not found in the hypertext, the officialdom has been established before the poem, meaning that Carroll's poem is set in dialogue with officialdom. Therefore, because the officialdom was established prior to the parody, the exclusion of the last stanzas is in dialogue with

officialdom, and the element of degradation still holds. Let the following further look at the dialogue between Carroll's poem and the officialdom.

As noted, the narrator of the poem establishes the officialdom of the memorised poem through the depiction of Alice's posture. Linda Hutcheon (2000) rather aptly states the importance of knowing the officialdom when exploring the carnivalesque: "The second life of the carnival has meaning, only in relation to the official first life" (p. 74). Also, the temporality of the carnivalesque is of significance here. Once Alice starts to recite the poem, the officialdom is subverted, but immediately after the poem ends, the novel continues: "'I'm sure those are not the right words,' said poor Alice, and her eyes filled with tears again as she went on" (Carroll, 2009, p. 19), which then brings Alice and the reader back into the officialdom. As the carnivalesque only occurs within a given period before the seriousness of officialdom again takes over, it appears that the poem functions as carnivalesque pause between Alice's worries of officialdom. This argument does not intend to suggest that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is, apart from the poem, situated in the officialdom of Victorian Britain. As this thesis merely analyses the three poems, it does not attempt to conclude anything related to the rest of the novel. What it, however, aims to suggest is that the way in which the officialdom is situated before and after the poem, can help to call the reader's attention to the topsy-turvy world of the carnival.

It is, on the other hand, worth noting that merely excluding the moral lesson of the poem and situating it in dialogue with officialdom, do not make it carnivalesque. Bakhtin asserts that other aspects, such as laughter, grotesque realism and decrowning, are key to the carnivalesque, and below, an investigation of how the poem has included these carnivalesque elements will be done.

The portrayal of the Bee in the first two stanzas of Watts' poem is revolved around its industriousness, and its ability to make honey. He mentions here the food that is made by the Bee, and it is described in the poem as "sweet honey". Food is one of the aspects of the material bodily principle, as put forward by Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 18), but the notion of grotesque realism, which is central to the carnivalesque, is related to an exaggerating and grotesque depiction of food. Therefore, Watts' description of the "sweet honey" that is made by the Bee, cannot be related to the notion of grotesque realism. In Carroll's parody, on the other hand, the Crocodile is described as eating fish in an exceedingly more grotesque manner. The last two lines of the second stanza read "[a]nd welcomes little fishes in / With gently smiling jaws". Here, then, the part that is related to food and eating is portrayed in a grotesque manner which resembles that of grotesque realism. Also, in contrast to the Bee that

produces honey for others, the Crocodile feasts on another animal, and the depiction of the way in which the Crocodile eats fish, further emphasises the exaggerating aspect of grotesque realism. Let the following paragraphs elaborate on this.

The illustrating depiction of the Crocodile that “*welcomes* little fishes in / With *gently smiling* jaws” (emphases added) produces the effect of grotesque realism. The action of the Crocodile eating fish is not nonsensical, as it mirrors the nature of the animal, meaning that it is in line with an accurate natural setting. What creates the carnivalesque elements here, is the manner in which the fish are eaten; that is, the exaggerated and humoristic portrayal of the eating process. In Bakhtin’s assessment of the carnivalesque, the focus on the ambivalence and the dialogue between the parody and the parodied text is important. This implies that the carnivalesque parody cannot be completely nonsense, as it would not be in dialogue with the officialdom. Here, the word ‘nonsense’ is not related to the literary genre of nonsense, in which Carroll is considered a leading figure, but rather in the sense that it has no roots in the officialdom. Thus, creating something that would be considered nonsense will disallow it as carnivalesque, as it is not in dialogue with the officialdom.

Precisely this aspect of dialogue and ambivalence becomes important when exploring Carroll’s parody. His change from a bee, in Watts’ poem, to a crocodile allows him to be in dialogue with the officialdom of Victorian Britain. As touched upon in the section of the animals in Victorian Britain, the crocodile must be considered an ‘exotic’ animal, and was most likely displayed to the people in Victorian Britain through zoos and menageries. As noted, the number and variety of animals were probably at its greatest in this time, and the Victorian public regarded the animals in zoological gardens more like commodities and symbols of imperialism rather than animals. Also, the Crocodile itself has a set of connotations that distance it as an animal.

In his doctoral dissertation *Modern Dragons: The Crocodilian in the Western Mind*, James Reitter (2006) investigates the Western notion of the crocodilian, and how folktales, legends and fiction have shaped the Western imagination of these large predatory reptiles. He notes that crocodilians are perceived as inherently evil, particularly after the introduction of Christianity, and that Western literature and film have maintained this characterisation ever since (p. 3). According to Reitter, the human fascination towards crocodilians is largely due to their anatomical features. Animals such as tigers and lions are frequently linked to danger, but there are often some majestic elements in the way they are depicted, resulting in a more two-dimensional presentation of these animals. On the contrary, humans are not capable of identifying with crocodilians, and they therefore become an alienated Other, or an imagined

part of the Self, somewhat like an evil twin (pp. 1-2). Concludingly, the crocodilians have, with few exceptions, become the equivalent of evil and malicious, and literature has, at least throughout the twentieth century, reinforced this archetype.

Accordingly, the crocodile has almost been seen as the equivalent of evil. Consequently, it is reasonable to suggest that Carroll's depiction of the Crocodile as mischievous is in dialogue with the officialdom. But then the question arises; if the crocodile is depicted as evil in the officialdom of Victorian Britain, and is also as mischievous in Carroll's poem, where does the carnivalesque arise in his poem?

To answer this, one must go back to Bakhtin's explanation of the carnivalesque act of decrowning. Here, he assesses that a mock crowning, and the subsequent decrowning of the king is essential in the carnivalesque. Due to Carroll's exclusion of the two last stanzas, his poem solely becomes a description and portrayal of the Crocodile. Hence, there are no moral lessons in the parody, and the actions of the Crocodile have not resulted in any repercussions, meaning that the Crocodile is, in the end, the victor. As a result, the Crocodile becomes the king, i.e. it is mock crowned by Carroll, and the Bee in Watts' poem is decrowned. As Bakhtin (1963/1984a, p. 127) states, parodying is the creation of a decrowning double and represents the world turned upside-down, i.e. the topsy-turvy carnival world. Carnivalesque parody, then, is dependent on the creation of a decrowning double, and by seeing the Crocodile as the decrowning double, it might add to the carnivalesque elements that can be found in this poem.

Notwithstanding, the portrayal of the Crocodile can also be read in relation to the notion of animal advocacy that flourished in children's literature in the Victorian Era. This is related to the idea that the animals need someone to speak up for them which was done through anthropomorphism. It will not be argued here that Carroll engages in animal advocacy by giving the Crocodile a voice. However, the Crocodile, both through its connotations to evil, and the fact that it was an exotic animal to the Victorian population, it is not the type of animal that was used in animal advocacy. The view of the animals in zoological gardens as symbols of imperialism and commodities create a distance between humans and these animals. Carroll's depiction of the Crocodile as mischievous is in line with the official view of the crocodile, but he has still made a few noteworthy alterations.

Initially, he has situated the Crocodile in its natural habitat, "[a]nd pour the waters of *the Nile* / On every golden scale" (emphasis added). The notion of animal advocacy was largely related to animals that in some way or another benefitted humans and these animals were most frequently domesticated. Carroll's depiction of the Crocodile in its natural habitat,

and without any moral lessons or links to humans then becomes a subversion the officialdom of Victorian Britain. While it does not subvert the officialdom of the natural settings of the crocodile, it becomes subversive in relation to the role of the crocodile and other exotic animals in the Victorian Era.

Lastly in this analysis, the comic aspect and the aspect of laughter will be discussed in relation to “How Doth the Little Crocodile”. As touched upon in the theoretical chapter, laughter is an important part of the carnivalesque, and Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 123) asserts that through ambivalence, i.e. the discourse between the serious and the comic, laughter liberates the serious, and he mentions didacticism as one of these serious aspects. In “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, the almost grim portrayal of the crocodile that “cheerfully seems to grim” creates humoristic depiction that generates laughter and thus liberates the didactic intentions of the hypotext. The didactic approach of rote memorisation is liberated through the laughter that is generated by Carroll’s poem, and equally, the moral and educational intentions of the poem are liberated and purified. Again, the comic aspect and the laughter in Carroll’s poem does not deny the seriousness of the hypotext and of the didactic approach of rote memorisation. As previously argued, the portrayal of Alice in a classroom-like situation establishes the seriousness of officialdom in the Victorian school system, and the seriousness is not denied, it is actually highlighted. Hence, the laughter that is generated from Carroll’s poem is ambivalent and it liberates the seriousness through dialogue with officialdom.

