

HAIR IMAGERY IN GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

EUROPEAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
(GERMAN)

DECEMBER 1994

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thankfulness is expressed to all who helped me in various ways to write this thesis.

Special thanks to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Jürgen Sang, Dr. William Scherer, and Dr. Jean Toyama who have encouraged this project with time, heart, and mind.

To my Teaching Assistant sisters, Susie, Ann, Sue, and Yuka who have always been helpful and positive.

To my dear husband André who has supported me with understanding and love.

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzed hair imagery in seventy-two out of two hundred and fifty fairy tales by the brothers Grimm. Hair imagery was categorized into poetic form-elements: the direct image, the idiom, the simile, the metaphor, the symbol, and the motif. In addition, hair symbolism found within the context of fifteen fairy tales was interpreted by using the Jungian psychological method of interpretation. It was determined that hair imagery occurs distinctly with certain themes that connect hair with its meaning for human life. Hair imagery appears in relationship to the self, e.g., to a personal growth process, and in relationships with others. It stands within the context of beauty, sensuality, and sexuality. As opposed to the latter, it represents spirituality, e.g., as a connection to a higher consciousness. Hair imagery relates to nature and magic. Eventually, the possible functions of hair imagery are addressed.

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INTRODUCTION

Associations made between 'hair' and 'fairy tales,' often entail the Grimm brother's fairy tale "Rapunzel"¹. This fairy tale about a young girl who lives in a tower has a fascinating quality because of its strong hair symbolism. Rapunzel's long hair serves as a ladder, first for the witch, later for the prince. The fairy tale reaches its climax when the witch cuts off Rapunzel's hair and banishes her. Among all hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales, the hair symbolism in "Rapunzel" has received the greatest attention from literary historians as well as psychologists. While this study considers "Rapunzel" subsequently it also explores other hair images in Grimm's fairy tales, and attempts to analyze and interpret them. It is the premise of this study that hair imagery deserves to be considered in the field of literary research. Not only has the subject meaning but often important functions in relation to the literary text.

A previous academic study done in 1988 concentrated on the meaning of hair for human self-experience.² A group of ten men and women were interviewed on the importance of hair in their life. The evaluation of these in-depth conversations showed that hair served different functions. It played a significant role in the personal development of people. Men as well as women pointed out that the rejection or acceptance of their hair during childhood influenced their self-esteem either positively or negatively. Hair is more than an every day theme in human relationships. It is an important factor in the process

¹ Jack Zipes, The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm (New York: Bantam Books, 1987) 46.

² Linda A. Hollatz, Haare – ein Weg der Selbsterfahrung und Selbstfindung für den Menschen (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 1989)

of individuation and socialization. At a certain age children learn to take responsibility for their body. They decide how to dress and how to wear their hair. This step towards independence often leads to a confrontation with the parents, who represent societal norms. A well-known example from Biblical times is Absalom's long hair that symbolized the rebellion against his father (Samuel 13-18). During the Sixties millions of young people grew long hair, and protested against political and environmental conditions. The results of society's positive or negative reactions towards one's own hair influence the process of finding oneself between conformity and individuality. Hair offers a choice for self-determination and self-expression. For instance, people express their feeling for life through their hair style. The study also investigated the relationship between hair and people's feelings. Individuals are easily hurt, when hair is judged, cut against their will or falls out. The condition of hair, personal reactions after hair-cutting are interchangeably connected to a sense of physical and psychological well-being. Furthermore, hair can be touched; it often plays a major role in experiencing tenderness, sensuality and sexuality. Also, the research interviews revealed that people attribute different symbolic meanings to hair. For example, one woman explains how a haircut freed her from past experiences. She believes that hair stores memories. Hence, that haircut literally separated her from the past and marked a new beginning.³ In order to provide better understanding for experiences like his one, the second part of this study presented theoretical information about hair from different fields, such as medicine, religion, art and literature. One chapter discussed hair symbolism in Grimm's Fairy Tales. The fairy tales "The Virgin Mary's Child,"⁴ "The Goose

³ Hollatz, 44.

⁴ Zipes, 8.

Girl,"⁵ "Rapunzel," and "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs"⁶ were selected and interpreted.

It is a common observation that readers of fairy tales associate perceptions of hair with the story's main character even if the text does not describe the hair. Descriptions of famous fairy tale figures such as "Snow White"⁷ or "Iron Hans"⁸ affect the reader and subsequently are transferred onto other fairy tale characters. For example, a princess has black hair or golden curls in the reader's mind, although her hair is not mentioned.

Hair imagery can have this powerful effect because many stereotypes regarding hair exist. These stereotypes are rooted in superstition, religious beliefs, and as such recorded in literature, especially in folk tales and legends. Also, other common beliefs result from principles of physiognomy that read someone's physical appearance, and draw conclusions about the person's character and destiny. At different times and in various parts of the world people have attempted to apply physiognomy. For example, the literary historian, Johann Kaspar Lavater, made it *salonfähig*, socially accepted, over two hundred years ago but eventually admitted the method's limitations. Moreover, some individuals suffer from condescending stereotypes laid upon them. For instance, people born with natural red hair still undergo people's insults and accusations. Red hair is commonly associated with 'witch' for females and 'devil' for males. At this point another intention of this thesis becomes clear. Namely, more knowledge on hair leads to more awareness of it. Eventually, this awareness helps authors and readers to distinguish whether a literary work adds

⁵ Zipes, 322.

⁶ Zipes, 109.

⁷ Zipes, 196.

⁸ Zipes, 482.

to the stereotypes of hair colors and textures or not. Yet, an argument for using typified descriptions would be that 'an image can say more than a thousand words,' and moreover that famous literary figures could lose their personalities if depicted in a different way.

This study examines two hundred and fifty of Grimm's fairy tales, using Jack Zipes' translation The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm.⁹ Jack Zipes, considered an expert on children's literature and fairy tales, has produced a translation that is comprehensive and close to the original text. Jack Zipes translated two hundred and eleven fairy tales from the seventh and final edition of Grimm's Kinder- und Hausmärchen published in 1857, and most of the remaining fairy tales from the first edition published in two volumes in 1812 and 1815. Another eleven tales are added from different editions. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the fairy tales are taken from Jack Zipes' translation. Sometimes it is necessary to annotate the original text in German in order to better understand the hair image. In that case the German quotations from the fairy tales are from the same editions Jack Zipes has used.

In the first chapter, the hair images found in seventy-two of Grimm's fairy tales are categorized and evaluated according to their literary meaning. It is assumed that any occurrence of hair in a literary text is based on an image. A next step was to determine whether the hair image serves simply as an image, an idiom, a metaphor, a simile, a symbol, a motif, or a theme. Each of these poetic form-elements is defined and illustrated with examples from the text. However, this thesis concentrates on the contents rather than on the functional aspect of hair imagery. The definition of these terms becomes useful when the function of

⁹ Jack Zipes, The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm (New York: Bantam Books, 1987)

hair imagery is addressed. Also, this is why the thesis is entitled Hair Imagery in Grimm's Fairy Tales. The term 'hair imagery' covers all the different poetic form-elements.

The contents of hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales consists of different hair motifs and themes. Therefore, section 1.4. classifies the content of all hair imagery into different motifs that form special thematic groups. For instance, the motif 'long hair covering the whole body' falls under the group 'hair length.' Eventually, all the different motifs contribute to the meaning of hair. Nevertheless, the themes relating to hair can only be discussed after the most significant hair motifs within the context of the fairy tale are described in Chapter Two. Hair motifs and themes from other fairy tales than the Grimm's fairy tales are only mentioned as an exception. Within the framework of this thesis a comparison of hair motifs in fairy tales collected by other authors is not possible. Also, hair imagery emanating from Grimm's different editions are not compared. However, these are opportunities for further research.

Chapter Two deals with the symbolism of hair in selected fairy tales. The in-depth interpretations are presented according to a certain pattern. Either the presentation starts with a short summary of the fairy tale followed by its psychological interpretations, or the fairy tale's content and the interpretations alternate. The symbolism of hair within the fairy tale is explained, and summarized after each story.

Finally, the conclusion presents the results of the previous chapters and considers them in the context of the expectations raised by this thesis' goals. The different themes related to hair imagery are discussed. The question is addressed whether some motifs and themes are more closely related to the time in which the fairy tales were collected than others. It will be confirmed that hair

imagery does not just serve the purpose of describing and illustrating a story. Some hair images play a major role in the structure of the fairy tale, while others play just a minor part. After the content of a hair image has been defined, its function for the text needs to be looked at. However, the function of the hair image is closely connected to its content. The hair image is either an essential part of the text upon which the action is based, or it actually supports the action of the fairy tale. The conclusion looks at the possible functions of hair imagery. For example, it is discussed whether hair imagery has a political or social function, and what its effect on the reader can be.

