

**UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA**

**Departamento de Filologías Inglesa y Alemana**



**“WHATEVER YOU WRITE SERIOUSLY IS TAKEN AS A JOKE,  
AND WHATEVER YOU MEAN AS A JOKE IS TAKEN  
SERIOUSLY”:**

**A STUDY OF CARNIVAL AND NONSENSE IN LEWIS CARROLL’S  
*SYLVIE AND BRUNO* AND *SYLVIE AND BRUNO CONCLUDED***

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**Trabajo de Fin de Máster**

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## Introduction

Presenting a different world with its own rules and logic could be a good field where to include images or characters that invert or subvert reality. Within that universe, the writer can hide many elements which defy the rules and conventions predominant in society. For that reason, after getting to know the nonsensical worlds of Lewis Carroll, I felt attracted to it and decided to deepen in the analysis of some of his works. The characters that Carroll includes in his novels, such as the red queen and the knight in the Alice books and the professor and sub-wardens in the *Sylvie and Bruno* books called my attention due to the way they parody many cultural and social aspects from the world surrounding the author. Once I got in contact with Lewis Carroll's works, and after realizing the many images that appear in them, I started to look for a way to analyze them. It was then when I came across Bakhtin's theory about the carnival. After a close reading of the theory which he provides in his study, I found it suitable to apply his theory to come of the images I found in Lewis Carroll's books *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*. The way in which Carroll presents powerful figures or ideas as degraded and turned into something less serious was the first aspect I connected with Bakhtin's principles. After that, many other images came out of Carroll's books: the professors, the celebration of death, or certain ideological conceptions turned upside-down, all of which are depicted in Bakhtin's work. Thus, I found in Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* a good source for research in the field of carnival.

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze carnivalesque features and images underlying Lewis Carroll's works *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889) and *Sylvie and Bruno*

*Concluded* (1893). To this end, I have considered the paradigm of Mikhail Bakhtin's work *Rabelais and His World* (1960), taking into account the definition about carnival and the carnivalized literature he provides. Hence, elements such as billingsgate, the celebration of death or acts of uncrowning will be considered. I also comment on children's literature in the Victorian period and mainly nonsense English literature which proliferated during this era, where some features of the carnivalesque described by Bakhtin can be observed.

Critical approaches usually treat nonsense literature as a mere word game in which the author is much more concerned about the musical and linguistic aspects of language than about meaning, as Jean-Jacques Lecercle does on the greater part of his analyses. But this is not the only aspect to be traced in nonsense works. As the present work will attempt to demonstrate, nonsense also pursues social criticism and the destabilization of the existing order. In the particular case of Carroll, nonsense is close to the theory of carnival and carnivalized literature and borrows images from it in order to accomplish that aim of defiling conventional categories. These carnival images will be analyzed taking into account Bakhtin's typology of carnival features, such as the importance of destruction and renewal in carnivalesque literature, the abuse of some of the characters that takes place in the carnival and the inversion and subversion of traditional beliefs.

## Chapter 1. Theoretical considerations

### 1.1 Children's Literature in Nineteenth Century England

During the Victorian period, literature addressed to children experienced its highest popularity and demand. As both Claudia Nelson in her essay "Growing Up Childhood" (2002) and Lewis C. Roberts in "Children's Fiction" (2002) claim: "Victorians inherited a growing concern about children, and that childhood came to be seen as the most significant phase of life" (Roberts, 354). This interest in children is evinced by the production of literature addressed to them. The publication of books and periodicals underwent a dramatic increase. This all proves how the awareness towards the education of children increased.

Literature for children used to contain religious values and moral lessons. Victorian and Pre-Victorian children's literature was highly educational. This didacticism was present in most of the books published, thus, the reader (in this case, the children) always had a lesson to learn at the end of the tale, a moral to consider when the book was finished.<sup>1</sup> This imperative to incorporate such morals in tales had to do with the necessity of educating children and teach certain ideas or values to the children. Writers such as Sarah Trimmer, "produc[ed] books for children which stressed religion and morality [...] and advised parents 'to be very cautious what books they put in their hands'" (Roberts, 355-356); obviously, Trimmer was really aware of the education of children and did not consider all books proper for them. However,

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<sup>1</sup> In their preliminary study to a selection of Victorian fairy tales, Cristina Pérez Valverde and Mauricio Aguilera Linde offer a useful approach to the didacticism of Victorian tales (1999: 11-39).

Trimmer's ideas can be considered as in tune with the sociopolitical context of the period.

This didactic trend in literature was influenced by the events and religious movements that took place in England during the nineteenth century. As Robin Gilmour comments in *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature* (1993), the Evangelical Movement, , underwent an important revival, with a very marked influence on “the middle-class home, the nursery of Victorian values” (Gilmour, 74). Didactic fiction was finally opposed by a tendency towards antididacticism. This antididacticism, which is prevailing in nonsense literature, is an inversion of the predominant didacticism of the Victorian fairy tale. The reader can find that the common fairy tale is turned inside out to uncrown it from its status, and to reconsider new ways of telling fairy tales. This uncrowning of the old and the crowning of the new is, as will be commented on chapter 1.3, one of the features that Bakhtin highlights as characteristic of the carnival.

After the increase in the number of stories for children which aimed at the education of young people, some writers, such as Catherine Sinclair began to write against that. In her work *Holiday House* (1838), Sinclair presented a new principle for literature based on entertaining its audience. These kinds of books, though not completely subversive to didacticism as they continued to include some religious or moral values, begin to move towards a literature where the main focus was not essentially to teach. Nonsense writers, as we will mention in the next chapter, start to

emphasize this antididacticism<sup>2</sup> and the fact that they do not try to teach or moralize their poems, tales or stories.

## 1.2 Nonsense Literature: Lewis Carroll

During the Victorian period the antididactic tendency in children's literature grows as exemplified by the nonsense works by Edward Lear or Lewis Carroll. In his *Philosophy of Nonsense*, Lecercle insists on the transgressing effect of nonsense, which, for him, "both upholds and ruins the values of Victorian education, it both mimics and mocks the educational institutions" (Lecercle, 220).