4.2. Analysis of “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster”

The tenth chapter of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, which is titled “The Lobster-Quadrille”, comprises three poems, two of which are sung by the Mock Turtle, whereas the other is recited by Alice. Accompanied by the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, Alice learns about the Lobster-Quadrille and gets a demonstration of both the dance and the song by the two inhabitants of Wonderland. “The Lobster-Quadrille” is one of the two poems that it performed by the Mock Turtle, but despite it being sung in the novel, it will still be labelled a poem here, as it is a parody of a nineteenth-century poem. This particular poem will be key to parts of this analysis, and will therefore be further explored later. The other poem that is performed by the Mock Turtle is “Turtle Soup”, but this is performed after Alice’s recitation of “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” and will therefore not attain any focus here.

After the performance of “The Lobster-Quadrille”, the Gryphon is interested in Alice’s story, upon which Alice starts telling them about her day, beginning with her first view of the White Rabbit:

Her listeners were perfectly quiet till she got to the part about her repeating ‘*You are old, Father William,*’ to the Caterpillar, and the words all coming different, and then the Mock Turtle drew a long breath and said ‘That’s very curious!’

‘It’s all about as curious as it can be,’ said the Gryphon. (Carroll, 2009, p. 91)

This triggers the Gryphon and Mock Turtle’s curiosity, resulting in Alice’s attempt to recite yet another poem, which in this case is Isaac Watts’ poem “The Sluggard”, which in the novel is referred to as “’Tis the Voice of the Sluggard”. As Alice is about to begin, the narrator notes that her head was “so full of the Lobster-Quadrille, that she hardly knew what she was saying” (Carroll, 2009, p. 91).

Nevertheless, a few notes need to be made on the poem, as cited by Alice. First and foremost, it does not appear in one sequence in the novel. After the first stanza is recited by Alice, she is interrupted by the Gryphon, and thus there is a pause between the two stanzas that make up the poem. In this pause, the Gryphon and Mock Turtle question and comment Alice’s version of the poem, and the Mock Turtle expresses confusion, uttering that “[...]it sounds uncommon nonsense” (Carroll, 2009, p. 92), and demands an explanation. Though the pause in the middle of the stanzas is not part of the poem per se, it is directly linked to the poem, and will therefore be included in the analysis of the poem.

In addition to the fact that there is a pause between the two stanzas that Alice recites, the two stanzas come across as two different and unrelated poems. Whereas the first stanza depicts a lobster, the second stanza portrays a picnic between a panther and an owl. On that note, these two stanzas will be regarded as two separate texts in the following analysis, and it will be structured thereafter. But first, let the following cite both the hypotext and hypertext in full.

Lewis Carroll, “‘Tis the voice of the Lobster”

‘Tis the voice of the Lobster: I heard him declare
“You have baked me too brown, I must sugar my hair.”
As a duck with its eyelids, so he with his nose
Trims his belt and buttons, and turns out his toes.
When the sands are all dry, he is gay as a lark
And will talk in contemptuous tones of the Shark:
But, when the tide rises and sharks are around,
His voice has a timid and tremulous sound.

[...]

I passed by his garden, and marked, with one eye,
How the Owl and the Panther were sharing a pie:
The Panther took pie-crust, and gravy, and meat,
While the Owl had the dish as its share of the treat.
When the pie was all finished, the Owl, as a boon,
Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon:
While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl,
And concluded the banquet by—

(Carroll, 2009, pp. 91-93)

Isaac Watts, “The Sluggard”

‘Tis the voice of the Sluggard. I heard him complain
“You have waked me too soon! I must slumber again!”
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
Turns his sides, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

“A little more sleep, and a little more slumber;”
Thus he wastes half his days, and his hours without number:
And when he gets up, he sits folding his hands
Or walks about sauntering, or trifling he stands.

I past by his garden, and saw the wild bryar
The thorn and the thistle grow broader and higher:
The clothes that hang on him are turning to rags;
And his money still wastes, till he starves, or he begs.

I made him a visit, still hoping to find
He had took better care for improving his mind:
He told me his dreams, talk’d of eating and drinking,
But he scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking.

Said I then to my heart, “Here’s a lesson for me,”
That man’s but a picture of what I might be:
But thanks to my friends for their care in my breeding:
Who taught me betimes to love working and reading!”

(Watts, 1715/2004, *The Sluggard*)

Before each stanza will be looked at individually, there is an aspect that will be tackled which is applicable to both of the stanzas. This is linked to the exclusion of the moral lesson in Carroll’s poem, and also the characterisation of the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle before, between and after the poem is recited by Alice. As argued in the analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, the exclusion of the moral lesson can be seen as a carnivalesque element in itself. Here, it was argued how the exclusion of the stanzas that aim to instil moral lessons can be related to the carnivalesque through the element of degradation. Much of the same argument can be put forward in this parody, and it will therefore not be repeated here. Similar to that poem, “‘Tis the Voice of the Lobster” has not included the last stanza that is found in

Watts' poem. The last stanza of his poem provides an explicit moral lesson, which is often included in the officialdom of children's literature of the time.

Although the hypotext consists of five stanzas, and the hypertext only comprises two stanzas, each stanza in the Carroll's poem is twice as long as the stanzas in Watts' poem, resulting in the hypertext only being four lines shorter than the hypotext. The four lines that are not included in the Carroll's poem are indeed the ones that clearly express the moral lesson. Regardless, the moral lesson in Watts' poem is related to the entire poem, as his poem is one continuous poem. The reading of Carroll's poem as two different poems brings up the question of whether the exclusion of a moral lesson can be found in both of the stanzas or solely the second stanza. Despite this, the exclusion of the moral lesson from Watts' poem will here be related to both of the stanzas, regardless of whether they are read individually or together. The following will look more closely at how the poem is in dialogue with the officialdom of the Victorian school system, herein the moral lessons and the teacher-like characterisation of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon.

As previously touched upon, the analyses of the poems in this thesis will not merely look at the poems by themselves, but also explore the parts of the novel that occur before and after the poems. However, there are some elements in this poem that differs slightly from the previous analysis, and it is mostly related to the dialogue and narration the precedes, interrupts and follows the poem.

The initial difference is the fact that Alice recites this poem to someone else. In "How Doth the Little Crocodile", Alice recites the poem to herself, meaning that no one comments on her failed recitation other than herself. After Alice has tried to repeat both of the stanzas of "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster", the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon comment on her attempt. After the first stanza, the Gryphon notes "'That's different from what *I* used to say when I was a child'", and the Mock Turtle follows up with "it sounds uncommon nonsense" (Carroll, 2009, p. 92). After the second stanza, they also comment on Alice attempted recitation, and the Mock Turtle utters "[w]hat *is* the use of repeating all that stuff [...] if you don't explain it as you go on?" (Carroll, 2009, p. 93). In these instances, the Mock Turtle and Gryphon's remarks can be read as a comment on the lack of a moral lesson in the poem. The poem, which ultimately only serves as a tale of the Lobster, the Panther and the Owl, becomes meaningless in the minds of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon as there are no moral lessons to be learnt. In relation to the carnivalesque and the dialogue between officialdom and the carnival world, the Mock Turtle and Gryphon can be seen as the voice of officialdom, in this

case, the voice of the officialdom of children's literature and the Victorian school system. Thus, their comments rather clearly express the topsy-turvy aspect of Alice's recitation.