This thesis concentrates on selected hair images rather than on the fairy tale or genre itself. Moreover, it is also not possible to strictly limit the presentation of hair images to hair motifs and symbols only. The different motifs of a fairy tale including hair images are interconnected. From a structural perspective, every symbol is part of a chain of symbols that mutually explain one another and reveal the meaning of the fairy tale as a whole.

In regard to the use of secondary sources, once more Jack Zipes has been very helpful. In his answer to an inquiry he stated that he has never written on hair in fairy tales. Also, he recommended Vladimir Propp's Die historischen Wurzeln des Zaubermärchens,¹⁰ which turned out to be a valuable source for this thesis. The fact that Jack Zipes, a leading expert on fairy tales, never commented on hair, illustrates the extent to which research so far has neglected a challenging literary topic. 'Hair' can be considered an important literary topic because it is connected to the poetic depiction of human experiences. So far, at least one academic field, the field of anthropology contributed to the meaning of

¹⁰ Vladimir Propp, Die historischen Wurzeln des Zaubermärchens (München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1987).

hair. As of today the library catalogues, CD ROM search programs like the MLA, or ERIC at the Universities of Hawaii and Hamburg, Germany, do not show a single listing on the topic 'hair and fairy tales.' The listings for 'hair' mostly refer to anthropology, medicine, biology and psychology but not to literature. To find hair images in primary literature one needs to scan and evaluate the text first. This might be one reason why hair so far has not received much attention in the field of literary research.

The literary works of numerous psychologists who interpreted different fairy tales provide most of the secondary sources for this thesis. They provide complex information on hair that can be of use for research in psychology as well as in literature, thus, in this thesis, it is the main source for the understanding of hair symbolism.

Grimm's own annotations for the fairy tales and various dictionaries like Grimm's Deutsches Wörterbuch, the Enzyklopädie des Märchens, and the Handwörterbuch zur Deutschen Volkskunde were additionally consulted. They define the etymology of hair and hair idioms, and offer commentaries on superstitious beliefs and magical or religious customs. The symbolism of hair is explained within a limited historical and cultural context. However, this thesis does not claim to present a complete analysis partly due to the present insufficient consideration of hair in literature.

For the study in psychology people were interviewed about the significance of hair but the main source of information for this M.A. thesis is literature. Given the lack of any data basis for the presence of hair in German literature, it seems appropriate to start the search with one literary genre and one author. There are some German authors who use hair imagery, and hair imagery can be found in poetry, lyrics and drama. Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were not

chosen because they are the only ones who use hair imagery. The Brothers Grimm and their fairy tales were selected for several reasons. Relying on a long oral tradition the Brothers Grimm collected the Kinder- und Hausmärchen in 1812-14. It seems appropriate to begin the research on hair in German literature with texts where images have been part of the German cultural tradition. Another reason for choosing fairy tales is to establish a frame of reference connecting classical as well as contemporary authors who use hair images in their text that are connected to fairy tales, legends and myths.

The common belief that Grimm's fairy tales are genuinely German has to be corrected. The existence of so-called German fairy tales and the notion that they originated in Germany cannot be proven. Other European countries and even non-European cultures have similar fairy tales. There are several theories that explain the origins of fairy tales. The mythological theory says that fairy tales origin from myths which are representations of early societies. The main figures in myths are gods and goddesses who influence the events in the world. Through myths human beings explained their origins, life and death. The Grimms, too, saw folk tales as remainders of ancient beliefs; for example, "Brier Rose" was interpreted as a the fallen myth of Sigurd and Brunhild. The *Wandertheorie* claims that all fairy tales came from Indian Buddhist monks who spread them throughout the world. This theory is untenable because fairy tales existed even before Buddha's time in India and Egypt. Nevertheless, it is possible to prove the literary path of some fairy tales from India to the West. The *Vielfachursprungstheorie*, Polygenesis, declares that fairy tales originated all over the world without interconnections. The similarity of fairy tales is a consequence

of alike presuppositions in different cultures.¹¹ This theoretical approach can be helpful for finding the origins of fairy tale motifs. Certain motifs, for example the magic sleep or hair cutting that appear in different cultures show that human beings share and learn from similar experiences. Accordingly, Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious is partially based on the archetypes found in myths and fairy tales around the world. The collective unconscious is a part of the human consciousness that holds all the information collected by mankind so far, and can be accessed, for instance, through dreams, myths and fairy tales. Another commonly accepted theory is the *Einfachursprungstheorie*, Monogenesis. It suggests one country of origin for each fairy tale. The fairy tale is then subject to changes. It wanders, is modified, and adapted by various circumstances and people.

As for the Grimm Brothers, they did not wander around and collect fairy tales from peasants and farmers, as it is commonly believed. They collected the tales by inviting young educated people to their home. These story-tellers were mostly women, and had heard the tales from their nurses, governesses and servants.¹² Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were born in 1785 and 1786 in Hanau, a small village in Hessa. Their father was a lawyer and their mother, a housewife. Together with three brothers and one sister they lived comfortably; they were excellent students, and enjoyed country life. After the sudden death of their father the family was dependent on financial help from relatives. In spite of such financial difficulties the two brothers continued to excel in their studies. Eventually, Wilhelm completed his studies of law whereas Jakob, being the eldest, had to leave the university to support the family. Jakob then worked as a

¹¹ Ivo Braak, Martin Neubauer, Poetik in Stichworten (Unterägeri: Hirt, 1990) 217.

¹² Zipes, XXIV.

librarian in King Jérôme's private library which allowed him to continue his research of old German poetry and language. During their studies the brothers were introduced by professor Friedrich Karl von Savigny, founder of the historical school of law, to the works of German literary significance. In 1805 they met Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim who had just published a first collection of folk legends, songs and sayings called Des Knaben Wunderhorn. The Grimms helped to compile a second and third volume. At that time they started to collect fairy tales, but contrary to Brentano and Arnim they wanted to write the fairy tales exactly as they were told. In 1812, they decided to publish their collection of fairy tales. Consequently, many people who had read this first volume provided more tales to the Grimms, and a second volume could be published in 1815. The Grimms were devoted to keep their documentation of fairy tales 'pure' and 'faithful.' Nevertheless, they revised them for several reasons. One reason was to make the fairy tales a more appropriate reading for children. This meant to replace sexual elements with educational religious and moral comments. Concerning the literary quality of the fairy tales Jack Zipes summarizes the editing for all seven editions of Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm as:

(...) the endeavor to make the tales stylistically smoother; the concern for clear sequential structure; the desire to make the stories more lively and pictorial by adding adjectives, old proverbs, and direct dialogue; the reinforcement of motifs for action in the plot; the infusion of psychological motifs; and the elimination of elements that might distract from a rustic tone.¹³

Consequently, the Grimms made a significant contribution in developing the fairy tale as a genre. People in different countries started to collect fairy tales after reading or hearing of Grimm's fairy tales. Grimm's theoretical explanations of fairy tale texts started a special interest of literary research. It developed not

¹³ Zipes, XXV.

only divergent theories within the field of literary research, but, other scientific disciplines took an interest in fairy tales as well. Since then, ethnologists, pedagogues, feminists, psychologist, even criminologists analyze, interpret, and use fairy tales for their studies. Pedagogues have been mostly interested in the implicit educational messages. Also, the cruelty of some literary text passages led to discussions that resulted in their elimination. However, this procedure was neither accepted by literary critics who believed in preserving the original tales, nor by psychoanalysts. Psychoanalysts interpreted the brutality as a part of basic human instincts, in particular the sexual drive that cannot be transformed if denied.

Although, it is mainly the psychological and literary mind that underpins this academic study, the pedagogical and cultural perspective is also taken into consideration. For instance, the hair image of the poisoned comb found in "Snow-white"¹⁴ when seen from the psychological perspective represents a negative element because of the controlling power the mother has over her daughter's femininity and sexuality. From a pedagogical standpoint this scene is an educational warning that says not to accept anything from strangers. Furthermore, a pedagogue sees a child who hears the fairy tale, and experiences excitement, fear, or awe, and wonderment. It has not learned yet to reflect about the content. Analogically, the psychological outlook is seen as the adult-position whereas the pedagogical one represents a child's point of view. This example shows that both, the psychological and pedagogical perspectives, are valid and useful. Also, the literary and cultural perspectives have to be seen as interconnected. Literature is part of culture, and culture is formed by literature. For this thesis, however, the approach is to work closer with the text than with

¹⁴ Zipes, 196.

the historical and cultural implications. Yet, the historical and cultural context would be necessary if the function of hair imagery were to be discussed in detail. Furthermore, to focus on the text does not mean, for example, to ignore the danger of cultural bias when the 'golden hair' of the princess is interpreted.

As mentioned earlier, fairy tale interpretations by psychologists are the main source for the interpretation of hair symbolism in this thesis. The method of interpretation used in this study is based upon the psychological schools of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung; both schools work with fairy tales: the contents of fairy tales are interpreted in order to understand general human themes and conflicts. Moreover, fairy tales are often used in therapy to access the patient's inner world. This is similar to therapeutic work with dreams. The language of fairy tale and dream are alike. It is the language of symbolic situations and archetypes that are rooted in the unconscious.