Nonsense authors themselves declared the absence of any didactic purpose in their writings and some of them even thought it useless to look for any kind of meaning, as when Edward Lear states in the introduction to his book *More Nonsense* (1872): "(M)ore care than might be supposed has been given to make the subjects incapable of misinterpretation: 'Nonsense', pure and absolute, having been my aim throughout" (6).<sup>3</sup> However, it should not be considered that nonsense has no purpose at all since, as it is agreed, what prevails in nonsense literature is an element of mockery. John Rieder in his work "Edward Lear's Limericks: The Function of Children's Nonsense Poetry" (1998) connects nonsense with carnival laughter, which is, the "most egalitarian element is its holism: It is directed to all and everyone, including the carnival participants... this laughter is ambivalent; it is gay, triumphant, and at the

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<sup>2</sup> In his study of fairy tale subversion, Rodríguez Salas points out this antididacticism in modern fairy tales (2009: 145-146).

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed study of Lear and Carroll as regards nonsense, see 'Consensus and Nonsense: Lear and Carroll' in Stephen Prickett's *Victorian Fantasy* (2005: 109-138).

same time mocking [...] Unlike the laughter in the satire” (Rieder, 12). Rieder comments on the egalitarian element of laughter which directed to all participants and calls its ambivalence. This egalitarianism, ambivalence and mockery are found both in the nonsensical and the carnivalesque text. As this work will analyze, gay and ambivalent laughter is to be found in some Carroll’s works.

Despite the fact that some critics think that nonsense has often been considered as a literary genre with, literally, no sense at all, many authors, as Isabel Pascua Feble in her work *Los mundos de Alicia: estudio comparativo y traductológico* (2000), have found in it a realm where the author can achieve “an escape route from reality, the idea of reaching a world where things have no everlasting and appropriate order [since] nonsense breaks away from every common sense, it is disarray and whim”<sup>4</sup> (Febles, 17). Leila S. May comments in her work “Language Games and Nonsense: Wittgenstein’s reflections” (2007), how the work of nonsense creates its own rules or a different reality where a different kind of logic can be found. Taking into account Wittgenstein’s theory, she presents a nonsense world where there is “a form of logic (which I am calling hyper-logic because it is logic in excess)” (83). Likewise Anthony Burgess states: “In fact, the British nonsense tradition, like the surrealist one which succeeded it, is only a bizarre way of making sense [...] (T)here is as much sense in nonsense as there is nonsense in sense” (21). Similarly, Lisa Ede concludes that “The self-denied world of nonsense does constitute a play world. Within this world, nonsense operates according to its own unique rules of order and logic” (59). It is also important to take into account the name Ede gives to nonsense “a play world”. Although this world may have its own rules, different from the ones outside it, it can

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<sup>4</sup> Author’s translation

be considered a playground for the writer who is free to play with images and as Sewell in her essay “Nonsense and the child” (1980-1982) says, “muddle things up” (Sewell, 38). This aspect of muddling things up is fundamental in nonsense literature as well as in carnival, which goes hand in hand with laughter. Mark Hennelly Jr., in his work “Alice’s Adventures at the Carnival”(2009), studies laughter in the nonsense of Lewis Carroll within the paradigm of the Bakhtinian definition of carnival in which both topsy-turvy representations and laughter play a key role, as will be commented in section 1.3. The importance of these aspects and their representation in Carroll’s Sylvie and Bruno books will be analyzed in chapter 2. In his analysis, Hennelly Jr. comments on the importance of the carnival in Victorian society. He remarks that, even though carnival was almost extinct, many authors retrieve this tradition: “P. W. Banks published a three-part essay in *Fraser’s Magazine*<sup>5</sup>, ‘Of Rabelais’, which uncannily anticipates Mikhail Bakhtin’s [...] *Rabelais and His World*” (2). He also mentions an important group or society which was formed by Walter Besant. He created the *Rabelais Club* comprised of seventy or eighty members, including eminent Victorians like George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Andrew Lang, Henry James, and Robert Louis Stevenson (5). By creating such a club, Besant is trying to make the work of Rabelais *Gargantua and Pantagruel* well-known, since he “hopes that England will yet learn to appreciate [Rabelais] more largely as a glorious wit” (Hennelly, 5). This preoccupation to spread carnival and its literature needs to be linked to the growing popularity of nonsense, since, as will be discussed, nonsense can be related to the carnivalesque realm.

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<sup>5</sup> Italics as in the original

Lewis Carroll, or Charles Lutwidge Dodgson –his real name–, was fond of provoking laughter in his writings. As Morton Cohen writes in his biography about Dodgson entitled *Lewis Carroll* (1995), Dodgson’s first works “show a true inventiveness, a great ability to play with language, to amuse with language. His strength lies in his ingenious humour.”<sup>6</sup>(108). Lewis Carroll creates his works to entertain, to cause laughter; one example could be his work *Hints for Etiquette; or, Dining Out Made Easy* (1849). In this short piece of writing, Dodgson recommends the reader who dinnners out “to use a fork with your soup, intimating at the same time to your hostess that you are reserving the spoon for the beefsteak” (Carroll, 1188) in order to get “acquainted with the usages of society” (Carroll, 1188). This kind of text shows how Carroll uses common images to turn them inside out, to invert the order of those things. By recommending the use of a spoon as if it were a fork and vice versa, Carroll is carnivalizing the rules of etiquette which are often strict and rigid. As can be observed, Dodgson muddles things up –as Sewell calls it – when he recommends to use a fork as if it were a spoon and vice versa.

Marah Gubar in her essay “Lewis in Wonderland: The Looking Glass World of Sylvie and Bruno” (2006), comments on the parodies of didactic poetry that can be found in *Sylvie and Bruno*, which encompasses the idea already mentioned that nonsense follows the path of antididacticism. In his works, Dodgson creates worlds where the nonsense could live with its own rules. We can consider the idea that Dodgson, or Lewis Carroll, creates new worlds in order to evade his creations from the reality surrounding him. However, we should bear in mind that, though it could be this way, in both Alice books there is a clear positioning of both worlds: the nonsensical