The fact that the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon make explicit comments on the poem that Alice recites, and that they reject her attempt, posits a point that needs to be addressed. In the section that put forward the criteria for the selection of the poems in this thesis, it was stated that one of the reasons for choosing the three poems is that they are all recited by Alice, who is the only character who belongs to the official culture of Victorian Britain. Now, the argument above that claimed that the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon function as the voice of Victorian officialdom may appear to contradict this criterion. Not only are the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon confused by Alice's recitation, they are also anthropomorphised almost as figures of authority. Prior to Alice's recitation of the second stanza, a classroom-like situation is established: "Go on with the next verse," the Gryphon repeated: "it begins '*I passed by his garden*'. Alice did not dare to disobey, though she felt sure it would all come wrong, and she went on in a trembling voice:—" (Carroll, 2009, p. 92). This may very well be read as something that could occur in the Victorian classroom, and the Gryphon can be read as the authority, in this case the teacher. This is perhaps even more clearly demonstrated before Alice's recitation of the first stanza. Here, Alice has just told the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon about her failed attempt to recite "You Are Old, Father William":

"It all came different!" The Mock Turtle repeated thoughtfully. "I should like to hear her try and repeat something now. Tell her to begin." He looked at the Gryphon as if he thought it had some kind of authority over Alice.

"Stand up and repeat 'Tis the Voice of the Sluggard,'" said the Gryphon.

"How the creatures order one about, and make one repeat lessons!" thought Alice. "I might just as well be at school at once." (Carroll, 2009, p. 91)

Here, Alice's explicit remark on the school-like situation establishes the officialdom of rote memorisation in the Victorian school system, and the Gryphons' command to Alice clearly gives him a teacher-like characterisation.

However, based on Bakhtin's assessment of the carnival, the argument that Alice is the only one who belongs to the official culture of Victorian Britain still holds. This can be seen through the aspect of temporality that is important in the carnivalesque. As has been noted in the theoretical chapter, the carnival is temporary, i.e. it is something that occurs within a given period of time, and when this period is over, the officialdom returns (Bakhtin,

1965/1984b, p. 9-10). Hence, the fact that Alice is the only one in the novel who temporarily resides in Wonderland means that she is the only character who belongs to the officialdom of Victorian Britain. Therefore, the Gryphon and Mock Turtle do not belong to the officialdom, they merely represent the voice of officialdom, which in turn allows for the parody to be in dialogue with the official culture.

To conclude on this, the exclusion of the moral lesson in this poem provides the carnivalesque element of degradation, as the abstract moral lesson is excluded, thus degrading the poem down to the material. As stated, this is similar to the analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, and this is why it will not be thoroughly accounted for here. In short, the moral lesson is an abstract element that shadows the Lockean and Aesopic tradition, which largely shaped the officialdom of Victorian children’s literature. The exclusion of this then becomes a degradation of the abstract moral lesson down to the material.

Regardless, the exclusion of the moral lesson is, in this poem, more explicitly set in dialogue with the officialdom of the Victorian children’s literature and school system, represented here by the voice of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon. The carnivalesque parody is inherently dependent on dialogue, ambivalence, laughter and the comic, and this is exactly what can be seen here. On its own, the poem recited by Alice functions as the voice of the carnival world, whereas the Gryphon and Mock Turtle function as the voice of officialdom, and hence the double-voiced discourse occurs.

Alice’s poem represents the comic, and the Mock Turtle and Gryphon represents the seriousness, and this dialogue is precisely what Bakhtin labels ‘ambivalence’ (1963/1984a, p. 120). While this was also argued to be the case in “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, the aim has, in these paragraphs, been to emphasise how the voice of the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon has more clearly shown the dialogical aspect of the poem. This does not mean that “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” is ‘more’ carnivalesque than the aforementioned poem, it merely suggests that the dialogue between the serious and comic is more explicitly stated.

However, everything that has been argued above is entirely dependent on Alice’s poem, in fact, being carnivalesque, which has not been properly established yet. The only carnivalesque element that has been identified as of now, is the exclusion of the moral lesson. The following two sections will individually analyse the two stanzas that comprise the poem, and attempt to examine the carnivalesque elements that can be found in the stanzas.

4.2.1. The first stanza

The first stanza of this poem is composed of eight lines and portrays an anthropomorphised lobster. The reading of this stanza, and particularly the first four lines of the stanza, provided a set of challenges that differed from the other analyses of this thesis. This was largely related to merely understanding the stanza, and it was therefore deemed necessary to interpret this stanza to a greater extent than will be done in the other analyses. On that account, the analysis of the carnivalesque elements that can be found in this stanza will, to some extent, be based on my interpretation of it, and must be read with this in mind.

As previously noted, prior to Alice's attempt to recite the poem, the narrator states that Alice's "head was so full of the Lobster-Quadrille, that she hardly knew what she was saying" (Carroll, 2009, p. 91). This implies that her recitation of the poem is likely to be influenced by The Lobster-Quadrille, which was performed by the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon just moments earlier. This explains why Alice changes the Sluggard in Watts' poem to a Lobster, and it may very well also explain the fourth line of the stanza. This line reads "[t]rims his belt and his buttons, and turns out his toes". After Alice has delivered this poem to the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle, the Mock Turtle urges Alice to explain the meaning behind the third and fourth line, asking "[b]ut about his toes"? the Mock Turtle persisted. 'How *could* he turn them out with his nose, you know?', whereas Alice answers "[i]t's the first position in dancing'" (Carroll, 2009, p. 92). Here, Alice herself comments on these lines of the stanza, and notes that it is related to dancing. 'Turn-out' is, indeed, a term used for the positioning of the feet facing outwards, away from the front of the body. This reference to dancing can be related to Alice's head being full of the Lobster-Quadrille, as a quadrille is a form of a dance. Furthermore, "[t]rims his belt and his buttons" may be related to the act of arranging and fixing the dress that is being used when dancing a quadrille. The quadrille was a popular and fashionable dance in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and Alice's constant reference to the quadrille creates a dialogue between the poem and officialdom.

However, going back to Watts' poem, the only similarity between his poem and this stanza that is clearly present is the first words of the first line, "[t]is the voice of the [...]". In fact, it appears that this stanza is more in dialogue with the Lobster-Quadrille, which is performed to Alice prior to her recitation, than Watts' poem. This challenges the assessment in the theoretical chapter that labelled all the poems that will be analysed here as 'specific parodies' of well-known poems in Victorian Britain. Actually, it may very well challenge the idea that Carroll's poem is a parody of Watts' poem at all. As previously stated, Watts' poem is explicitly mentioned by its first line prior to Alice's recitation, and the Mock Turtle and

Gryphon's rejection of Alice's performance is based on how different it is from Watts' poem. While this definitely suggests that the poem recited by Alice is a specific parody of Watts' poem, it is still worthwhile to view the extent to which the poem differs from Watts' poem.

Both of the stanzas that comprise "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster" are, in fact, quite dissimilar to the poem that Alice is asked to recite. Based on my reading and analyses of the two other poems, this poem appears to be less alike the poem of which it presumably is a parody. Still, as will be argued in the analysis of the second stanza, there are some elements from Watts' poem which can be linked to that stanza. The first stanza, on the other hand, seems to be more in dialogue with the Lobster-Quadrille than Watts' poem, and that ultimately requires a slightly different approach to the analysis of this stanza. Notwithstanding, both of the stanzas that compose "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster" will maintain to be labelled a parody of Isaac Watts' "The Sluggard". The reason for linking it to the Lobster-Quadrille is because it will influence the following analysis, and Watts' poem will not receive the same focus as the parodied text have in the other analyses. Therefore, the following will establish the context of the chapter that "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster" is part of, namely "The Lobster-Quadrille".

Prior to Alice's attempt to recite "The Sluggard", the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon have demonstrated the Lobster-Quadrille to Alice. The song that accompanies the dance is also a parody of a poem, that being "The Spider and the Fly" by Mary Howitt (1829). As opposed to the three poems that are analysed in this thesis, there is no explicit mentioning of the parodied poem prior to the singing of "The Lobster-Quadrille". However, the first line of Carroll's poem reads "'Will you walk a little faster?' said a whiting to a snail", whereas the first line of Howitt's poem reads "'Will you walk into my parlour?' Said a spider to a fly". Hence, similar to the other poems in this thesis, the initial part of the parody is identical to the parodied text, and thus, "The Lobster-Quadrille" may also be labelled a specific parody.

The Mock Turtle and the Gryphon explain to Alice what a Lobster-Quadrille is, and it is essentially a dance which is performed by different creatures of the sea, each having a lobster as a partner, and the other creatures change lobsters repeatedly. As the name suggests, it resembles a quadrille, i.e. an upper-class dance that is danced by four couples who change dance-partners throughout the dance.