Freudian psychology sees fairy tales originating from human fantasy, which is directed by the *Lusttrieb*, the sexual drive. This sexual drive produces wishful thinking that contrasts with reality. When a fairy tale is interpreted, first the hidden wishes are to be uncovered. Fairy tale figures are representatives of the sexual drive and are interpreted in sexually-oriented symbols. Freudian psychologists see the different variations of the Oedipal conflict reflected in the fairy tales. For example, a dragon represents the rival, and therefore can be killed.

Jungian psychology sees the fairy tale figures representing individual components of one's soul. To refer again to the example of the dragon, the fight with the dragon stands for the fight with the dark side of one's self. In that sense, fairy tales are seen as archetypal guides that serve human beings on their path

towards wholeness. They reflect the psychological development of human beings, and can help to solve problems, or give advice to various difficulties.

Verena Kast points out that the process of the main fairy tale figure and situations in which he or she is in are interpreted as well as the various symbols. The method of amplification is applied to find the meaning of the symbol, that is the interpreter looks for parallels to the motif and examines where else in human history this symbol played a role, and in what context. These amplifications make the general meaning of the symbol more evident.¹⁵

The anthroposophical school of interpretation is closer related to Jungian than Freudian psychology. The destiny of human beings is reflected in the imagery of fairy tales. This method expresses more obviously its dedication towards religious and spiritual values. The orientation of the personal development is towards higher forces. Moreover, the basic natural instincts of human beings are rather seen as representation of nature itself than of human sexuality.

All three methods of interpretation are used in this study, and identified as such. Applied to hair imagery a combination of different interpretations could look like this, for example: the haircutting motif in "Snow White and Rose Red" is seen from a Freudian perspective as an act of castration. Snow White and Rose Red cut off the dwarf's beard. The dwarf is a male figure, representing for them either a brother of whom they are jealous or a distorted image of the non-existing father. The Jungian school could interpret the same scene as the girl's effort to cut off their inner nastiness that prevents them from maturing. Finally, an anthroposophist could understand each beard cutting as a change of the season.

¹⁵ Verena Kast, Mann und Frau im Märchen (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 8.

Rose Red symbolizes the summer and Snow White the winter. They are marking the major seasons. Three cuts would almost complete the cycle of a year.

In the interpretations the use of the different definitions are identified when applicable. The presentation depends on the secondary literature that is available, and favors the Jungian method.

1. LITERARY HAIR IMAGERY

This chapter explains poetic form-elements of specific fairy tales that relate to the description of hair. The purpose of this presentation is to provide the basic terminology used in the following chapters, and to give an overview of what hair imagery looks like, and how it contributes to the plot in Grimm's fairy tales.

The poetic form-elements consist of images, symbols, metaphors, simile, idioms, symbols, motifs, and themes and can be grouped together under the terms imagery. These forms contain 'hair' and describe the content of the image. In the beginning of this chapter each poetic form-element is briefly defined. They are then presented with more detail in relation to hair.

A prerequisite for writing this thesis was the reading of two hundred and fifty fairy tales in English and German, and search for any word, sentence, or paragraph related to hair. Eventually, seventy-two fairy tales were selected that had at least one hair image. At this point, the question arises what is the exact meaning of an image. Usually, a linguistic image evokes a visual impression of an object, a person or a scene in the reader's mind. Yet, these mental pictures are not limited to the visual sense; they can also convey messages to other senses like feeling, hearing, smelling or tasting. In order to further categorize the term 'image' Bernhard Sowinski suggests in Deutsche Stilistik¹⁶ to differentiate between images that are *unmittelbar*, direct and *mittelbar*, indirect. Direct images are linguistic expressions that summarize a real or fictitious context into image units that have commonly used names. Indirect images are based on two or more different images aiming at the same expression and effect. Examples for

¹⁶ Bernhard Sowinski, Deutsche Stilistik (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1973) 301-311.

these indirect images are the simile, or the metaphor (See 1.2). The idiom is also considered an indirect image. The idiom cannot be translated literally into a different language because its words alone do not convey a meaning. In this case, an image is transferred from an area of life or profession to express a certain content in another situation.

The symbol is a special form of an image. It extends the direct meaning of the object, the situation, or person with further significance. In Poetik in Stichworten¹⁷ a symbol is defined as "an image that strongly affects feeling and fantasy thus allowing an in-depth glance into rich relationships." On one hand, the symbol, as an image, belongs to the group of poetic form-elements. Yet, since it has a further meaning it also relates to content, and therefore, it can be categorized under the literary terms for the content. The symbol is closely connected to the terms archetype, motif, and theme. According to Chris Baldick, the archetype is "a symbol, theme, setting or character-type that recurs in different times and places in myth, literature, folklore, dreams, and rituals so frequently or prominently as to suggest ... that it embodies some essential element of 'universal' human experience"¹⁸. A motif is "a situation, incident, idea, image or character-type,... or [it is] any element of a work that is elaborated into a more general theme"¹⁹. A leitmotif can be a phrase, idea or symbol that is repeated throughout the text, and supports the theme. Consequently, a theme is a more abstract idea that comes forth when symbols and motifs are repeated and combined.

¹⁷ Braak, Neubauer, 42-51.

¹⁸ Braak, Neubauer, 225.

¹⁹ Chris Baldick, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 140.

1.1. The Direct Image

Descriptions of situations, objects and persons that illustrate the main contents without added importance, fall under the term direct image. For example, in "Cinderella,"²⁰ the two sisters order Cinderella to comb their hair, brush their shoes, and fasten their buckles.²¹ Here, the hair image stands for hair care, and it underlines that the two sisters are eager to beautify themselves in preparation for the King's festival. Moreover, it is a visual detail that supports the character-type motif 'Cinderella as a servant.' Considering the context of the fairy tale, a further interpretation of this hair combing image does not seem necessary, contrary to "The Nixie in the Pond"²² where the combing of the woman's hair becomes a magical means to save her husband. Although, at first the combing of the hair is also a descriptive image, it has a deeper significance, and therefore falls under the terms symbol and motif. Other hair images related to hair care simply seem to express an aspect of daily life. For example, in "Eve's Unequal Children"²³ the mother Eve washes and combs her children's hair before the Lord would arrive. This hair image describes how mothers usually prepare their children for a visit. It reinforces moral values communicated in this fairy tale such as cleanliness.

There are twenty-seven direct hair images in Grimm's fairy tales. Some of them are border-line between image, symbol, or motif. For instance, the descriptions of some figures' appearances include the hair. In "The Glass

²⁰ Zipes, 86.

²¹ Zipes, 88.

²² Zipes, 572.

²³ Zipes, 570.

Coffin,"²⁴ there is an old gray-haired little man, and in "The Golden Maiden,"²⁵ there is a little red old woman. Here, the different hair colors symbolize certain characters, thus the old gray-haired man can be either a wise man or the devil, and the little red woman reminds one of a witch.

Furthermore, there are eight hair images that outline a fight. A figure is dragged, or grabbed by her or his hair, or, for instance, the cook in "Brier Rose"²⁶ was just about to pull the kitchen boy's hair because he had done something wrong, when the whole castle fell asleep.²⁷ The contents of these hair images are descriptive. Furthermore, they provide information about methods of physical punishment and violation.

In "Lucky Hans,"²⁸ there is one hair image that describes how he touches his own hair: "No fooling" said Hans, who stroked his hair"²⁹. This is the only time throughout the fairy tales that a reflexive motion related to hair is mentioned. Again, images like these are not to be overinterpreted but in this particular instance stress Hans' characterization. The body gesture expresses Hans' thoughtfulness. Touching one's own hair is an attempt to get in touch with oneself inwardly. Here, he reflects about the possibility of trading the cow for the pig. Furthermore, Hans is a positive, naive figure who trusts everyone around him. Yet, there are no real relationships or friendships in his life. People abuse him constantly. A person who plays with his or her own hair seems to be in their own little world. Hans definitely lives in his own world; he is too good, and rather easily duped compared to other people.

²⁴ Zipes, 522.

²⁵ Zipes, 721.

²⁶ Zipes, 186.

²⁷ Zipes, 187.

²⁸ Zipes, 302.

²⁹ Zipes, 304.

The hair image in "The Fisherman And His Wife"³⁰ acts as a means of dramatization. When the fisherman's wife finally wants to become God, her husband begs her to remain satisfied with being the Pope. Then, the wife reacts with anger. "She immediately became furious, and her hair flew wildly about her head"³¹. Not only does the hair express her emotional state but moreover, the element of air and wind connected to 'flying hair' foreshadows the upcoming storms of change.

These last examples show that direct images related to hair are more descriptive than symbolic. The function of the descriptions has to support the motifs, especially the character-type motifs, and thus form and content of the fairy tale.

1.2. The Indirect Images

This set of imagery is more complex: each indirect hair image consists of more than one image, and as with idioms additional knowledge is required to understand the imagery.