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<sup>6</sup> Author’s translation

and the real as can be seen in the fact that Alice has a mind built in the real world, which does not fit within the nonsensical mind. As in his Alice books, Carroll's Sylvie and Bruno stories are not always relegated to the fairy world. In both books, the reader can find that the narrator goes from one world to the other on numerous occasions. Likewise, this shifting is intertwined in such a way that it is often difficult to realize in which world we are in. Yet, on the contrary that in Alice and its sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*, in the Sylvie and Bruno books the nonsensical world represented by the fairies Sylvie and Bruno is connected with the real world. In chapter number twenty from *Sylvie and Bruno*, "Light Come, Light Go", the fairies get in contact with the people from the real world and interact with them. Nevertheless, this interception of the real world fails to be a mimetic copy of reality. Much the contrary, if Carroll includes those elements from real life in the Sylvie and Bruno books, it rather seems to be with the purpose of mocking, as will be discussed, many of the principles and instructions dominating Victorian life. Some instances that exemplify this mocking are the presentation of the didactic literature and the mentioning of certain scientific discoveries that happened during Victorian period. In chapter two, I will examine some of these features, such as how scientific publications like Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* are presented in the Sylvie and Bruno stories and the representation of Dodgson's opinions about Oxford College itself presented by the Professors and the strange stories told by Mein Herr. As K. Narayan Kutty observes:

Reading Carroll [...] one comes to the conclusion that he seems to have resorted to nonsense not only because he enjoyed doing so but because he found it to be the most appropriate medium for his version of reality. (2)

This thesis will account for the carnivalesque images that can be found in both *Sylvie* and *Bruno* books. Hennelly Jr., comments in his article the revival of the carnival promoted by Walter Besant and P. W. Banks in Carroll's times; this together with the fame of Catherine Sinclair and Edward Lear could have influenced Carroll and helped him to create the carnivalesque imagery that can be found in his works. Even though such influence cannot be directly proved, the works analyzed in this essay evince the connection between his writings and the main tenets of Bakhtin's carnival. In the next chapter I will analyze the carnivalesque imagery described by Bakhtin in his work *Rabelais and His World*, which will be useful for our analysis of *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie & Bruno Concluded*.

### **1.3 Bakhtin's Theory of Carnival**

In his analysis of Rabelais *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Bakhtin points out the presence of certain elements at the core of carnival. Acts of crowning and uncrowning, the celebration of death, laughter and billingsgate are some of the quintessential elements that Bakhtin highlights in his conception of carnival philosophy.

Hence, he especially focuses his attention on the aspects of laughter and mockery. Bakhtin associates parody with the defilement of any type of constraints and oppression: “

(L)laughter liberates not only from external censorship but first of all from the great interior censor, [it] purifies from dogmatism, from the intolerant and the petrified; it liberates from fanaticism and pedantry [...]. Laughter does not permit seriousness. [...] (S)uch is the function of laughter in the historical development of culture and literature.” (94, 123)

In this regard, he remarks on the fact that parody is a positive element which enables the reevaluation of old beliefs, as well as the promotion of the renewal of the established order:

Bakhtin emphasizes the power of carnival laughter to overview the world through the attainment of a new particular perspective that enables the participants to revise old beliefs and conceptions and debunk whatever may represent a source of oppression. (Andrés, 23)

Dovetailed with mockery is the idea of uncrowning. Bakhtin mentions some of the festivities that took place in Europe during the Middle Ages. He provides examples such as the “feast of fools” (74) which was celebrated by schoolmen and lower clerics on some important feasts such as New Year’s Day or the Epiphany. This feast was actually a parody of the official cult, in which participants degraded various religious rituals and symbols. In these festivities, a new mock king was elected to substitute the old king during a specific period of time. In the feast of fools, it is the official cult which is mocked and temporally replaced. After the uncrowning of the old king, he is abused and degraded to the lower stratum of society (Bakhtin, 199). Sometimes this abuse is accompanied with billingsgate, which, according to Bakhtin, constitutes an important part in the language of the market place, typical in the carnivalesque literature. “The protagonist is the representative of a world which is aging, yet pregnant and generating. He is beaten and mocked, but the blows are gay, melodious, and festive” (207). In carnival, the “King is the clown. He is elected by all the people and is mocked by all the people” (197). This fact is representative of the carnival philosophy of debunking official authority, as well as conventional assumptions: “(T)his inverted act

of crowning [...] becomes one of the most genuine celebration of the opposition to the [...]official power” (Andrés, 25). Bakhtin also mentions an illustrative example from Rabelais’s *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, where Panurge, who was one of Pantagruel’s friends, forces king Anarchus, who was taken prisoner, to wear fool’s costumes and sell greensauce, treating him as a slave. In one of the varieties of this feast of fools, a “grotesque degradation of various church rituals and symbols” takes place, whereby those rituals and symbols are degraded to the lower, “material bodily level” (Bakhtin, 74). Insisting on the importance of laughter within the parameters of carnival, he refers to these acts as “*risus paschalis*”<sup>7</sup> (78).

The main purpose of those acts of uncrowning is that of regenerating the old social, political, and ideological order. Accordingly, Bakhtin defines carnival and the way in which it operates as a “positive negation” of the strict hierarchical order established. This positive negation tries to infuse a new conception of the world by dethroning the old values which constrain society (Bakhtin, 403).

Another type of inversion that Bakhtin mentions in connection with carnival is related to the way in which reality is described through language. Hence, he refers to the prohibitions which begin with the Latin word “*nemo*”, which means “no one”. According to him, in carnival, the “gloomy sentences: ‘no one may,’ ‘no one can,’ ‘no one knows,’ [...] are transformed into gay words: ‘Nemo may,’ ‘Nemo can,’ ‘Nemo knows.’” (414). Thereby, whenever a prohibition or negative proverb is uttered – “no one is a prophet in his own country”<sup>8</sup>, it actually means that Nemo is, in fact, a prophet in his own country (ibid.). In keeping with this, Bakhtin notes the importance

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<sup>7</sup> Italics as in the original.

<sup>8</sup> “*nemo is acceptus propheta in patria*” (Bakhtin, 260).

of the element of folly, inasmuch as it promulgates a reversal of logics and traditional assumptions. As he defines it, “(f)olly is the opposite of wisdom – inverted wisdom, inverted truth. It is the other side, the lower stratum of official laws and conventions, derived from them” (260). This type of inversion in the perception of reality can be associated with the whimsical creations that appear in *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, as will be discussed in chapter two.

Together with the celebration of the dethroning of the old king and the subsequent renewal, Bakhtin mentions the banquet images. Food and drink are elements that cannot be absent from carnival. Unlike Christian traditions such as Lent, which forbids the consumption of meat, carnival is full of images that present big amounts of food and drink as well as gluttony scenes. In Rabelais’s *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, food appears in disproportionate quantity, as well as wine and any other kind of drinking. The importance of the banquet lies in the fact that it is an “element of victory and triumph [which] is inherent in all banquets images [...] the banquet [is] as a triumphal celebration and renewal [that] fulfills the function of completion” (Bakhtin, 283). Thus, the celebration of the renewal, of the uncrowning of the old king, was “closely associated with the banquet” (Andrés, 21).