Above, the fourth line of the stanza was linked to the quadrille and to dancing. Additionally, the part of the fourth line that reads "[t]rims his belt and his buttons" was interpreted as an act of arranging and fixing his look, as the quadrille is an upper-class dance that is danced in fashionable clothes. This is further emphasised in John Tenniel's illustration



which is located in the pause between the two stanzas (Carroll, 2009, p. 92). The illustration is replicated here, and it depicts the Lobster standing in front of a mirror with a brush in his claw. By that, the illustration is linked to the first stanza of this poem as the Lobster is not part of the second stanza. The second part of the second line of the stanza reads “I must sugar my hair”, which can equally be read as an act of appearing attractive, and the brush calls attention to this. Also, the illustration shows a bootjack and the Lobster wearing shoes, which might be interpreted as dancing shoes. The illustration

alongside the text therefore depicts an anthropomorphised Lobster who appears to be getting ready for a quadrille. This strengthens the interpretation that the poem that Alice performs is more closely related to “The Lobster-Quadrille” than to “The Sluggard”.

Notwithstanding, the link between “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” and “The Lobster-Quadrille” is based on the first four lines of the first stanza. The four last lines, on the other hand, describe how the Lobster acts in relation to a shark. The fifth and the sixth line portrays the Lobster as conceited and overconfident in the absence of sharks, but once they are around, he is perceived as a timid prey. As with “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, and as will be shown in the analysis of the second stanza of this poem, the relationship between predator and prey plays a central role in these parodies. Yet, in contrast to the other stanza of this poem, and of the first poem that was analysed in this thesis, it does not seem to provide carnivalesque elements to this stanza to the same extent.

All of these interpretations can be seen as being in dialogue with the officialdom of Victorian Britain, as the quadrille already has been established as a popular dance in this period. While this is true, the elements of grotesque realism, the tradition of folk humour and the carnivalistic act of decrowning are difficult to locate in this stanza. This does not mean that they are not present or that this stanza cannot be read as carnivalesque. What it, however, suggest, is that the way in which this thesis has approached the poems is not sufficient to conclude on the analysis of this stanza. The argument that the first four lines of this stanza, and perhaps the entire stanza, is more in dialogue with “The Lobster-Quadrille” than “The Sluggard” means that a carnivalesque reading of this poem requires a different approach. This thesis is based on the hypotext being a poem that was used in the educational system of the

Victorian Era, and when this is not the case, it is not deemed fruitful to dwell further on this stanza. While a more thorough reading the entire chapter that this stanza is part of, or of the entire novel as a whole, might offer different findings or different conclusions on the carnivalesque elements, it is, based on the criteria and analytical approach of this thesis, not found much that can be linked to the theory of the carnivalesque.

Actually, the fact that this stanza is so unlike “The Sluggard” might be read as a critique of the educational system of Victorian Britain. In the analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, Alice recites the poem to herself. Here, she attempts to recite “Against Idleness and Mischief”, but after she is done, she immediately recognises that it is wrong and starts crying. This can be interpreted as a situation that resembles the act of practicing rote memorisation and recitation of the poem; that is, a homework-like situation. Her attempt, though unsuccessful, still share similarities with the poem she attempts to recite. In her attempt to recite “The Sluggard”, on the other hand, the result is, as argued, highly dissimilar to the actual poem. Moreover, the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle are characterised as figures of authority which has been interpreted as a classroom-like situation. Hence, the fact that her attempt produces something so exceedingly different from “The Sluggard” when she is in a classroom-like situation, might be read as a critique of the practice of rote memorisation and recitation in the educational system of Victorian Britain. This will not be further dwelled upon, as it will bring the line of argument a bit too far off the topic of the thesis. Nevertheless, it postulates that one can locate critical and polemical elements related to the poems that Alice attempts to recite.

4.2.2. The second stanza

The second stanza begins with “I passed by his garden”, which is the only line in the second stanza that resembles the hypotext. After the first stanza, the Gryphon urges Alice to repeat the rest of the poem, telling her “[g]o on with the next verse, [...] ‘it begins ‘*I passed by his garden.*’” (Carroll, 2009, p. 92). Consequently, the only similarity that Alice manages to utter from the hypotext, is through the help of the Gryphon. This posits that the reading of this stanza, as with the previous stanza, is equally different from Watts’ poem, and this might indicate that a similar conclusion will be offered here. Notwithstanding, for a couple of reasons, this is not entirely true. Initially, there are actually a few elements of Watts’ poem that can be found in the second stanza of this poem, which is related to the material bodily

principle. Also, it will be argued that this stanza is more affirmative of some of the carnivalesque elements that this thesis investigates.

Still, this stanza does not resemble Watts' poem to a large extent, and one of the results of that is that "The Sluggard" will not be broken down nor established as part of the officialdom. The following will therefore embark straight on the second stanza of "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster".

The second stanza tells the story of the Owl and the Panther having a dinner party in a garden. In the second line, the Owl and the Panther are observed sharing a pie. The third and fourth line, however, tell how the Panther, in actuality, eats everything, leaving the dish for the Owl. Here, the Panther's obvious greedy and malicious characteristics are apparent to the reader, whereas the Owl is depicted as the subordinate. It is equally noteworthy to explore how the narrator in the stanza does not appear to condemn the behaviour of the Panther. Despite being anthropomorphised as cunning and sly, the Panther's action is in some way characterised as positive. Instead of making a statement that the Panther took the entire pie, the fourth line of this stanza acknowledges that the Owl indeed got its share, namely the pie dish, "[w]hile the Owl had the dish as its share of the treat". Furthermore, the fifth line, "[w]hen the pie was all finished, the Owl, as a boon, / Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon", suggests that the Panther, as a good deed, lets the Owl have the spoon. Hence, the obvious malevolent actions of the Panther are not portrayed as wrong, they are rather depicted as considerate.

While the last two lines of the poem reveal that the Panther lets the Owl have the spoon, so that he could take the knife and fork and eat the Owl, the mischievous actions of the Panther does not result in any repercussions. It is worth mentioning that the very last line of the poem consists of a mind-rhyme, i.e. a rhyme that is not explicitly stated, but the structure of the rhymes in the poem suggests the ending. In this case, the last two lines read: "While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl, / And concluded the banquet by----", which leaves the reader to fill out the rest of the poem, which is frequently read as "eating the Owl" (e.g. Kincaid, 1973, p. 97; Haughton, 2009, p. 319). Moreover, in the six first lines of this stanza, the poem follows the rhyme-structure AA, BB, CC, which suggests that the very last word should rhyme with the last word of the seventh stanza, which is "growl". This strengthens the argument that the mind-rhyme is read as "eating the Owl". Again, the evident malicious characteristic of the Panther is not explicitly stated, excusing the Panther's behaviour and actions.

Additionally, the actions of the Panther are portrayed through the use of active sentences, e.g. in the third line, “[t]he Panther *took* pie-crust[.]” (emphasis added). On the contrary, the actions of the Owl are depicted through passively constructed sentences, e.g. in the fifth and sixth line, “[...]the Owl, as a boon, / *Was* kindly *permitted* to pocket the spoon” (emphasis added). As noted above, the Owl is given the role of the victim in this poem, but the passively constructed sentences lessen the sympathy of the reader towards the Owl. The Owl becomes the object in these sentences, which creates a distance between the reader and the Owl, and the reader will therefore not sympathise with it in the same way as the subject in the poem, which is the Panther. Also, it lessens the anthropomorphic features of the Owl, as it is perceived almost as a passive bystander. The anthropomorphic features of the Panther are, on the other hand, strengthened by this active construction of the sentences, which is perhaps most evident in the very last line of the poem. As mentioned, the last line consists of a mind rhyme, meaning that it is not explicitly stated. Nonetheless, the unstated ending to the poem, which reads “by eating the Owl”, will be included in this part of the analysis, as it has been argued as an accepted ending. Thus, as the Panther uses a knife and fork, an apparent anthropomorphic feature, it is strengthened by the actively constructed sentence in the concealed ending. This way of anthropomorphising the Panther and the Owl allows the malevolent predator to be portrayed in a more positive way, whereas the prey loses its sympathy. Let the following relate this to the officialdom of children’s literature, and particularly the officialdom of anthropomorphised animals.