The first indirect images relate to the fact that a single hair is very thin and something small. In "The Singing, Springing Lark,"³² there is a sentence saying "a ray about the width of a hair fell upon the prince, and he was instantly transformed," and in "The Young Giant," "his son did not show the least sign of getting any bigger or even growing so much as a hair's breadth"³³. This hair image compared with saying 'a small ray' or 'he didn't grow at all' has a

³⁰ Zipes, 72.

³¹ Zipes, 79.

³² Zipes, 319.

³³ Zipes, 328.

dramatizing effect. The image makes the description more colorful. Also, in "The Six Servants"³⁴ the accentuation lies on the single hair. The prince has to fulfill different tasks to be allowed to marry the old woman's daughter. His second task is to eat three-hundred oxen with all their skin and bones, hair and horns, and to drink three-hundred barrels of wine. "If one hair is left from the oxen or one little drop from the wine"³⁵ the prince has to die. Here, the hair image expresses *pars par toto*, one part of the whole, as well as something small. Again, the effect is dramatization.

The next indirect image is the simile. There are only a few hair images in the fairy tales that compare hair with something else. One simile is found towards the end in "The Juniper Tree"³⁶. The mother of the main character feels that her last hour has come. She jumps up, and "her hair flared up like red-hot flames"³⁷. Then, the millstone crushed her to death, and "smoke, flames, and fire were rising from the spot." This scene represents the punishment received for all her bad deeds. Hence, the hair image is not just a decorative simile but it indicates that the mother goes to hell. It is not clear whether the mother's hair is naturally red, and therefore resembles red flames, or if it looks like red flames because the fire of hell already reached her. It also resembles the hair image in "The Fisherman and his Wife." In both cases, the motion of hair represents great emotional turmoil. The resemblance is most likely due to the same origin of both fairy tales.³⁸ However, another descriptive hair image that cannot be considered a simile depicts hair and flames from a different perspective. In "The

³⁴ Zipes, 473.

³⁵ Zipes, 475

³⁶ Zipes, 171.

³⁷ Zipes, 179.

³⁸ Both original fairy tales "Von dem Machandelboom" and "Von dem Fischer und syner Fru" came from the romantic painter Phillip Otto Runge.

Drummer,"³⁹ the drummer himself has to fetch a log from the fire for the old woman. The fire does not harm him: "They [the flames] were not even able to singe his hair." Again, this hair image related to flames has a foreshadowing effect, and is reinforced by a second fire image. Yet, here the drummer is protected against the flames, and a moment later he throws the old woman into the fire.

Another simile found in "The Three Little Birds"⁴⁰ is less dramatic and more decorative. The King asks the maiden if she would take him for her husband. "She said yes, and her two sisters also married the two ministers, for the maidens were all beautiful and had fine features, especially the queen, who had hair like flax." The comparison of hair and flax suggests itself. In the Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache,⁴¹ the etymological dictionary of the German language, there are two entries under hair. The first one defines hair as flax which is the German name for the plant that was used to weave cloth. The second one refers to the hair on the human body. Flax is of a yellowish color, and it also has a similar texture as hair. Consequently, the Queen's hair must be blond and very fine. Moreover, the description of the three maidens' beauty appears as contradictory. It starts with the depiction of their features which includes the features of the Queen. Then, the content switches abruptly to the hair of the Queen. A statement such as: 'Moreover, the Queen had hair like flax' would sound more logical. Nevertheless, the hair image stresses the Queen's beauty as being superior, and therefore the Queen stands

³⁹ Zipes, 610.

⁴⁰ Zipes, 353.

⁴¹ Friedrich Kluge, Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter&Co., 1960) 278.

out as very special. Here, a beauty ideal is reflected that is characteristic for the time in which the fairy tales were collected.

In the fairy tale "The Virgin Mary's Child,"⁴² the Virgin Mary sends the child back to Earth for having lied to her three times. Then, the young girl spends many years in the wilderness and "her long hair covered her on all sides like a cloak." This simile is discussed more in detail at a later point because it is also a motif. Vladimir Propp calls this motif *Einschließung der Jungfrau*, the virgin's encasement,⁴³ and it is also found in other fairy tales. Also, the comparison of Snow-white's hair with ebony is part of a symbolism that is discussed in Chapter Two.

The presentation continues now with a hair image that has a metaphoric character from the fairy tale "The Golden Bird"⁴⁴. According to Chris Baldick, a metaphor is

the most important and widespread figure of speech, in which one thing, idea, or action is referred to by a word or expression normally denoting another thing, idea, or action, so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two ... Metaphors may also appear as verbs ... or as adjectives ..., or in longer idiomatic phrases.⁴⁵

In the beginning of the fairy tale, the young prince wanted to fetch the golden bird that his father desired. On his journey, he made friends with a fox who started to help him. The fox even served the prince as a means of transportation. "And he went up hill and down dale so swiftly that the wind whistled through the prince's hair." This line, repeated four times throughout the tale, is only slightly changed. Fairy tales stem from oral tradition; consequently, those repetitions as well as rhymes help the teller recall the

⁴² Zipes, 10.

⁴³ Propp, 45.

⁴⁴ Zipes, 217.

⁴⁵ Baldick, 134.

different parts of the plot. However, although this image does not rhyme there is a certain musicality to it. This is also stressed by the verb whistle. In the original German text the hair whistles in the wind.⁴⁶ This verb characterizes the image as metaphoric, and as a personification because usually people whistle. This image is a synaesthesia which is the literary means that expresses a blending or fusion of different sensual impressions. It connects the ride on the fox' tail, the wind, and the hair, and thus expresses movement and adventure.

As mentioned earlier, and according to Chris Baldick's definition of the metaphor, an idiom is a form of the metaphor. So far, my research has found over forty different idioms in the German language that refer to hair.⁴⁷ However, Grimm's fairy tales contain only two different types. The fact that these German idioms could be easily translated into English shows that they are not exclusively German. One idiom expresses the belief that sorrows lead to gray hair. It says "Don't grow any gray hairs over this" in "The Two Travelers,"⁴⁸ in "Strong Hans,"⁴⁹ and in "The Long Nose,"⁵⁰ which means as much as 'do not worry.' The other idiom in Grimm's fairy tales says "nobody's going to touch a

⁴⁶ "Und kaum hatte er sich aufgesetzt, so fieng der Fuchs an zu laufen und da giengs über Stock und Stein daß die Haare im Wind piffen." in Jakob u. Wilhelm Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1857) 292.

⁴⁷ Hollatz, 79-80.

Most of the idioms were found in:

Lutz Röhrich, Lexikon der sprichwörtlichen Redensarten (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder KG, 1973) 355-358.

Wilhelm u. Jakob Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch Vol.4 (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1877) 6-23.

Krüger-Lorenzen, Das geht auf keine Kuhhaut (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1960) 115-117.

⁴⁸ Zipes, 392.

⁴⁹ Zipes, 537.

⁵⁰ Zipes, 693.

hair on your head"⁵¹ in "Old Sultan,"⁵² and slightly different in "The Brave Little Tailor,"⁵³ "The Three Languages,"⁵⁴ and "The Three Journeyman"⁵⁵. This idiom stands for 'nobody's going to hurt you.' At this point, the question must be left open why these idioms in particular are found in Grimm's fairy tales. They must have been very popular at the time when the fairy tales were collected.

The presentation of the next literary means leads to the clarification of how the terms symbol, motif, and theme are understood and used in this study. This literary means functions as the teller's comment at the end of some fairy tales. The teller's comment shows its literary intention by its symbolic meaning, and has the purpose of bringing the listeners of the fairy tale back into reality. The audience is reminded of the teller's presence when they hear:

Were you also at the wedding? Of course, I was there in my finest attire. I had my hair powdered with snow, but the sun came out and melted it...⁵⁶

or

My hairdo was made of butter, and as I was exposed to the sun, it melted and was muddled. My dress was made of spider's web, and as I went through some thornbushes, they ripped it off my body. My slippers were made of glass, and as I stepped on a stone they broke in two.⁵⁷

The image of the hairdo that melts away under the heat of the sun seems like an analogy to the fairy tale that fades away under the light of reality. The teller's remark is exaggerated in a way that no one can believe it. The image of

⁵¹ The original German text says "*niemand wird dir ein Härchen krümmen.*" The verb *krümmen* means to bend, and it makes the idiom somewhat more idiomatic.

⁵² Zipes, 180.

⁵³ Zipes, 84.

⁵⁴ Zipes, 128.

⁵⁵ Zipes, 429.

⁵⁶ Zipes, 308.