Bakhtin points out many elements in carnival which are useful for the present analysis of Carroll’s works *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*. The importance he gives to the carnivalesque laughter or *risus paschalis*, which is aimed at a positive negation of the current order of things, promotes the uncrowning of the old order and often its inversion. Acts of uncrowning are also based also on the Bakhtinian idea about the importance of the death of the old and the birth of the new. Together

with this uncrowning or death of the old, Bakhtin comments on the aspect of the dethroned king. Finally, an important image is that of the banquet. Closely related to renewal and the new crowning of the carnival king is the image of the banquet, which shows the celebration of the new order. We can find that such carnivalesque elements, as well as the opposition to moralization through literature are present in the works by Carroll that will be analyzed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 2. Carnavalesque Imagery in *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded***

We can find carnivalesque images in many of Carroll's works, as Mark M. Henelly Jr. notes in his essay "Alice's Adventures at the Carnival" (2009), there is an important presence of carnivalesque imagery in Carroll's Alice books. In addition, it is also important to remark that Carroll himself, in "The New Belfry of Christ Church, Oxford: A Monograph" (1872), discusses how the imagery of something that is claimed to be sacred or official is turned into something low. In his analysis of the etymology of the word belfry, Carroll claims that "The word 'Belfry' is derived from the French *bel*, 'beautiful, becoming, meet,' and from the German *frei*, 'free, unfettered, secure, safe'. Thus the word is strictly equivalent to 'meatsafe'" (Carroll, 1101). This carnivalized image of the belfry can be compared to a similar observation made by Bakhtin. In his research on Rabelais's work, he notes the connection made by the French author between a monastic belfry and a gigantic phallus (Bakhtin, 312). In both images the main idea is the uncrowning of a mystified object –in this case related to religion –, turning it into something related to bodily appetite, greed, and obscenity. This

uncrowning of powerful images, of images that a priori have a certain degree of importance, is essential in the carnivalesque text. As Bakhtin affirms, “objects [...] are uncrowned in order to be regenerated” (372).

As M. Hennelly Jr. comments in his essay, we cannot be sure if Lewis Carroll was directly influenced by Rabelais or by the carnivalesque revival that Besant promoted in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, we can find that his works “abound in carnival motifs” (Hennelly, 5). As I have pointed out at the beginning of this section, numerous carnivalesque motifs that can be found in Carroll’s work *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, including acts of uncrowning, billingsgate or the celebration of death and renewal. In the next sections I will deal with some of these motifs in both *Sylvie and Bruno* books. In the next section I will comment on laughter in these works since, as has already been mentioned, it is an important element in carnivalesque literature as well as it is in nonsense literature.

## **2.1 Laughter**

Laughter is one of the core elements involved by nonsense literary works as it is in carnivalesque literature, as has already been commented in chapter 1.3., Laughter helps to liberate from dogmatism, intolerance and seriousness to reach the freedom from the strains imposed upon certain ideas, conceits or events. As Bakhtin states, laughter in carnival is “a philosophical principle that heals and regenerates” (70); thus, if there is laughter, renewal can take place. In Carroll’s *Sylvie and Bruno* books laughter plays an essential role. This laughter is generated by the description of impossible

characters like the gardener or by the awkward behaviour of the two professors and Mein Herr.

As I have mentioned above, nonsense opposes the Victorian rule of children's fiction. While most of the fiction written for children tries to educate them, or at least to provide useful morals, nonsense literature does not pursue that aim, but rather one centered on social criticism. As Lecercle puts it:

Nonsense both upholds and ruins the values of Victorian education, it both mimics and mocks the educational institutions, it both captures and frees the children still excluded by the system, it echoes, stages and intervenes upon the contradictions of language as both object and vehicle of Victorian pedagogy (220).

In this quotation, it can be seen how nonsense literature ruins Victorian education and turns it upside down. This turning upside down of some accepted and well-known concepts is what supports laughter in the literary work. In *Sylvie and Bruno* books we can see that the Victorian principle of children education is sometimes turned upside down. One example from *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* that proves this reversal is when Bruno (a little child) tells a tale in which the moral is a negative one. When we find Bruno's story we can see that the order of the story is similarly reversed since he first states the moral and then he tells the story, instead of doing it the other way round. Furthermore, as we can notice, in this example, he does not even respect the conventional rules of grammar. Bruno says "The Lesson [of the fable] are 'not to try again'" (659). Obviously this moral is a negative one, something unconceivable in Victorian literature for children. The text continues:

Once there were a lovely china man, what stood on the chimbley-piece. And he stood, and he stood. And one day he tumbleded off, and he didn't hurt his self one bit. Only he *would*<sup>9</sup> try again. And the next time he tumbleded his self welly much, and breaked off ever so much varnish" (*S&B C.*<sup>10</sup>, 659-660).

Here we find a short fable that mimics a Victorian moral tale in reverse. The laughter in this fragment comes from the awkward and negative moral that is stated. In *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* the reader can see another tale which is aimed at the same negative moral. In the chapter called "The Pig-Tale", which "portrays an overweight porker who can't play leapfrog until a frog 'with fishy eye' teaches him 'how to jump!'; but it proves an unhealthy and ultimately 'fatal jump'" (Hennelly Jr., 13), we find a pig that does not give up trying till it hurts itself; thus, the moral could be the same as the one stated by Bruno in the example above: not to try again. As Claudia Nelson (75) claims in her article, antididacticism and the "idea that there is pleasure to be found in identifying with the child that subverts conventional domesticity" causes the laughter of the audience, at the same time as it reconsiders the construction of fairy tales. The use of reversed morals is seen in others works by Carroll. Norton N. Cohen points out in his biography *Lewis Carroll*: "Charles enjoyed playing with words [...]. He loved parody and humour [...]. He dispatches conventional and bulky Victorian issues with a new and light style, with mockery (35).<sup>11</sup> Cohen uses as an example of that quotation Dodgson's poem "My Fairy" (1845), where the reader can read at the end: "Moral: <You mustn't>" (36). In this poem full of prohibitions, Dodgson criticizes domestic and social conventions that are present in children's literature. Cohen

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<sup>9</sup> Italics as in the original

<sup>10</sup> From now on *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* will be referred as *S&B C.* after quotations taken from this work.