The notion of animal advocacy was central to the use of anthropomorphised animals in Victorian children’s literature. By anthropomorphising the animals and giving them a voice, it was believed that it could help instil benevolence towards animals. Through the analysis above which claimed that the Panther is more apparently anthropomorphised, the Panther is then the one that is given a voice. Yet, animal advocacy was often related to speaking up for domesticated animals, but in this case, it is an exotic animal that has been anthropomorphised. In the analysis of “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, it was argued that the use of an exotic animal creates a subversion of the officialdom, as these animals were seen more as symbols of imperialism and commodities. Giving such animals a voice subverts the notion of animal advocacy. Anew, it does not suggest that Carroll has intended to speak up for the Panther, but it subverts the moralistic aim of anthropomorphism and animal advocacy.

In spite of that, there are some noteworthy differences between the Panther in this poem and the Crocodile in the previous poem. In the analysis “How Doth the Little Crocodile”, it was stated that Carroll has placed the Crocodile in its natural habitat, and that

there is a natural historical accuracy in the Crocodile eating fish. This is in utter contrast to this stanza, as the Panther and the Owl are observed in someone's garden and also the fact that the Panther eats the Owl. A natural historical rendition of panthers and owls will not be done here, as it is not the purpose to state whether or not there are examples of panthers eating owls. However, it is not a commonly agreed fact that owls are preys of panthers, which results in Carroll's portrayal of the Panther eating the Owl opposing the accuracy of the relationship between these two animals.

It was previously argued that it is not possible to engage in the carnivalesque if the text is truly nonsensical with no roots in the officialdom. Regardless, the depiction of the Panther eating the Owl and the setting in the garden may very well be read as being in dialogue with the officialdom of children's literature. As Cosslett (2006, p. 37) notes, children's literature that uses anthropomorphised animals and that engages in animal advocacy become involuntary subversive. Their aim is to offer a natural historical correctness and instil moral lessons at the same time as they wish to please the child reader through the use of anthropomorphism. In the Lockean tradition it was believed that the use of anthropomorphism, despite it being nonsensical, was worth it, as it would likely engage the children in further reading. Carroll's poem can thus be read as a mocking of these contradictory elements of children's literature. His use of inaccurate natural historical elements and anthropomorphism keep this stanza in dialogue with the officialdom of children's literature, but the ultimate goal of the moral lessons related to compassion towards animals, is not included in Carroll's poem. Hence, this stanza can be read as a parody of these contradictory elements of the officialdom of children's literature.

Moving forward, this stanza of Carroll's poem will now be linked to grotesque realism, and in that case, it can prove fruitful to explore it in relation to Watts' poem. In Watts' poem, there are some aspects that can actually be linked to the material bodily principle and grotesque realism, that being the depiction of the Sluggard. The material bodily principle, which is essential in the notion of grotesque realism, can be seen in the portrayal of the Sluggard, e.g. in the third line of the fourth stanza: "He told me his dream, talk'd of eating and drinking". In fact, the first four lines can be read as a portrayal of someone who engages in grotesque realism, and even the title of the poem, "The Sluggard", puts forward a hint of it. It needs to be noted that it would be stretching it a bit too far to claim that the Sluggard from Watts' poem truly engages in grotesque realism, as Bakhtin notes that grotesque realism is the representation of the material bodily principle in an *exaggerated* manner (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 19, emphasis added). Nonetheless, the portrayal of the Sluggard as filthy and

most concerned with eating and drinking can, at least partly, produce elements of grotesque realism in the first four stanzas of the poem. However, in the last stanza of his poem, this is precisely the characteristics that Watts condemns, and the moral lesson aims to counteract this way of life. Therefore, the portrayal of the Sluggard becomes something negative, which dismisses it as grotesque realism.

On the contrary, the last stanza from Carroll's poem does not contain any moral lessons, as previously confirmed, and the stanza does not condemn the actions of the Panther. The entire stanza about the Panther and the Owl is centred around eating, and eating is, as noted, an aspect of the material bodily principle. The characterisation of the Panther who receives a "knife and a fork with a *growl*" (emphasis added) and concludes the dinner-party by eating the Owl, is an exaggerated and brutal depiction, and grotesque realism can thus be detected in this stanza by Carroll. As the moral lesson is gone and the stanza finishes at this stage, the actions of the Panther does not produce negativity, but rather a humorous and positive aspect. Precisely this allows the stanza to produce grotesque realism, as Bakhtin emphasises that grotesque realism is considered positive (1965/1984b, p. 19).

To summarise the analysis of this stanza, it can be argued that the approach and criteria of this thesis have allowed for the finding of some carnivalesque elements. Still, the fact that it differs from the hypotext and that the only similarities are related to the material bodily principle means that another approach to this stanza may offer some findings that this thesis has not been able to locate. For this reason, a somewhat similar conclusion to the one presented after the first stanza can be drawn from the analysis of this stanza; namely that an analysis of this stanza, and of the entire poem, in relation to the novel as a whole might provide a broader understanding of it can be read as carnivalesque.

4.3. Analysis of "You Are Old, Father William"

In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, "You Are Old, Father William" is the second poem that Alice attempts to recite, and it is a parody of Robert Southey's poem "The Old Man's Comforts, and How He Gained Them". In the fifth chapter, "Advice from a Caterpillar", Alice encounters a hookah-smoking Caterpillar to whom she expresses concern about her changes in size. She reveals that she does not appear to be able to do the things she previously could: "Well, I've tried to say '*How doth the little busy bee,*' but it came out all different!" Alice replied in a very melancholy voice", whereupon the Caterpillar utters: "Repeat '*You*

are old, Father William” (Carroll, 2009, p. 42). What follows is the poem as cited by Alice alongside Southey’s poems.

Lewis Carroll, “You Are Old, Father William”

“You are old, Father William,” the young man said,
“And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head –
Do you think, at your age, it is right?”

“In my youth,” Father William replied to his son,
“I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I’m perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door –
Pray, what is the reason of that?”

“In my youth,” said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
“I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment – one shilling the box –
Allow me to sell you a couple?”

“You are old,” said the youth, “and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak –
Pray, how did you manage to do it?”

“In my youth,” said his father, “I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose –
What made you so awfully clever?”

Robert Southey, “The Old Man’s Comforts, and How He Gained Them”

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
The few locks which are left you are grey;
You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied
I remember’d that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigour at first,
That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And pleasures with youth pass away;
And yet you lament not the days that are gone,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember’d that youth could not last;
I thought of the future, whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And life must be hastening away;
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remember’d my God!
And He hath not forgotten my age.

(Southey, as cited in Madden, 1972b, pp. 457-458)

“I have answered three questions, and that is enough,”
Said his father. “Don’t give yourself airs!”
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I’ll kick you down-stairs!”

(Carroll, 2009, pp. 42-45)

In Southey’s poem “The Old Man’s Comforts, and How He Gained Them”, the young man asks Father William three questions which are related to Father William’s ability to stay healthy and positive, with consecutive answers by Father William. The poem comprises six stanzas where the first, third and fifth stanzas present questions by the young man, and the second, fourth and sixth stanzas are Father William’s answers to the questions. This analysis will examine the poem as a whole, but it will be structured by analysing each question and subsequent answer individually. In contrast to the two poems by Watts that was parodied in the two previous analyses, in which there is an explicit moral lesson in the last stanza, Southey’s poem has included moral lessons in every answer that Father William provides. The two first answers by Father William begin “[i]n the days of my youth, Father William replied”, which emphasise that there are moral lessons in the poem related to how one should act and behave when being young; that being, one should stay healthy and think about the future. The last stanza, on the other hand, might be seen as the provider of the most significant moral lesson that the poem aims to instil. The second line of the last stanza reads “[I]et the cause thy attention engage”, which suggests that this is the most important lesson of them all, and that lesson is to remember God: “In the days of my youth I remember’d my God”. Again, the focus is on the actions being done in the youth, and this emphasis suggests that the poem aims to instil moral lessons towards young people.