⁵⁷ Zipes, 666.

the torn dress and of the broken slippers have the same intention as the hair image. The audience has to disengage from the world of the fairy tale. They cannot stay enchanted by it. The teller's remark asks them to break away from it like the shoes that break apart.⁵⁸

The content of the teller's remark is a motif that consists of several symbolic images. Consequently, this classification can be applied to some of the hair images presented so far, and a few of them have already received an interpretation. In that sense, it becomes obvious that it is difficult to draw a clear line between hair images that are just descriptive and hair images that express further meaning. To argue that an image is symbolic if it stands for something beyond itself is, according to Chris Baldick, not sufficient:

It is therefore too simple to say that a literary symbol 'stands for' some idea as if it were just a convenient substitute for a fixed meaning; it is usually a substantial image in its own right, around which further significances may gather according to differing interpretations.⁵⁹

This comment stresses the importance of the context. For example, it could be considered rather subjective to categorize the hair combing image in "Cinderella" as only descriptive, and possibly overlook a hidden symbolism in the hair image from "The Golden Bird." Therefore, the context and the overall impression of the fairy tale validate the choice to interpret a hair image or not. Looking at all the hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales, it becomes clear that most of them are of a symbolic nature. As shown earlier, even simple descriptions of hair appearance or hair care can refer to the characterization or intention of a figure. With the hair image in "Cinderella" the sisters wanted to beautify themselves. No further interpretation seemed to be necessary. This hair image appeared to be too much

⁵⁸ In Grimm's annotation for the fairy tale "Hans Gets Married" the teller's comment is conceived as a joke (The original German word is *Scherz*)

⁵⁹ Baldick, 219.

of a detail compared to all the other symbols and motifs in the tale. Nevertheless, the focus here lies on hair and the meaning of hair, and indeed, this image provides more valuable information. This information is commonly understood as 'making oneself beautiful to attract a mate.' Of course, this hair image can be categorized under more abstract themes such as 'relationship' or 'sexuality.' Also, the only hair image found in "The Worn-out Dancing Shoes"⁶⁰ describes the same content: "They [the princesses] groomed themselves in front of their mirrors and hurried about, eager to attend the dance"⁶¹. Since this image does not describe a daily morning hair care routine but is, again, connected to meeting a partner it can be called a motif. To clarify the following discussion of literary terms: the hair itself, its color, length, and style is the symbol; the hair, what it represents and what is done with it (for example, hair cutting, hair shaving etc.) within the context of the fairy tale, is the hair motif; and the more abstract ideas, intentions and circumstances related to the symbol and motif determine the theme (for example, religion, magic, sexuality).

1.3. The Symbol

Hair just by itself is a symbol. In general, dictionaries of symbolism summarize the meaning of hair similarly. For instance, the Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Volkskunde⁶² gives a definition of hair which includes the different customs and beliefs regarding hair loss, hair cutting, and hair styling. Then, hair is described as the *Sitz der Kraft*, the origin of power, and as part of

⁶⁰ Zipes, 470.

⁶¹ Zipes, 471.

⁶² Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Volkskunde (Berlin, Leipzig: Walter De Gruyter&Co., 1930/1931) Abteilung 1, Aberglaube. 1240.

the body that according to superstition needs special attention when being cut off. In the Wörterbuch der Symbolik,⁶³ too, hair is described as the origin of life. Hair carries the power of life because it constantly grows. Warriors and priests did not cut their hair in order to keep their mental and physical strength. Samson lost his strength after Delilah cut some of his hair (Judges 13-16). In the Middle Ages, cutting someone's hair against his will was a dishonoring punishment. On the other hand, hair has been sacrificed to gods as an expression of devotion. Moreover, wild growing hair symbolizes a rejection of civilization, living a life as a recluse. The Illustriertes Lexikon der traditionellen Symbole⁶⁴ differentiates between the head hair that symbolizes higher forces and inspiration, and the body hair that stands for lower sensual forces. Also, it is explained that loose hair worn by men and women represents freedom whereas bound together it indicates the state of marriage, dependency or submission.

The comb and the scissors are important symbols, or symbolic objects in several fairy tales. Similar to hair, both can stand as a symbol by itself. For example, the comb can simply represent order, or it reveals its symbolic meaning directly in connection to hair as, for instance, in the hair combing motif.

At this point, only a few examples of hair symbolism are mentioned. As shown later on, some of them are worked into literary motifs in the fairy tales, for example the hair cutting motif. In the next chapter, the hair symbolism in each fairy tale is discussed in greater depth.

1.4. The Motif

⁶³ Manfred Lurker, Wörterbuch der Symbolik (Baden-Baden: Körner Verlag, 1985)

⁶⁴ J.C. Cooper, Illustriertes Lexikon der traditionellen Symbole (Leipzig: Drei Lilien Verlag, 1986)

The hair motif relates to the image of hair itself or to what happens with it. The hair imagery in seventy-two fairy tales comprises twenty-four different motifs. The first group of hair motifs is categorized under **hair color and length**. It includes gray and white hair (13),⁶⁵ golden light, yellow, and blond hair (13), red hair (6), and black hair (3). Especially, the hair color golden is often used as a motif of recognition. For example, in "All Fur"⁶⁶ or "The Goose Girl"⁶⁷ the golden hair reveals the royal origin of each young woman. One fairy tale, "The Clever Little Tailor"⁶⁸ contains all colors, also silver and brown. It is about a riddle that the tailor has to solve. If he guesses the right color of the princess' hair, she would accept him as her husband. He guesses right that her hair is silver and golden. Again, the description of the hair motif reveals its symbolic message only if it is seen in the context of the fairy tale, or in connection with other fairy tale symbols, motifs, and themes. There are a few hair motifs that are by themselves descriptive and symbolic. It is questionable though whether we see gray hair as hair color or as an image of age, wisdom, sickness, good or bad. The gray hair obviously grew first. Then, humans learned that gray hair occurs after sickness and as a result of aging. Often, an aged person is either wise and mature or grumpy, edgy and wicked. In the fairy tales both types are represented. The gray-haired dwarf in "Snow White and Rose Red"⁶⁹ is very grumpy and unthankful. The gray-haired woman in "The Nixie in the Pond"⁷⁰

⁶⁵ The numbers in parentheses in this chapter show the amount of fairy tales that contain the particular hair motif.

⁶⁶ Zipes, 259.

⁶⁷ Zipes, 322.

⁶⁸ Zipes, 414.

⁶⁹ Zipes, 516.

⁷⁰ Zipes, 572.

gives good advice to the hunter's wife. The devil, depicted as a bad character sometimes appears with a white or gray beard, and then, in the religious fairy tale "Saint Joseph in the Forest"⁷¹ the Saint wears a white long beard. This demonstrates that gray hair can have many meanings. Gray hair is not seen as gray hair or as a symbol of age and wisdom but as both.

The other motif 'hair length' appears with hair colors (3), and as the motif 'hair covering the whole body' (3).

The second group of **hair care** images covers hair combing (magical combing as well as grooming), hair washing (9), the magic combs (3), and braided hair (3). Furthermore, the motif of 'neglecting hair care' (4) as well as 'the undoing, uncovering, and gathering of the hair' (3) fall under this category. One single motif in which hair adornments play a significant symbolic role is found in "The True Bride"⁷².

The next group is called **hair and touch**. The highest number of hair images is found under the category touch, pain, dragging, and pulling the hair (17). This includes the hair idioms related to pain. The other hair images are mostly describing a fight. For instance, in "The Expert Huntsman,"⁷³ it reads: "The huntsman wound the giant's hair around his hand, yanked the head in, and cut it off with one stroke of his saber"⁷⁴. Also, in an argument between husband and wife the hair is pulled and grabbed. Furthermore, the hair cutting and hair shaving motif (6) belongs to this group as well as the hair lousing motif (5).

The beard is regarded as a separate motif from the hair (11). The beard is described as white or gray (4). Also, giants growl or mumble into their beards

⁷¹ Zipes, 634.

⁷² Zipes, 583.

⁷³ Zipes, 402.

⁷⁴ Zipes, 404.

(2). Furthermore, in the fairy tales "King Thrushbeard"⁷⁵ and "Bluebeard"⁷⁶ the names depict the main figures. In "King Thrushbeard" a King is given this nickname by a princess who makes fun of him because his chin was slightly crooked. She compared his chin with the beak of a thrush.⁷⁷ In Grimm's annotation for the fairy tale "Fitcher's Bird" that resembles "Bluebeard" it says 'Bluebeard' is a name for someone with a strong beard. Moreover, this name refers to a sickness called 'Miselsucht' that was believed to be healed if one bathes in the blood of virgins which explains the intense cruelty of these tales.⁷⁸ Moreover, twice in Grimm's fairy tales even women have a beard. In "The Tale About the Land of Cockaigne"⁷⁹ everything is turned upside down. The lies of the teller include the scene of a barber who shaves a woman's beard off. In "Saint Solicitous"⁸⁰ a woman implores God to let her grow a beard. She wants to dedicate her life to God but since she is so beautiful her father wants her to get married. There is a connection to some legends mentioning pictures of Saints that grow hair. Also, women who lost hair used to dedicate their braids to Saint Solicitous, *heilige Kimmernis* and pray for new hair growth.⁸¹

The fifth group of hair motifs is summarized under **devil and hair** (4). The devil is described once with a long white beard. Twice, in "The Devil's Sooty Brother"⁸² and in "Bearskin"⁸³ the devil does not allow the main figure to wash,

⁷⁵ Zipes, 192.