<sup>11</sup> Author's translation

constantly mentions the humorous tone of Dodgson's writings; and it is by the use of such tone that the text can reach that liberation from the dominating authority that is also promoted by Bakhtin when he highlights the freedom of laughter (Bakhtin, 89). As he puts it, laughter "purifies from dogmatism, from the intolerant and the petrified: it liberates from fanaticism and pedantry, from fear and intimidation" (Bakhtin, 123). Bakhtin also mentions the parody of elements from sacraments and medieval teaching as a fundamental feature in the Rabelaisian text (Bakhtin, 379), which blurs and even erases the seriousness of such texts.

In the case of Carroll's work, we can see that laughter is frequently restricted and accepted just in a minor literary genre as is nonsense. As Lisa Ede claims "The self-denied world of nonsense does constitute a play world. Within this world, nonsense operates according to its own unique rules of order and logic." (Ede, 59) Traditionally, laughter has been relegated to a lower literary genre, as is nonsense literature. This can be related to the case of carnival which Bakhtin has noted, that it has been relegated to a secondary sphere or a lower class from the seventeenth century, on the basis of the belief that what "is important and essential cannot be comical. Neither can history and persons representing it –kings, general, heroes –be shown in a comic aspect" (Bakhtin, 67). Thus, taking this into account we can consider that the low genre of nonsense could be a tabula rasa where the author can simply play with carnivalesque images, laughter, and politics. The "gay positive tone of laughter" (Bakhtin, 119) is then found in Lewis Carroll's nonsense works, where laughter is achieved by the use of some of the images central to carnival. In the following sections, I will deal with the presence of some of these images in *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*.

## 2.2 Uncrowning and the celebration of death

In the works by Carroll discussed in this thesis, there are two images that particularly attract the reader's attention: the uncrowning of the warden and the celebration of his faked death. These are the scenes that open and close the full novel. In chapter one from *Sylvie and Bruno* we find the character of the warden portrayed as a kind of king in the country of Outland; a few pages later, this king is depicted as a beggar (see illustration 1). The beggar that appears at the bottom of the illustration is the old warden after he is dispossessed from his rank. This is an obvious uncrowning presented in the book since immediately after the king is cheated and decrowned, he is depicted as a beggar, reversing at the blink of an eye his status in society. The other aspect –the celebration of death– can be found in the passages where the sub-warden who uncrowns the Warden and deceives him, Sibimet and his wife Tabikat, plan a “cunning conspiracy” (S&B, 275) and pretend the warden's death: “We must spread a report of his death. A little Conspiracy” (S&B, 278). Both cases of uncrowning and death are, according to Bakhtin, closely related to the carnivalesque. For him, the uncrowning of the old king means the crowning of a new one. This, at the same time, represents the death of the old order and its subsequent regeneration. In these two novels, uncrowning also means the regeneration of the political order in Outland.

An interesting aspect to comment on the process of crowning of the new king in the

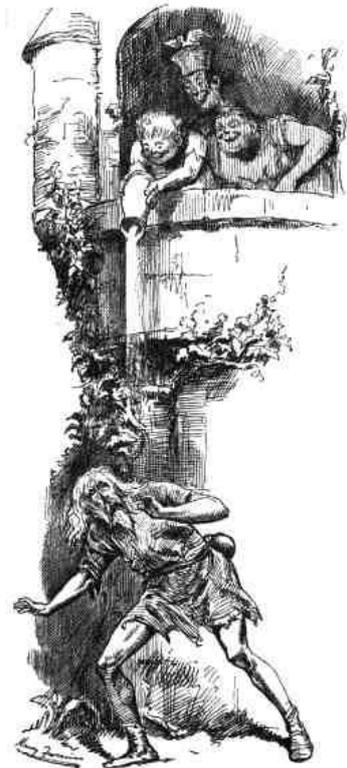


Illustration 1. Furniss, Harry.  
Drawing of the beggar.  
1889. (S&B, 280)

two novels, uncrowning also means the regeneration of the political order in Outland. An interesting aspect to comment on the process of crowning of the new king in the

novel is that it is not merely imposed upon the inhabitants of Outland, but it is consulted by election: “I’ll take the title of Emperor, as soon as we can safely hold an Election” (S&B, 278). By holding an election, people are called to participate in the crowning of the new figure of power after accepting the death of the warden. The uncrowning of the old king in carnivalesque literature is accompanied by the abuse of that king, which is also essential in order to reinforce that act. As can be seen in illustration 1, this element of abuse can also be found in *Sylvie and Bruno*. The figure of power, the warden, is the target of public offence when Uggug – Sibimet and Tabikat’s son – makes fun of him right after he is transformed into a beggar. Uggug then pours some water over him and makes fun of him. In Rabelais’s work we can find that king Anarchus is uncrowned and turned into a mere vendor of greensauce, at the same time he is also dressed in a clownish costume (Bakhtin, 385). Both images are similar, since we can find the extreme change in the status of both characters. Bakhtin conceives of uncrowning as directly related to abuse: “(T)he uncrowned king becomes a slave” (199). In the case of the beggar in *Sylvie and Bruno*, although the warden does not become a slave, his status is drastically reduced to its lowest and his situation is as precarious as it is for a slave.

Uncrowning images abound in both *Sylvie and Bruno* books, where they can be found in many different ways. Apart from the uncrowning of the warden, we attend the dethroning of royalty in general when Nero is presented. He is the king of Dogland, a country ruled by dogs, where humans belong to dogs, rather than the other way round. When Sylvie and Bruno visit this land, they find that it is full of aristocrat dogs whose king is a Newfoundland Dog who rules from his Royal Kennel (see illustration 2).