Carroll’s poem also presents questions from the youth and subsequent answers by Father William, but as opposed to Southey’s poem, the youth asks Father William four questions. However, he only receives three answers, and after the fourth question by the youth, Father William replies “[b]e off, or I’ll kick you downs-stairs!”. In contrast to the questions asked by the young man in Southey’s poem, which are related to Father William’s way of life and state of mind, the questions asked in Carroll’s poem are related to the actions performed by Father William. The two first questions by the youth are related to Father William’s reason for constantly standing on his head, and doing back-somersaults, whereas the two last questions are related to his abilities to eat the whole goose with its bones and

beak, and balance an eel on his nose. As mentioned above, the moral lessons of Southey's poem become visible in Father William's replies. Carroll has not excluded any stanzas from the parodied poem, he has, in fact, added two stanzas. In the other two poems that have been analysed above, the stanza that provides an explicit moral lesson is not included in the parody, but as this is not the case in Southey's poem, it needs to be explored what Carroll has done in the answers by Father William, which carry the moral lesson in Southey's poem.

In Carroll's poem, the first two lines of the answers provided by Father William do not seem to provide highly subversive responses to the questions asked by the young man. In the second stanza of the poem, i.e. the first answer by Father William, the first two lines read: "In my youth," Father William replied to his son, / "I feared it might injure the brain". Here, it might appear that the answers by Father William will contain a moral lesson, and the same can be argued in two first lines of the fourth and the sixth stanza. The second answer by Father William begins: "In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks, / "I kept all my limbs very supple", and the two first lines of the third answer by Father William reads "In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law, / And argued each case with my wife". Anew, there are no indications of a subversion or exclusion of any moral lesson in the two first lines of Father William's replies. In fact, these lines share similarities with Southey's poem, as they point to Father William's younger days as the reason for his present abilities. This keeps Carroll's poem in dialogue with Southey's poem, but let the following inspect the two last lines of Father William's replies to the youth.

In the two last lines of the answers by Father William, it becomes rather clear that the moral lessons are dismissed, or at least that they are altered. For instance, in the two last lines of the second stanza, Father William declares "[b]ut now that I'm perfectly sure I have none [brains] / Why, I do it again and again", which might seem to reject any moral lesson in his answers. This is also the case in the two other answers provided by Father William, i.e. the two last lines appear to reject the moral lessons.

Nonetheless, claiming that this completely dismisses and rejects any moral lesson might not be an unproblematic utterance. It was argued in the analyses of the two other poems that the exclusion of the moralistic stanzas in the hypotexts actually dismiss and reject any moral lessons in Carroll's poem. But, the hypotext in this analysis does not contain any explicit moral stanza, and Carroll has not excluded any parts of the text he parodies. Hence, it challenges the idea that the moral is *excluded* in this poem. On that account, it will rather be argued that the moral found in the Southey's poem has been altered in the hypertext, which then raises the question of whether there are moral lessons in Carroll's poem.

Above, it was argued that Southey's poem aims to instil moral lessons towards young people. This claim is based on Father William's constant references to his own youth, which were vital to his current health and state of mind. In Carroll's parody, Father William also makes references to his younger days when he answers the youth's questions, and as seen in the previous paragraph, the two first lines of his answers share similarities with the hypotext. By that, it could be argued that Carroll's parody does, indeed, put forward moral lessons, e.g. that one does not need to exercise, but one can stay in shape "by the use of this ointment", as read in the third line of the fourth stanza. However, this analysis rejects this reading of Carroll's poem, i.e. it rejects the idea that Carroll's poem presents moral lessons. Instead, it is here read as a way of keeping the parody in dialogue with the hypotext, and consequently in dialogue with officialdom. Carroll's poem is therefore read as a humoristic subversion of Southey's poem and of the moral lessons it aims to instil, and on that note, it will here be concluded that Father William's replies in Carroll's poem become a humoristic subversion of the moralistic messages in the hypotext.

Nevertheless, also the conclusion that was just presented can be challenged. It presented the reading of the poem as a humoristic subversion of the moral lesson in Southey's poem, but it might, in fact, be read as a slight polemical or critical intention from Carroll. Let this paragraph exemplify this by exploring the second stanza of the two poems. In Southey's poem, one of the messages that Father William aims to teach the young man is that he was concerned with the future when he was young, and that this is one of the things that has benefitted him in his older days. This has previously been accounted for, but one of the elements in Carroll's parody that differs from the hypotext can be found in the second stanza, i.e. in the first answer that Father William provides. In the hypotext, Father William notes that in the days of his youth, he "remember'd that youth would fly fast, / And abused not my health and my vigour at first, / That I never might need them at last". Here, Father William notes that his cleverness and actions performed in his youth are the reason for his present well-being. Accordingly, the message that is put forward does not revolve around the thoughts of him as an old man, it is revolved around his thoughts as a young man, and this is emphasised in the title of the poem "The Old Man's Comforts, and *How He Gained Them*" (emphasis added).

The second stanza of Carroll's poem begins somewhat similarly, "[i]n my youth," Father William replied to his son, / 'I feared it might injure the brain". However, the third and fourth line of this stanza, "[b]ut now that I'm perfectly sure I have none, / Why, I do it again and again", can be read as a slight critique of the moralistic intentions and seriousness of

Southey's poem and of contemporary literature for children. It has previously been stated that carnivalesque parody does not have a polemical nature, and this reading might thus undermine Carroll's poem as carnivalesque. But, as concluded above, Carroll's poem is, in this analysis, still regarded as a humoristic subversion of the moral intentions of the hypotext. While there might be a slight polemical intention in Carroll's poem, it is not here read as a direct attack on the contemporary literature, but rather a mocking of the morals that Southey's poem aims to instil. Therefore, the conclusion presented above still holds.

In the two previous analyses in this thesis, the complete exclusion of the entire stanza that provided a moral lesson was discussed in relation to the carnivalesque. As shown, in this poem, the parts that aim to instil moral lessons have not been completely excluded in Carroll's poem, they have rather been altered and changed, resulting in the dismissal of a moral lesson. Relating this to the carnivalesque, the idea of degradation becomes applicable, as was argued in the preceding analyses. Yet, this poem may, in fact, be even more affirmative of degradation, as the moral lesson is altered, it is then taken down to the material level. As presented in the theoretical chapter, the element of degradation is important in the carnivalesque and in carnivalesque parody, and is related to the materialising of the spiritual or abstract. The moral lesson can be seen as something abstract in Southey's poem, but equally the religious message in his poem are evidently related to the spiritual and abstract.

Furthermore, the questions that the youth asks Father William in Southey's poem are all related to abstract notions, such as health, joy and faith. On the contrary, Carroll's poem does not contain a moral lesson, there is no apparent religious message, and none of the questions that are asked by the young man are about abstract characteristics. First, let the following look at the questions asked by the young man, and explore the element of degradation in Carroll's parody. Each of the following paragraphs will compare the questions from the youth in Southey's poem to the questions by the young man in Carroll's poems, as well as Father William's answers, and relate it to degradation.

The first question by the young man is related to the reason why Father William constantly stands on his head, whereupon Father William replies that he's confident he has no brain, so he does it over and over again. In Southey's poem, this question is based on Father William's ability to stay healthy, despite his old age. As noted above, health is defined here as something abstract, i.e. it is concerned with one's well-being. In Carroll's poem, the act of standing on the head is something physical; that is, it is an action, and will accordingly be regarded as something more material. This thesis will not attempt to tackle the philosophical notions of the abstract and the concrete, as that will result in an unwanted and convoluted

debate. The abstract and the material, which are the terms used by Bakhtin in relation to degradation (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 19), will here be understood through the reading of the carnivalesque and how Bakhtin assesses degradation. Bakhtin affirms that degradation the act of materialising, i.e. turning something abstract down to the material. While he notes that degradation is strictly topographical, i.e. ‘up’ and ‘down’, and related to heaven and earth, or the human body, therein the facial area and the genital area, that is more related to the specific way in which degradation was used in parodies in the Middle Ages (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, p. 21). As this thesis enquires into the carnivalesque in children’s literature in the Victorian Era, it will not be fruitful to look at elements related to the genital area, nor will it be productive to assess degradation as something strictly topographical. In that sense, degradation becomes the way in which something is turned from the abstract down to the material level. Thus, as Southey’s aim to provide a moral lesson on staying healthy is changed by Carroll to the physical action of standing on the head, this paragraph will conclude that the element of degradation is apparent in the two first stanzas.