⁷⁶ Zipes, 660.

⁷⁷ In Grimm's annotations it says that König Drosselbart is also called *Bröselbart* because the bread crumbs (in German called *Brösel*) hang in his beard.

⁷⁸ Jakob u. Wilhelm Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen Vol.3 (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1857) 75.

⁷⁹ Zipes, 514.

⁸⁰ Zipes, 705.

⁸¹ Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Volkskunde, 1244.

⁸² Zipes, 367.

⁸³ Zipes, 370.

comb, or cut his hair for seven years. This motif is called 'neglecting of hair care.' The motif known as 'fetching the devil's hairs' appears once in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs"⁸⁴ (See Chapter 2.5).

The group of hair motifs called **hair and motion** (6) is divided in hair and water (3), and in hair and wind (3). In "All Fur" the young woman is warned by the cook not to let her hair fall into the soup that she prepares for the King. Instead she lets three golden objects fall into the soup (See Chapter 2.4). In "Iron Hans" one of the prince's hairs falls into the well and turns golden. Shortly thereafter his whole head of hair dips into the water, and transforms into a golden mane (See Chapter 2.5). The hair motif in "The Goose Girl at the Spring"⁸⁵ is different. There, her tears roll along her long hair onto the ground (See Chapter 2.4). 'Hair and wind' present itself in "The Golden Bird" (See Chapter 1.2), and similar in "The Nixie in the Pond." Here, the young wife on her way to the wise woman has to walk through rainy weather, and "the wind whipped through her long hair"⁸⁶. In "The Gnome"⁸⁷ many gnomes help the young huntsman to return to Earth. "They each grabbed a strand of his hair and flew up to Earth with him"⁸⁸.

The last group of hair motifs compresses **hair, animals, and magic** (5). In "The Griffin"⁸⁹ a nest made by a toad out of the princess' hair was the cause for her sickness. She regained her health, once she took the hair back. Cut hair serves as a means of proof in "The Castle of the Murder"⁹⁰. Furthermore, in "The

⁸⁴ Zipes, 109.

⁸⁵ Zipes, 562.

⁸⁶ Zipes, 574.

⁸⁷ Zipes, 334.

⁸⁸ Zipes, 337.

⁸⁹ Zipes, 529.

⁹⁰ Zipes, 670

Faithful Animals,"⁹¹ the mouse bites off the hair of its master's enemy to get to the miraculous stone that would save the master. In "The Robber and his Sons"⁹² the robber uses the description of "wild, hairy forest creatures, people with horns and beaks so horrible that I still shudder whenever I think back of them"⁹³ to make his story more exiting. Finally, in "The Three Sisters"⁹⁴ the rubbing of three bear hairs, three eagle feathers, and three scales from a wale helps the brother on his journey to free his sisters and their husband from the magic spell.

These were the twenty-four motifs found in the fairy tales including the motif of the 'melting hair' in the teller's remark that has been discussed earlier (See Chapter 1.3). In the last section of this chapter it will be discussed in how far the names of the eight different groups are considered themes.

⁹¹ Zipes, 685.

⁹² Zipes, 708.

⁹³ Zipes, 711.

⁹⁴ Zipes, 674.

Overview of the twenty-four motifs

A. Hair Color and Length

- A.1. Gray and White hair
- A.2. Long, Radiant, Golden, Yellow, Light
Blond Hair and Sun Comparisons
- A.3. Red Hair
- A.4. Long and Black Hair
- A.5. Hair Color Riddle
- A.6. Long Hair Covering the Whole Body

B. Hair Care

- B.1. Hair Combing, Grooming (Service), Washing
- B.2. Combs (Magic Comb, Poison Comb)
- B.3. Braided Hair
- B.4. Uncovering or Undoing Hair
- B.5. Hair Adornments
- B.6. Neglecting of Hair Care

C. Hair Cutting and Shaving

- C.1. Barber/ Scissors Grinder Profession
- C.2. Hair Cutting
- C.3. Hair Shaving
- C.4. Baldness

D. Hair and Touch

- D.1. Hair and Touch, Pain, Harm, Dragging, Pulling
- D.2. Hair Lousing

E. Beard

F. Devil and Hair

G. Hair and Motion

- G.1 Hair and Water
- G.2. Hair and Wind

H. Hair and Animals and Magic

I. Hair in the Afterword (Teller's Remark)

1.5. The Theme

It can be argued that the names for the groups of hair motifs outline themes. Nevertheless, the names have different levels of abstraction, for example, **hair color and length** are close to **beard** but they are further away from the more abstract **hair and motion**. Some group titles imply the direction towards a more abstract theme. For instance, the names **hair, animals, and magic**, or **hair and devil** point towards the themes magic and religion. This thesis has researched themes related to hair like 'magic' and 'religion.' These themes are abstract in the sense that if they just stand by themselves a relationship with hair is not obvious. Similar to the thesis in psychology where the themes of each individual's hair story were collected; here the themes behind the different hair motifs are of interest because they contribute to the meaning of hair in life and literature.

In the next chapter the hair motifs are interpreted, compared and discussed within the context of selected fairy tales. The process of interpretation will explore the themes related to hair, which are then highlighted in the conclusion.

2. HAIR SYMBOLISM IN SELECTED GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

Whereas the previous chapter has addressed the clarification of terminology and factual presentation of hair imagery, this chapter uses intuition, association, memory and feeling to understand the meaning of hair imagery. It is too limiting to simply transfer the definition of hair symbolism onto a hair image. It is not intended to create a dictionary section on hair, because the meaning of hair is too complex and rich to simply translate hair into two or more meanings. For instance, hair is not always a symbol for the life force or for beauty.

In order to allow an in-depth experience of the symbolism, it is best to read the complete fairy tale before each interpretation, and let it have its effect. This procedure is recommended by most authors who interpret fairy tales. It allows a personal reaction to the fairy tale, and an impression is gained that contributes to an individual interpretation. However, the underlying premise is that there is not just one interpretation, or an interpretation that is 'right' or 'wrong.' The interpretation has to make sense intrinsically as well as within the frame of the contents. However, the complete fairy tales could not be reprinted in this study. Only the passages on hair are cited, and the content of the fairy tale is briefly summarized.

2.1. 'Long Hair Covering a Woman's Body' in "The Virgin Mary's Child," "The Glass Coffin," and "The Nixie in the Pond"

The motif of 'long hair covering a woman's body' is found in "The Virgin Mary's Child," which is addressed first, in "The Glass Coffin," and in "The Nixie in the Pond."

The Virgin Mary's child lives in Heaven. She has been adopted by the Virgin Mary because her real parents are very poor. One day the Virgin Mary goes on a trip, and gives her the thirteen keys to the doors of the heavenly kingdom. The Virgin Mary forbids her to open the thirteenth door during her absence but the child cannot resist. She opens the door and sees "the Holy Trinity sitting in fire and splendor"⁹⁵. When the Virgin Mary returns and finds out that the young girl disobeyed, she banishes her and sends her back to Earth, just as Adam and Eve were thrown out of Paradise.

According to Arthur Schult's religious interpretation, it is too overwhelming for a fourteen year-old girl to see the "highest God on the throne"⁹⁶. She has to go back to Earth to learn about God in the process of life. Eugen Drewermann, on the other hand, draws attention towards the "problem of the mystification of sexuality"⁹⁷. He interprets the opening of the thirteenth door as the discovery of the child's sexuality not as a forbidden touching of the divine. The young girl denies the deed, and therefore rejects her sexual experience because she is afraid to lose the love of the Virgin Mary who represents the mother figure. According to Eugen Drewermann's interpretation, this fairy tale is about a girl's development into womanhood, and especially about the problems in her marriage caused by the rejection of her sexuality.⁹⁸

Eventually, the young girl awakens, and finds herself in a desert, *Einöde*. At this point, the first hair image reinforces her situation.

⁹⁵ Zipes, 9.

⁹⁶ Arthur Schult, Mysterienweisheit im Deutschen Volksmärchen (Bietigheim: Turm-Verlag, 1980) 157.

⁹⁷ Eugen Drewermann, Marienkind (Olten, Freiburg i. Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1985) 38.

⁹⁸ Eugen Drewermann, Marienkind (Olten, Freiburg i. Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1985)

Before long her clothes became tattered, and one piece after the other fell off her body. As soon as the sun began to shine again, she went out and sat in front of the tree. Her long hair covered her on all sides like a cloak. She spent year after year like this and felt the sorrow and misery of the world.⁹⁹

This image recalls a Yogi sitting in front of a tree and searching divine knowledge in an infinite effort. The young woman is one with nature. It is said earlier in the fairy tale that she lives in a hollow tree. A magical merging with the tree has taken place. The tree is hollow and shelters the young woman. It is old, and the life force does not flow any longer into its leaves but instead, flows into her hair. The anthropologist Christopher Hallpike confirms the impression of a yogi in that he states that long hair is worn by ascetic people, hippies, intellectuals and those banished from society. Some Indian Yogis are known to never cut their hair. They twist it with a spiral movement and place it on top of the head. The hair functions as an antenna, and enables the Yogi to communicate easier with God.