Illustration 2. Furniss, Harry. Drawing of the court in Dogland. 1889 (S&B, 341)

The image depicted here is clearly a representation of the highest stratum of society whose members are animalized. This constitutes the uncrowning of upper-class people, since all of them are represented by dogs of all breeds. Furthermore, the debunking of these characters goes further than the mere representation of the king as a dog. When Sylvie and Bruno want to leave the land, Nero offers to escort them until they reach the frontier of Dogland. This occasion serves for Nero to ask them a favour: “(W)ould you mind the trouble of just throwing that stick for me to fetch?” (S&B, 343). Later, Bruno orders him: “‘Beg for it’ [...] and His Majesty begged. ‘Paw!’ commanded Sylvie; and His Majesty gave his paw” (S&B, 343). By acting this way, Nero is debunking his figure as a king by being at the orders of two children. This game played by the King and the children illustrate the abuse and thrashing presented also in the extract of the beggar. A similar example is analyzed by Bakhtin in Rabelais’s work when Pantagruel visits the island of the Catchpole, whose habitants “earn their living by letting themselves be thrashed” (Bakhtin, 196). Although not such a violent image as the one described by Rabelais, where the inhabitants are battered almost to death,

this scene of the dog king as submissive can be related to the imagery of the uncrowned king, mocked and deprived of his authority.

The episode of the presentation of Mein Herr, in *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, is similarly linked to the idea of uncrowning. Mein Herr tells the story of a person who travels to a little planet which is inhabited by “a number of Kings and one Subject” (*S&B C.*, 547), thereby subverting the logical organization, with a king and a number of subjects. This inversion debunks the power of a king, as it is his uniqueness in a territory one of the major aspects of his authority. On the contrary, we notice that the unique figure here is that of the Subject, so he can decide which king he is obeying: “(T)he Kings would be sure to make Laws contradicting each other: so the Subject could never be punished, because, whatever he’d be obeying *some Law*”<sup>12</sup> (*S&B C.*, 547). In this case, the one who is free to act as he pleases is the subject and he is also the one who is in a privileged position, since all the kings want him to follow their own rules. In this passage, the figure of the peasant, the common inhabitant, is extolled as it is in carnival. The kings are lost in a crowd of people while the subject is clearly differentiated among all the royal figures.

Furthermore, the uncrowning is not presented only in the figures of kings or political rulers. Carroll also includes scenes in which the characters debased are academic authorities. In *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, Mein Herr also relates the way colleges work in a strange and unknown world Mein Herr frequently talks about. In that country, students are paid “for every good answer” (*S&B C.*, 554) and professors literally hunt students in order to get the best ones. In this passage, Carroll offers an

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<sup>12</sup> Italics as in the original

inversion of the order of things. In this new order, professors become almost desperate figures that chase after precious objects – students. It should also be mentioned that in this passage, where such an odd university is portrayed, we can notice a critique of Oxford University and a sarcastic vision of its decline. As Cohen states:

the level required in Oxford is for Dodgson extremely low, both at Maths and at classical languages. He showed his disagreement with it in an article, ‘The New Examination Statute’, which he sent to The Morning Post [...]. When he wrote in 1890 *Sylvie & Bruno Concluded*, he found an escape from his frustration”<sup>13</sup> (116-117).

In the book, Mein Herr assures students did not understand Moral Philosophy, they just:

got it by heart; and when Examination-time came, they wrote it down [...]. They became teachers in their turn, and they said all these things over again [...]. We woke up one fine day, and found there was no one in the place that knew *anything*<sup>14</sup> about Moral Philosophy” (*S&B C.*, 552).

As we can notice through this passage, professors do not only become avid chasers of students. Additionally, they are patently ignorant generation after generation.

All these instances of uncrowning are related to a certain degree of abuse and even, as in the case of the uncrowning of the warden, to the celebration of death.

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<sup>13</sup> Author’s translation

<sup>14</sup> Italics as in the original

Especially rich in carnival elements is an episode from chapter four from *Sylvie and Bruno*, entitled “A Cunning Conspiracy”, where we find that the warden is tricked, a fact which ends up by his being uncrowned. Sibimet makes the warden sign a paper where the title of governor for life is given to both Sibimet and Tabikat. After playing this trick, both Sibimet and Tabikat begin to plan the fake death of the warden. Moreover, they celebrate the death of the figure of power by preparing a great banquet – which, as has been mentioned in chapter 1.3–, is also one of the central images of carnival analyzed by Bakhtin. In both *Sylvie and Bruno* novels, a banquet is presented. In *Sylvie and Bruno*, it is organized in order to celebrate the new crowning of Sibimet and Tabikat. Yet, it is not until the end of *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* that the banquet takes place. This presents both stories as a preparation for the great festivity of the new crowning and the celebration of the uncrowning of the old warden. In this example, the banquet is being held in order to celebrate the faked death of the warden and the establishment of the new order represented by Sibimet and Tabikat, who become his substitutes. This episode appears at the end of the second book as a way of ending with the uncrowning and its celebration.

After commenting on that replacement of the old king with a new one, we must mention the way in which this new king is depicted and how he is treated. We have already referred to the importance of the abuse of the old king. Nonetheless, Bakhtin highlights the importance of the battering of the new one. In *Sylvie and Bruno*, abuse is present in the depiction of Tabikat. In fact, she could be considered as the Carnival Queen. The narrator depicts her as a “stupid woman [who] never means anything at all” (*S&B*, 275). She is also portrayed as a person unable to really know what she says, as can be noticed when she states: “‘When my husband is Vice’ she said, ‘it will be the

same as if we had a *hundred*<sup>15</sup> Vices!” (S&B, 276). In this passage, Tabikat is mocked due to her inability to see the double meaning of the word “vice”. She refers to the status of vice-warden recently gained by her husband, but she fails to notice that “vice” also has a negative meaning. She is also debased by her husband as “a great blethering goose!” (S&B, 296, 311), a “donkey” (S&B, 309), or an idiot. The latter case is notably representative of scarce intelligence when she says: ““He’s no more an idiot than *I*<sup>16</sup> am!”. ‘You’re right my dear,’ the Vice-Warden soothingly replied. ‘He isn’t, indeed!’” (S&B, 296).

In the works by Lewis Carroll analyzed here, it is evident that the element of uncrowning is essential and represents a chief principle in the presentation of many of the characters. We have seen, for instance how the warden is uncrowned and abused, turning down his status. He is abused as well by Uggug when the latter pours water over him once he has become a beggar. Another image of a dethroned and abuse character is Nero. This dog acts as a pet when he is not surrounded by his Subjects, and he even asks to be treated as just a normal dog when he asks Bruno to have him fetch a stick.

The inclusion of these elements of uncrowning and abuse has attested the role of carnival in Carroll’s S&B and S&BC. In the next section, I will analyze two other elements which also evince this presence, as are inversion and subversion.