Moving on, the following will take on the third and fourth stanzas of the two poems, i.e. the second question and the subsequent answer. In Southey’s poem, the young man questions Father William’s ability to not mourn over the days that have passed, upon which Father William replies that “I remember’d that youth could not last; / I thought of the future, whatever I did, / That I never might grieve for the past”. Here again, the question and answer are concerned with the abstract, which can be seen through the use of words such as ‘remember’, ‘thought’ and ‘grieve’. In Carroll’s poem, the youth is again interested in the reason for Father William’s physical actions, noting that he has “grown most uncommonly fat”, still he “turned a back-somersault in at the door”. Once more, Carroll has turned the abstract and moralistic message into something material in the third and the fourth stanza.

The fifth and the sixth stanza, which presents the third question and answer, respectively, are in Southey’s poem related to Father William’s ability to stay cheerful and positive despite “life hastening away”. Father William’s reply can, as previously argued, be read as the most important message that Southey wants to communicate. The answer is related to the spiritual and the importance of remembering God, which again is related to the abstract. Bakhtin notes that degradation is linked to both the abstract and the spiritual, and the religious message expressed in the sixth stanza of Southey’s poem clearly fits into the spiritual and abstract. In these stanzas of Carroll’s poem, the youth asks how Father William is able to eat the entire goose, “with the bones and the beak”, despite his “jaws are too weak /

For anything tougher than suet”. Anew, the question in Carroll’s poem is related to a physical action, in this case the ability to eat, and can again be linked to the material.

Concludingly, all the three questions asked by the young man in Southey’s poem, and his answers, are related to the abstract, and in the case of the last stanza, to the spiritual. Carroll’s poem is, on the other hand, related to the physical actions performed by Father William, and can be linked to the material. Thus, the carnivalesque element of degradation can be seen in Carroll’s parody of “The Old Man’s Comforts, and How He Gained Them”. Nonetheless, as Carroll has included two extra stanzas in his parody, and the following paragraph will explore these two stanzas, as it will be argued that they even more clearly demonstrate the carnivalesque element of degradation in the poem.

In the last line of the seventh stanza in Carroll’s poem, the youth asks Father William “[w]hat made you so awfully clever?”. Above, it was argued that the element of degradation arises in Carroll’s poem precisely because the questions and answers are not linked to the abstract. On the contrary, in this question the youth asks Father William about his cleverness, which is, in fact, something abstract, and does therefore not appear to follow the line of thought that was presented above. However, when looking at Father William’s reply, he rejects this question by the youth, “I have answered three questions, and that is enough”, and he ends by warning the youth, “[b]e off, or I’ll kick you down-stairs!”. Hence, once the element of abstract is presented in the poem, it is almost immediately rejected. This rejection does not allow the abstract to exist in the poem, and the element of degradation still holds.

Now, this analysis will move on to examine the use of language in Carroll’s poem. As the theoretical chapter touched upon, one of the forms of folk humour that is manifested in the medieval carnival is ‘various genres of billingsgate’, which is related to a form of communication that prevailed in the carnival. This means that one of the aspects of the carnivalesque is a form of communication that is not deemed appropriate in the official culture. The theoretical chapter also noted that this form of folk humour will not be excessively discussed in this thesis, but that one example of ‘various genres of billingsgate’ will be presented in relation to this poem. This example is found in the first and second line of the third stanza of Carroll’s poem, and it reads: “‘You are old,’ said the youth, ‘as I mentioned before, / And have grown most uncommonly fat’”. The focus is on the two last words of the youth’s utterance, which essentially is the characterisation of Father William as “uncommonly fat”.

Linking this to the children’s literature in Victorian Britain, it will not here be concluded whether the youth’s comment on Father William’s weight will directly fit into the

‘various genres of billingsgate’ that is part of the carnivalesque. This thesis has not provided a sufficient amount of theory on the language that can be labelled appropriate in children’s literature of the time to make such a conclusion. However, this thesis has put forward the moralistic aims of children’s literature and the fact that literature for children was used for educational purposes. While calling someone “uncommonly fat” might not in itself be qualified as ‘various genres of billingsgate’, it is still reasonable to suggest that this use of language would be condemned in the officialdom of children’s literature. For this reason, one has to look at the response and what follows this utterance by the youth. An examination of that shows that Father William does not respond to being called “uncommonly fat” at all, and no parts of the poem make a comment on this utterance. Therefore, this remark and the type of language appears to be accepted in the poem by Carroll, and it seems to be accepted by Father William. This indicates that the form of folk humour that Bakhtin labels ‘various genres of billingsgate’ might exist in Carroll’s poem. Notwithstanding, it requires further study to conclude on whether a carnivalesque language can be found in Carroll’s poem, but this has provided an example of how one can go about this discussion.

Lastly in this analysis, the characters will be explored more in detail, especially in relation to the way in which Carroll has altered Father William in his parody. Carroll’s poem does, in contrast to the other poems that are analysed in this thesis, not contain any animals. The characters in this poem are two men, i.e. the youth and Father William. These are also the same characters that can be found in Southey’s poem, although the youth is here referred to as the young man. It can thus appear that Carroll has not changed the characters in this poem, as he has done in the two other poems. Despite this, Carroll has made some noteworthy adjustments from Southey’s poem. The initial change can be seen in the title ‘Father’. In Southey’s poem, ‘Father’ seems to refer to the title of a priest, as there are several religious references in the poem. Every stanza that is a question from the young man ends with “I pray”, and the two last lines of the poem reads “In the days of my youth I remember’d my God! / and He hath not forgotten my age”. In Carroll’s parody, on the other hand, the title ‘father’ appears to be the biological title of a father. This can be seen in the first line of the second stanza, which reads “‘In my youth,’ Father William replied to his son”. The first line of the sixth stanza, and the second line of the eighth stanza further emphasise this by stating “said his father”.

The change from the religious title of ‘Father’ in Southey’s poem to the biological title ‘father’ in Carroll’s poem, makes it possible to discuss the act of decrowning, which Bakhtin (1963/1984a, pp. 124-125) asserts is related to the way in which someone at the top of the

hierarchical ladder is decrowned and replaced by a ‘mock king’. ‘The mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king’, which is the full name of this carnivalistic act, is essentially a shift in authority that arises through laughter and mocking. As argued above, the title ‘Father’, which is found in Southey’s poem, represents the religious title of a priest, i.e. someone educated in Christianity. Also, in the hypotext, Father William provides the moral lessons in his answers to the young man, and as the educator of these moral lessons, in addition to his title as ‘Father’, he can consequently be regarded as the authority in the poem.

In Carroll’s poem, the title ‘father’ appears to be concerned with the biological title, and this indicates a shift in authority, as Father William no longer holds the hierarchical position of the Church. The theoretical chapter of this thesis presented a quote from Bakhtin that summarised the carnival world, and one of the lines from this quote will be repeated here: “They [the carnival] offered a completely different, nonofficial, *extraecclesiastical* and extrapolitical aspect of the world” (Bakhtin, 1965/1984b, pp. 5-6, emphasis added). This suggests that the change from the religious title ‘Father’ to the biological title ‘father’ produces an *extraecclesiastical* aspect, and that this occurs through the decrowning of Father William as a clergyman in the hypotext, to Father William as the youth’s father in Carroll’s poem. However, as Bakhtin posits that laughter and mocking is essential to the carnivalistic act of decrowning, it is therefore not sufficient to say that it is fulfilled simply by changing the title. The messages conveyed by Father William in Carroll’s poem needs to be addressed in order to find whether the poem engages in decrowning.

In the hypotext, Father William offers moralistic lessons to the youth that are concerned with the abstract and spiritual. This is in line with the officialdom of children’s literature, as it was concerned with imbuing educational and moralistic messages. The analysis above also discussed Carroll’s parody, noting that it provided a humoristic portrayal of Father William, and that the main focus was laughter and humour, which subverts the moralistic aims of the hypotext. Bakhtin (1965/1984b, p. 123) asserts that laughter purifies dogmatism and didacticism, and the use of humour provides the aspect of laughter in Carroll’s poem, and by that subverts the moralistic and didactic lesson in Southey’s poem. Father William in Carroll’s poem therefore becomes the ‘mock king’, which results in the subsequent decrowning of Father William in the hypotext. It also needs to be noted that the ‘mock king’ does not have a polemical and critical function. As previously discussed, the carnivalesque parody is not polemical, it is rather involved in a dialogue with officialdom, and through ambivalence, the parody occurs. While a slight critical intention could be read in Carroll’s poem, it is not seen as a direct attack and hostile parody, but rather a humorous

subversion of the hypotext. Thus, in addition to the change of the title 'Father', the fact that Father William provides humoristic answers in Carroll's poem which regenerates laughter, decrownes Father William in the hypotext, and the biological Father William becomes the mock king.