Long hair indicates a life outside society, and beyond social control.¹⁰⁰ Virgin Mary's child is indeed an outsider. Her long hair covers her like an animal fur, which stresses her animal and earthly consciousness as opposed to the heavenly one. Eugen Drewermann reflects on her neglect of her appearance, and writes

'Solitude' and 'encasement' describe exactly this alienated state of being that thinks it has to exclude itself as something 'wild,' 'animalic,' and 'asocial.' The Virgin Mary's child is seemingly indifferent to its appearance: it seems to be unimportant. The clothes fall off her body but it does nothing to take care of its body or to adorn itself. If it is a danger

⁹⁹ Zipes, 10.

¹⁰⁰ Christopher Hall, in Michael Argyle, Bodily Communication (London: Methuen & Co.Ltd., 1975)

and sin to be beautiful and to have the body of a woman, what else should one do than to neglect and deform oneself up to bodily care.¹⁰¹

Neglected hair can also express indifference towards oneself and the world as well as inner and outer loneliness. The moment a person starts a relationship with the self or someone else, he or she strives to look physically attractive, or simply radiates beauty in a natural way. This phenomenon is expressed in the fairy tale by the second hair image. When the King and the Virgin Mary's Child meet her neglected appearance is transformed into beauty:

When he finally got through, he saw a wonderful-looking maiden sitting under a tree, and her golden hair covered her down to her toes.¹⁰²

The golden color of the hair stands for her special and higher origin as well as for her destiny. On one hand, it shows her connection to Heaven; she comes from a higher realm, which also implies that she is still under the influence of religious values. On the other hand, the color gold foreshadows her destiny to become a Queen.

Sexual hints in fairy tales are often hidden behind symbols. For example, Eugen Drewermann sees the earlier-mentioned key in the door, and the touching of the splendor with a finger as the discovery of sexual pleasure through masturbation.¹⁰³ Also, the meeting between the Virgin Mary's child and the King contains symbols that indicate sexual contact. Hair is one of the symbols. The

¹⁰¹ Eugen Drewermann, Marienkind (Olten, Freiburg i. Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1985) 43.

'Einöde' und 'Eingeschlossenheit' kennzeichnen aufs Wort dieses entfremdete Dasein, das unter den anderen sich selbst wie etwas 'Wildes', 'Tierisches' und 'Asoziales' aussperren zu müssen meint. Selbst sein Äußeres erscheint dem Marienkind jetzt offenbar gleichgültig und nichtig: die Kleider fallen ihm vom Leibe, aber es tut nichts zu seiner Pflege und zu seinem Schmuck. Wenn schön sein und den Körper einer Frau zu haben Gefahr und Sünde ist, was soll man dann anderes tun, als sich bis in die Körperpflege hinein zu vernachlässigen oder zu verunstalten.

¹⁰² Zipes, 10.

¹⁰³ Eugen Drewermann, Marienkind (Olten, Freiburg i. Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1985) 37.

King's desire is aroused by her nudity covered only by her hair. The coat of hair can be seen as a veil that symbolizes her *Jungfernhäutchen*, her hymen. Following the fairy tale, Eugen Drewermann points at the sexual difficulties in their marriage. In that sense, the Virgin Mary's child's complete hair cover gives the impression of a closure. It seems as if the *künstliche Heilige*, the artificial holy self in her, in other words her *asexuelles Über-Ich*, her asexual superego threw a golden hair dress over her to build a wall made of morals between her sensual and sexual nature and her future husband. The color gold and the closure of the 'dress' stand in opposition to the notion of sexuality. However, the symbol of the long golden hair is ambivalent, and therefore contains other possibilities. Long hair can be seen as an expression of free flowing libido or as a wish for this experience. The end of the fairy tale shows the solution. The Virgin Mary's child confesses her deed; thus, she affirms herself and her sexuality.

According to these thoughts, hair symbolism is thematically used as a symbol in relationship to oneself (neglect of hair, development to womanhood), in relationship to others and society (separation from the mother, being an outcast), and in relationship to the opposite sex (attraction, sexuality).

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Virgin Mary's Child"

Long grown hair	Ascetic people (antenna), outsiders
Wild grown hair	Animal and instinctive consciousness The sexual drive, connection to nature (tree)
Neglect of hair	State of inner and outer loneliness
Long golden hair	Femininity, sensuality, beauty, innocence, attraction, radiance, sexuality Gold - connection to Heaven

Hair covering the whole body

Virginity, closure in the sense of being closed towards sexuality
Protection of her nakedness
Modesty

The motif 'long blond hair covering the nude body of a woman' is also found in "The Glass Coffin." The women in both fairy tales are virgins. Vladimir Propp explains the motif of the virgin's encasement as a variation of the isolation of the King's children, and proves that the fairy tales reflect a historical reality. The King's children were isolated to be protected against robbery, and furthermore to develop special magical abilities. Also the virgins were isolated and protected, in preparation for their eventual marriage. Usually, this motif is immediately followed by an encounter with the opposite sex. In addition, the isolation included the prohibition of cutting the hair, since hair was considered to be the seat of the soul and the carrier of magical powers.¹⁰⁴

Vladimir Propp gives several examples of fairy tales including "Rapunzel" that involve an enclosed princess who has long hair. He states that the prohibition of cutting the hair was not expressed explicitly. The long hair of the enclosed princess is a common trait, and gives her a special power of attraction. Furthermore, he points to the connection between the prohibition of cutting the hair, and the custom of isolating menstruating girls. Girls who started to menstruate were isolated or imprisoned, *eingekerkert*, and were not allowed to cut or comb their hair. Indeed, the Virgin Mary's child, Rapunzel, and the princess in "The Glass Coffin" are isolated at the age when puberty starts. Vladimir Propp explains the motif of the isolated King's children and the virgins as a cultural result of the isolation of menstruating girls. The motivation to isolate the girls

¹⁰⁴ Propp, 45-47.

was fear of invisible powers. This fear was then transferred onto the members of the royal family. Vladimir Propp does not further discuss the fear that surrounds the isolation of menstruating girls. It probably has to do with the fear that spirits who took something from people, like their blood or hair, would gain power over them. This could explain why girls were not allowed to cut or comb their hair especially at that time; it was 'bloody' hair. This leads to yet another important aspect, which is women's menstruation as a taboo. Women's menstruation was seen as something dirty and even evil. In that sense, the custom of imprisoning women during their menstruation contributed enormously to their inferiority and therefore suppression by men. Also, the experience of isolation as a measure to deflect a woman's sexuality has a harmful effect on every woman's physical and psychological well-being. Again, this is expressed by the 'misery' the Virgin Mary's child experiences. On the other hand, in some cultures, especially matriarchal types, the isolation of menstruating girls and women has been part of their initiation process, and was considered sacred.

In "The Virgin Mary's Child" the two main female characters are the Virgin Mary and the young woman, at first a virgin herself. Kathryn Hoffmann investigates the 'silenced space' between these two females, the space of fecundity, of the fertile woman, and the mother. According to her

the virgin and the old woman are two of the most common elements of the European tale. The virgin is associated predictably with purity and goodness, the old woman with magic, death, and the forest. ... [Virgins are] passive beauties, patiently awaiting their princes, their 'good' character reflected in their physical beauty, ... invariably heroines of the narrative place of fairy-telling. ... Appearing, apparently from nowhere, to either ease or block the process of virginal transformation are the fairies and witches. Although magical facilitators and interruptors appear in a variety of forms, from young fairies to testy old witches, nymphs and nixies to magical birds and fish, gnomes and giants to angels and the

Virgin Mary herself, old women are among the most frequent interveners in the life of the virgin.¹⁰⁵

Not only "The Virgin Mary's Child" and "The Glass Coffin" but also the following fairy tales, in particular "The Nixie at the Pond," "Rapunzel," and "The Goose Girl at the Spring" outline the virgin's physical beauty mainly by descriptions of the hair, and characterize them as good and pure.

The princess in "The Glass Coffin" is robbed by a magician who seeks revenge because she refuses to marry him. He also transforms her beloved brother into a stag, and enchants the whole castle including the servants. A young tailor meets the stag who leads him to the castle. There he finds the princess in a glass coffin: "She lay as if asleep, wrapped in her long blond hair, which seemed like a precious cloak"¹⁰⁶. Compared to the Virgin Mary's child the princess here is laying down and sleeping just like 'Snow White' and 'Brier Rose.'

From a Jungian perspective she has to overcome her symbiotic and incestuous relationship with her older brother who took care of her when her parents died. In other words, the fairy tale describes the daughter's process of separation from the father-figure represented by her brother, which eventually enables her to begin a loving relationship with a man, here the tailor. The state in the glass coffin symbolizes a psychological phase in her life where she is unconscious and distant from the rest of the world. Her castle and the servants who shrank down to miniature size reinforce her limited inner world. In fact, they recall a doll's house and accentuate her child-like personality.