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<sup>15,16</sup>Italics as in the original

### 2.3 Inversion and subversion

As a Don in Oxford University, Dodgson had access to new publications and studies which kept him up-to-date. For that reason it is not strange that we could find in *Sylvie and Bruno* some references to the groundbreaking *The Origin of Species*, by Darwin. In chapter five from *Sylvie and Bruno* Carroll mentions an evolution of the English literature related to the evolution of trains. It is said that trains have added a “whole new Species of English Literature” (S&B, 285). In this case, Carroll is applying the theory of evolution to the evolution of English literature. However, as Cohen notes:

Charles invents the ‘inverted Darwinism’ when a lady who was travelling with him suggests that the speed of trains has added new more compressed images to English literature. In them, she observes, ‘the murder appears on page fifteen and the wedding on page forty’. The narrator suggests then that when we move and travel by electricity, we will have even more compression, mere leaflets where both the murder and the wedding appear on the same page. ‘A valuable form of evolution after Darwin!’<sup>17</sup> (423)

In this passage the reader can see how there is a comic inversion of a scientific work of research, where, “[i]nstead of developing a mouse into an elephant, you would develop an elephant into a mouse” (S&B, 285). Hence, Carroll turns it into a funny topic, thereby liberating it from the dogmatism and seriousness of the scientific field. This carnivalesque reversed theory of evolution is applied to literature up to the point of reducing every book to its “Least Common Multiple [when] [...] we should erase every recorded thought, except in the sentence where it is expressed with great intensity” (S&B, 265). This episode is reminiscent of Voltaire’s “Library of God”, where

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<sup>17</sup> Author’s translation

all books are revised” (Bakhtin, 124), where the superfluous works had to be eliminated or reduced to their Least Common Multiple. Bakhtin notes that in that “Library of God” carnivalesque texts had no presence at all since they were considered as low literature. According to him, that was the reason for the discredit of carnivalesque literature. This interest in new research and scientific progress in nineteenth-century England is also shown in both *Sylvie and Bruno* books through the figure of the professor. Throughout the novels, we find that the professor is fond of discovering new things and inventing new machines. When the professor is presented in the first chapter of *Sylvie and Bruno*, he is said to be a “very learned doctor [...] [who] actually invented three new diseases, besides a new way of breaking your collar bone” (S&B, 260). The image of the doctor who invents and researches for new ways to die is a complete inversion of the doctors who look for ways to cure people. Moreover, this is not the only thing he invents; the chapter entitled “The Professor’s Lecture” is completely focused on the new inventions of this alleged expert. In this chapter we find a list of his inventions and works of research which includes: a “(m)egaloscope<sup>18</sup>” (S&B, 627), the black light, and the weight which can float. All these inventions are actually subverted versions of things that already exist. In the case of the megaloscope the professor explains: “(Y)ou know you can’t see a Flea, properly, without a *magnifying*<sup>19</sup>-glass –what we call a microscope. Well, just in the same way, you can’t see an Elephant, properly without a *minifying*<sup>20</sup>-glass [...] And this is a *Megaloscope*<sup>21</sup>!” (S&B C., 627). As can be noticed, in this passage there is an inversion of a scientific instrument, whose use is the opposite of its original referent. The next example is also an inversion, in this case it is an inversion of light, which is deprived of its essential

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<sup>18, 19, 20, 21</sup> Italics as in the original

function: lighting. In the description of the black light, “Bruno sadly replied ‘It were too dark!’. ‘He has described the appearance of the thing exactly!’ the professor exclaimed [...]. ‘Black light and Nothing, look so extremely the same’ (S&B C., 631).

Finally, the professor, while presenting some physical laws, assures that he could make a weigh float:

In the same way, if I were to bend this piece of whalebone round the post –thus –and put the ring over this hook –thus –it stays bent [...]. (S)uppose we left things just as they are for a long time. The whalebone [...] will stay bent [...], why shouldn’t the same thing happen with the weight?” (S&B C., 631).

This experiment, however, proves a failure. Nevertheless, the professor is convinced that in a thousand years it would work. In these three experiments, we can find a parodic inversion of scientific research. In the first case, the reverse function of a microscope is presented. In the second example, we attend an instance of the inverted function of light. In the latest example, we find how the professor uses physical laws to prove something logically impossible. The inversions connected with scientific progress lead to the debunking of its own seriousness. This misuse of objects in the wrong way is also marked by Bakhtin as important in carnivalesque literature:

(C)arnival celebrates the destruction of the old and the birth of the new world [...]; this is why in carnivalesque images there is so much turn about, so many opposite faces [...]; we find a similar logic in the use of carnival objects. They are, so to speak, turned inside out, utilized in the wrong way (Bakhtin, 410-411).

The reversal of the use of an object is thus one of the core carnivalesque tools for the destruction authority, no matter the nature of it. Together with inversions and the presentation of these awkward creations, the issue of subversions constitutes the

kernel of carnivalesque imagery. According to Bakhtin, most of the carnival feasts, such as the Feast of Fools, are a “parody and travesty of the official cult, with masquerades and improper dances” (74). In Both *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, we notice that inversion and parody of conventional values which contribute to the carnivalesque atmosphere in the story. One of these parodies, as has already been commented, is the inversion of Darwin’s theory of evolution into a theory of a reversed evolution. Another example can be found in inversion of the typical Victorian educational tales that contain a useful moral.

As has already been mentioned, we can find instances where this kind of moral and didactic tales are parodied and transformed into their opposite, thus becoming negative moral tales. Bakhtin also points out the “travesty of the main Gospel miracles” (381)



Illustration 3. Furniss, Harry. Drawing of the Jester and the bear. 1889. (*S&B*, 131)

as central to the essence of the carnivalesque text. In *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, Lewis Carroll similarly uses different ways of subversion, such as the physical transformation of some characters. In *Sylvie and Bruno* the chapter entitled “A Jester and a Bear” shows the disguise played by both characters Tabikat and Sibimet. In this chapter Tabikat dresses herself as a bear and Sibimet as a jester with a “cap and bells, and the rest of the Fool’s dress” (*S&B*, 312) (see illustration 3).

This disguise is carried out with the purpose of spreading the announcement of the faked death of the Warden. It is important to take into account that the characters

that play this costume game are the ones that are going to be crowned after the former Warden uncrowning. This means they are participating in such fame with the purpose of accelerating this uncrowning.