5. Conclusion

To repeat the main question of this thesis, it reads: *How can Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque offer a new reading of three parodic poems in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?* On that note, the purpose of this thesis has not been to offer a final conclusion of whether these three poems can be characterised as carnivalesque, but rather investigate some of the carnivalesque elements that can be found in the poems.

This thesis is based on the notion that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has not been sufficiently read and related to Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque. Hennelly's article "Alice's Adventures at the Carnival" (2009) helped to trigger the objective of this thesis, as it highlights a gap in the research on the novel. Further research induced this curiosity and at the same time detected the uniformly accepted idea that the writings of Lewis Carroll are inextricably tied to the nonsense genre. The link appears to be so widely accepted that even the element of parody that is frequently found in Carroll's work is simply acknowledged as part of the genre, despite it being contradictory to the nature of literary nonsense. At the same time, Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque is highly affirmative of parody, and it raises the question of whether Carroll's use of parody might be more favourably linked to the carnivalesque.

On that note, the conclusion, and for that matter, the entire thesis as a whole, aims to serve as a stepping stone to more research on the relationship between the carnivalesque and the works of Lewis Carroll. This chapter will summarise the findings in the analyses of the three poems and attempt to provide consecutive conclusions based on the criteria and analytical approach of this thesis. Nevertheless, the analyses have already touched upon a few of the differences and similarities between some of the carnivalesque elements that could be found in Carroll's parodies. For instance, the various ways in which Carroll had subverted the moral lessons of the hypotexts were commented on during the analyses, and this chapter will therefore not repeat the differences and similarities that have hitherto been discussed.

Starting with the moral lessons that have been found in the hypotexts, it was argued that both of the poems by Watts and the poem by Southey contain explicit moral lessons. In the two poems by Watts, the moral lessons are clearly stated in the last stanza, or the two last stanzas, whereas Southey's poem contains moral lessons in each answer by Father William. These different ways of instilling the moral lesson in the hypotexts are mirrored in the way that Carroll subverts the moral lesson.

In the two poems by Carroll “How Doth the Little Crocodile” and “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster”, the parodies are shorter than the hypotext, and it was found that the stanzas that are not included in Carroll’s parodies are precisely the ones that clearly contain a moral lesson in the hypotexts. It was argued that this can be read as carnivalesque through the element of degradation, yet this is only possible if a dialogue with officialdom has been established. This dialogue is located prior, during or after these poems are recited by Alice. The fact that the classroom-like situations of recitation and rote memorisation are established, allows for the exclusion of the moral stanzas to be in dialogue with officialdom and thus degrade the abstract notion of the moral lesson. On the contrary, in “You Are Old, Father William”, the moral lessons in the hypotext are not excluded, but rather altered. On that account, the dialogue appears more explicitly between the hypertext and the hypotext rather than the parts that precede and succeed the poem. This results in the argument that the alteration makes the parody more affirmative of degradation than the exclusion, as the abstract notions of the hypotext are transformed into something concrete and material in the parody. Hence, the conclusion rests that all three poems engage in the carnivalesque element of degradation through dialogue with the officialdom, but that this is apparent in various ways and to a different extent.

Nonetheless, “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster” turned out to offer a few challenges related to the dialogue between the parody and the hypotext. Particularly the first stanza of this poem is argued to be more alike another poem in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* than the poem read by school children in the Victorian Era of which it presumably was a parody. The analysis of that stanza concluded that the approach and criteria of this thesis do not provide an adequate set of tools to conduct a sufficient analysis of the carnivalesque elements. I will therefore encourage further research on the relationship between Watts’ “The Sluggard” and Carroll’s “’Tis the Voice of the Lobster”, and the analysis presented in this thesis can hopefully offer a basis for how further research can be conducted.

The dialogue between Carroll’s parodies and the hypotexts and the officialdom of Victorian Britain has been a key aspect in the attempt to provide a carnivalesque reading of the three poems. The findings suggest that the parts of the novel that surround the poems, as well as the hypotexts themselves, represent the officialdom. This is mostly related to the use of rote memorisation and recitation which was frequently used in the classroom. This establishment displays the serious and official world and can be related to Bakhtin’s emphasis on the existence of two worlds in relation to the carnivalesque, i.e. the serious official world and the topsy-turvy carnivalesque world. The carnival world exists for a period of time, i.e. it

is temporary, and ends when the serious official world returns. Consequently, as the parts that surround the poems represent the official world, it becomes possible to inspect whether the poems can represent a temporary carnivalesque world.

In this thesis, the exploration of the carnivalesque elements in the poems is related to the ways in which the poems subvert the officialdom. Here again, the dialogue is crucial and was, in the analyses, related to several aspects of the officialdom of Victorian Britain. The overtly moralistic intentions of literature for children that prevailed in the officialdom were touched upon above, but also the use of animals was examined in the analyses. In the officialdom of children's literature, the use of animals was based to the idea that it would more effectively instil moral lessons and engage the child reader, and the use of anthropomorphism was frequently used as a means of developing animal advocacy. In the two poems by Carroll that contain animal characters, these types of animals differ from the animals used in children's literature in Victorian Britain. In fact, the Panther and the Crocodile are exotic animals which were kept in zoological gardens. These animals were seen as symbols of imperialism and commodities and Carroll's use of these animals can be seen as a subversion of the ways in which these animals were regarded in Victorian Britain.

Additionally, the carnivalesque element of grotesque realism was analysed and discussed in all three poems. The Crocodile that feasts on little fish "with gently smiling jaws" and the Panther who eats the Owl "with a growl" are some of the examples of exaggerated portrayals of food and eating that were found. Food and eating were also the aspects of the material bodily principle that attained most focus in the analyses. Bakhtin's rendition of the material bodily principle and grotesque realism also include elements such as defecation and sexual life with a focus on the genital area. These aspects were not found, nor did it receive much focus as these are more closely related to the medieval culture. Moreover, due to the fact that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a book intended for children, it was not deemed fruitful to engage in an analysis of these elements.

Another element that was scarcely explored was the form of folk humour that Bakhtin labels 'various genres of billingsgate'. Once more, this was not investigated to a large extent due to the novel's intended audience. However, one example was given in relation to "You Are Old, Father William", and it was found that the youth's comment that Father William is "uncommonly fat" can be related to this form of folk humour. Nonetheless, as it did not achieve much focus in this thesis, it is an element that requires further study in relation to the poems, and perhaps in relation to the novel as a whole.

An aspect that was indeed inspected in the analyses was the carnivalistic act of decrowning. The exclusion or alterations of the moral lessons, the depiction of the characters through grotesque realism, the use of exotic animals and the change from a religious ‘Father’ to a biological ‘father’ are all elements that result in the creation of decrowning doubles in these poems. Anew, the decrowning double is inherently dependent on dialogue and ambivalence, and it was found that the decrowning doubles in Carroll’s poems represent the comic, whereas the ones that are decrowned represent the seriousness of officialdom.

Ambivalence is regenerated through laughter, and the humoristic portrayals in the poems liberate the seriousness of officialdom. The rather grim and grotesque depictions of the Crocodile smiling while feasting on fish, the Panther who eats the Owl with a knife and a fork, the “uncommonly fat” Father William who stands on his head and doing back-somersaults are examples of comic and humoristic portrayal that regenerates laughter. At the same time, their official and serious counterparts that are found in the hypotexts are industrious, concerned with the future or condemn the lazy and idle, which is perfectly in line with the dogmatism that prevailed in the officialdom. The creates ambivalence; that is, the combination of the serious hypotexts and the comic parodies.

This thesis has overall been concerned with how the three poems can be read as carnivalesque predominantly due to the fact that they are parodies. The findings have shown that they can indeed be read through Bakhtin’s theory of the carnivalesque and carnivalesque parody. This thesis will end by claiming that the lack of research on *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* through the theory of the carnivalesque seems to limit the appreciation of the parodic poems that appear within the novel. It is believed that a carnivalesque reading of these poems can offer a broader understanding of how the poems subvert the seriousness of Victorian Britain through dialogue with officialdom.

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