Throughout this episode, the characters are disguised not only physically, but also in the narrative, since they are referred to as “the bear” or “the keeper” instead of as Tabikat and Sibimet. As we can notice here, even the narrator adopts a playful attitude and takes part in the game, thus making the disguise complete and making Tabikat and Sibimet lose their real names for a certain period of time. The aim of this disguise is, as I have mentioned, the uncrowning of the Warden, and this is done through laughter and role play.

Likewise, there is another form of subversion: it is in the chapter “How to Make a Phlizz”, from in *Sylvie and Bruno*.

The subversion appears when, at the end of the chapter, a phlizz, in the shape of a nursemaid, is presented. A phlizz is

an image that seems to be real and can even move. It is made out of air and can

be easily destroyed. In this example, we can find the figure of the nursemaid talking to the narrator who, at the beginning of the episode, still ignores that the nursemaid is not real. In this scene, Sylvie and Bruno are playing the role of the maid and the little girl accompanying her. Bruno imitates the voice of a nursemaid while she is talking to the narrator, which makes him gain the power of an adult over children. What is



Illustration 4. Furniss, Harry. Drawing of the phlizz being destroyed. 1893 (*S&B*, 394)

important about this episode is that this image is sacrificed at the end of the scene. The highest figure of authority among children, the nursemaid, is killed when “Bruno ran it against a telegraph post, by accident. And it went in two halves” (*S&B*, 394) (see illustration 4). This killing, as in the faked killing of the warden, has a similar purpose of debasing the power represented by a figure to be respected.

In Sylvie and Bruno books, inversions and subversions play an important role. There are many instances such as the researches and inventions of the professor, which are sometimes inversions of already existing instruments and other times subversions of the logical physical rules. These subversions are also held by characters themselves, as we have seen in the disguise of both Tabikat and Sibimet in order to spread the news of the fake death of the warden. Finally, the last instance analyzed has been the one of the killing of the nursemaid. This last subversion is closely related to the disguising of Tabikat and Sibimet, since this also represents the death of a figure of power. In this case, the figure death is fulfilled with the destruction of the phlizz which represents a nursemaid. In the instances analyzed, subversions and inversions are aimed to the dethroning of certain figures of power and the releasing of certain topics, such as the scientific field, from its seriousness and gravity.

## **Conclusions**

After the present analysis, even though the direct contact of Lewis Carroll with the carnivalesque texts of authors such as Rabelais, or with the movement promoted by Walter Besant in the nineteenth century cannot be confirmed, it can be considered that he uses in his texts some images that belong to the carnivalesque realm. Carroll resorts to uncrowning, billingsgate or subversion in order to free his text from the

strains of seriousness and dogmatism of certain aspects especially concerned with the rigid morality of Victorian England. This rupture from dogmatism becomes patent in Carroll as he tries to liberate children's literature from the didacticism prevailing in nineteenth-century. Furthermore, Carroll presents certain characteristics which are typical of carnivalesque literature, including topsy-turvy elements, disguises, acts of crowning and uncrowning, or the implication of the destruction of the old and its subsequent renewal.

In *Sylvie and Bruno*, the main act of uncrowning is that of the warden, which is linked from its beginning to his death and the celebration of his demise. The warden is dethroned in chapter three of *Sylvie and Bruno*, and it is after that episode that some events, such as the abuse towards the former warden, who has now turned into a beggar, takes place. Similarly, we also attend the celebration of his death through the report of it by Tabikat and Sibimet. Images of uncrowning appear throughout the text as we have seen in the depiction of Nero, the king of Dogland or the description of the little planet where there are many kings but only one subject. In the example of Nero, it is himself who decides to obey the children and in the case of the little planet it is the actual reversal of the normal depiction of a country, where there is only one king and many subjects. Another uncrowning is that of the Victorian fairy tale when the writer poses in this works some antididactic elements which go against the trend in Victorian fairy tales and create a new perception of fairy tales. Such sets of uncrowning have the purpose of liberating from seriousness and gravity the images they represent; thus, contributing to the reconsideration and reevaluation of those well established figures or conceits.

In this text we have also dealt with some images of inversion and subversion. Such as the inverted Darwinism, when Carroll applies the theory of evolution to the English literature. In this example, we can find how Carroll takes that theory and inverts it. Other inversions analyzed are the ones found in the inventions of the professor when he presents some inventions that are actually inversions of objects which already exist. In this example, as in the one of the inverted Darwinism, we find that Carroll takes a well known object and turn it upside-down to present it in another perspective. Finally, we have also mentioned some subversive elements such as the disguise of the jester and the bear, and the phizz. In both cases we find subversion of the order of things, and they have the purpose of reconsidering the actual order of things. It is through inversions that the reader can see well-known objects in a new perspective and it is through subversion that things can be seen from a different point of view. That way, the carnivalesque features help to reevaluate the images they represent.

Thus, in Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, there are many carnivalesque images to consider and analyze, as well as in some other of Carroll's works. As Hennelly Jr. observes: "It seems curious that [...] Lewis Carroll's in the Alices has never been linked to the Carnival tradition typified by François Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*" (1). Thus, it appears to be evident that carnivalesque features can be found in many of Carroll's texts, including his best-known works and his minor writings, as in the case previously mentioned of "The New Belfry of Christ Church, Oxford: A Monograph".

After having analyzed *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* under the perspective of carnival, it seems quite likely for carnival aspects not to be restricted

to these two novels. Indeed, I would like to deepen into my analysis of Carroll's fiction by studying the extent to which other works are also permeated by the carnival philosophy that is present in the novels mentioned above. In particular, I am interested in exploring Carroll's *Hunting of the Snark: An Agony in Eight Fits* (1874), as well as his *Phantasmagoria* (1869). My main purpose in that case, as has been in this thesis, is to provide a different reading of such texts and thus open up new paths for their interpretation. If some traces of carnival can be traced in Victorian literature, Carroll's fiction, and in particular, his Sylvie & Bruno novels, appear to provide a fitting setting for that carnival atmosphere which envelops a faithful depiction of the absurdity pervasive in the rigid Victorian society.

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## Illustrations

The illustrations included in this thesis are originally untitled. The bibliographical details are as provided below:

Furniss, Harry. Drawing of the beggar. 1889. Carroll, Lewis. *Sylvie and Bruno*. *The Complete Illustrated Lewis Carroll*. 1996. London: Wordsworth Editions, 2006. 239-449. 280.

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