¹⁰⁵ Kathryn Hoffmann, Of Innocents and Hags: The Status of the Female in the Seventeenth- Century Fairy Tale in The Office for Women's Research Working Papers Series, 1994,

Vol. 3. 20-24.

¹⁰⁶ Zipes, 524.

The hair image expresses innocence and beauty. Of course, the tailor is very attracted by her sight, and is even more encouraged to save her. It looks as if the princess takes a *Schönheitsschlaf*, a beautifying sleep. However, if all the figures of this fairy tale are seen as part of one human psyche, only the anima, the female part is sleeping, while the animus, the male part is very active in his endeavors to reach wholeness. It is assumed that this fairy tale is about the development of the human being, man and woman, towards the ability to begin a partnership. Unlike the Virgin Mary's child who is banished by a mother-figure, the princess is robbed by the magician, and then saved by the tailor, both representing her animus. This could explain why this hair motif simply seems to stress her beauty, and not her problems with moral values like it did in "The Virgin Mary's child." Again, the relationship with the mother is not stressed in this fairy tale. It is more the relationship with the father-aspect, and therefore other male figures that has to be explained. The 'anima' simply needs to rest, to go inward in order to grow. She is covered by the glass coffin to undertake an inner process, meanwhile the hair, representing her libido grows, and develops into a more confident and mature aspect of femininity. Once the tailor opens the coffin, she runs out and grabs a real coat to cover her nudity. Then she even kisses the tailor's lips. This shows her ability to freely express affection and to feel comfortable with her sexuality and womanhood.

In "The Glass Coffin" hair is thematically used as a symbol in relationship to oneself (protection and documentation of inner growth), and in relationship to the opposite sex (beauty, innocence, attraction, sexuality). As in the previous tale, the hair is the first thing that is mentioned about the women when the future couples meet.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Glass Coffin"

Long blond hair	Femininity, sensuality, beauty, innocence, attraction, radiance, sexuality
Hair covering the whole body	Virginity, closure in the sense of having completed an inner process

In a similar motif in "The Nixie in the Pond" it is the nixie herself, not necessarily a virgin who appears in front of the miller: "Her long hair, which she clasped by her tender hands over her shoulders, flowed down both sides and covered her white body"¹⁰⁷. According to Verena Kast, nixes and mermaids are seductive female figures who seduce men. They are known to be very passionate, and somehow influence a man in such a way that he loses his mind, and becomes overwhelmed by passionate longings, emotions, and fantasies.¹⁰⁸ The seductiveness of this nixie is clearly reinforced by her 'flowing hair' that covers the nude body. In contrast to the previous two hair motifs, the hair covers here the body of a nixie. Usually a nixie's upper body is human, whereas the lower part consists of a fish tail instead of legs. Hence, it cannot be determined whether the hair covers her human body and the fish tail completely. It can only be concluded that she has very long hair, at least up to her waist. In that sense this hair image differs from the ones interpreted before that explicitly described the hair as covering the body completely. This means that here the long hair does not symbolize closure or closeness but openness. The hair image in "The Virgin Mary's child" was an extreme form of closure. Also, the hair image in "The Glass Coffin" expressed closure but the body movements as the princess

¹⁰⁷ Zipes, 572.

¹⁰⁸ Verena Kast, Wege aus Angst und Symbiose (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 87.

stood up and hurried through the room probably opened her coat of hair already a little bit, symbolizing her readiness for a relationship. The hair in "The Water Nixie" is already more open than in the other two tales which underlines her prevailing eroticism.

Although, the fairy tale does not mention the color of the nixie's hair, it seems to contrast the white body, and therefore must be darker hair. Roderic Gorney writes in his book, The Human Agenda about blond hair in comparison with dark hair. He describes the blond image as

erotic ... glamorous, plainly not that of a reliable, mature homebody, but is always wholesome in the sense of fresh air, honesty, kindness ... On the other hand, the brunette image, which encompasses the devoted, stable, mature-wife-and-mother aspects of femininity, includes also the 'darker' characteristics ... International-spy types, arrogant society ladies, and mean stepmothers usually are typed as brunette.¹⁰⁹

This description of stereotypes supports the notion that it seems much easier to imagine a nixie with dark hair. Moreover, nixes are associated immediately with water, symbolizing the unconscious, thus darker part of the human psyche. Also, the famous paintings "Resonance" and "Hylas and the Nymphs" by John William Waterhouse, created during the same time the fairy tales were collected, picture nymphs with brown hair. Furthermore, this fairy tale brings forth another hair image that will be discussed more extensively in the following section: the wife of the miller's son has to comb her long black hair to get her husband back. The fact that the second hair image describes black hair can also contribute to the assumption that the nixie has dark hair.

The nixie "clasps her hair by her tender hands over her shoulders." This image shows the nixie in a very active state. She uses her hands to touch her

¹⁰⁹ Roderic Gorney, The Human Agenda (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968) 517.

own hair and body to arouse the miller's desire. Again, the connection of hands and hair are *kokettisch* and very seductive. Moreover, her long flowing hair intensifies the dominance of the water element. Things seem to flow pleasantly whereas for the miller they 'get out of hand.' The nixie has it all (the flowing hair) in her hands, and controls the events.

Here, hair symbolism is used in relationship to the opposite sex (attraction, seduction, control). Furthermore, it occurs with the element water; water and hair mutually reinforce their symbolic message.

**Summary of hair symbolism in "The Nixie in the Pond"
(only the first hair motif)**

Long flowing hair covering the (whole) Body	Femininity, sensuality, eroticism beauty, attraction, control seductiveness(connection with water)
'Dark' hair	Connection with the unconscious, with darker forces

2.2. The Magic Combs in "The Nixie in the Pond," "The Water Nixie,"
and "Snow White"

In "The Nixie in the Pond" a miller becomes suddenly very poor. In his desperate state he meets the nixie who promises to make him rich on one condition. She asks him for what has just 'become young' in his house. The miller does not know that his wife has given birth to a son, he thinks more of a young cat or dog, and thus agrees.

Verena Kast interprets this fairy tale as an illustration of a couple's process and development. First, it is the miller's and his wife's relationship that is

interrupted by the nixie, later the relationship of their son and daughter in law. Verena Kast sees the meeting between the miller and the nixie as a representation of his fear and longing for passionate and natural emotions that are as fascinating as they are dangerous. Exactly these emotions are excluded in his marriage, and therefore they are so seductive and dangerous. The interpretation continues to point at the connection between human beings and nixes. This connection expresses the longing for something different, for depth, transcendence, and an experience without limitations. The experience of being without limits is often looked for and found in the realms of Eros and sexuality. However, the miller does not have to further deal with the nixie. The parent's problem is transferred to the son. The motif 'promising and selling the own child' is commonly found in fairy tales. The miller's son's marriage marks the time when he starts to love someone. At this point, the nixie becomes interested in him, and draws him to the lake.¹¹⁰

The fairy tale continues with the description of how his wife tries to win him back. She has a dream in which she is surrounded by the forces of nature:

She was anxiously climbing up a mountain between two huge cliffs. Thorns and briars pricked at her feet. Rain slapped her face, and the wind whipped through her long hair. When she reached the peak, there was an entirely different view. The sky was blue; the air mild. The ground sloped gently downward, and a neat little hut stood on a green meadow covered by flowers. She went towards the hut and opened the door. There sat an old woman with white hair, who beckoned to her in a friendly way.¹¹¹

When she wakes up she starts the journey towards this hut, and finds everything the way the dream predicted it. Verena Kast sees this journey as the process that overcomes the negative woman-mother-goddess image represented

¹¹⁰ Verena Kast, Wege aus Angst und Symbiose (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 88-91.

¹¹¹ Zipes, 574.

by the nixie, and finds the positive woman-mother-goddess image in the wise woman. She writes that climbing up the mountain to the woman with the white hair expresses the rise towards a 'lighter' femininity.¹¹² That means that the white hair is associated with lightness, and wisdom.

The wise woman then gives the young wife a golden comb, and tells her to use it to comb her long black hair at the millpond when the full moon has risen. According to Verena Kast, the hut of the wise woman and its surroundings represent order. This aspect is now reinforced by the symbol of the comb. On one hand the comb is a nixie's tool. A nixie who combs her hair is a common image of seduction. Therefore, here hair combing symbolizes the touch of the life energy or sexual energy, and bringing it into flow. Consequently, the wife is asked to become a little bit like a nixie. She has to beat the nixie with her own weapons. Psychologically this could mean that the woman has to discover and get in touch with her own nixie-self instead of suppressing or ignoring it. The light of the full moon underlines that she is acting consciously in the sense that the night is not fully dark. On the other hand, the comb is a tool that brings order into the hair. On the woman's way up to the hut, her hair is ruffled by the weather and the wind, representing her emotional turmoil. Now the comb brings order into the psyche of the woman, and into her relationship. The comb is golden, which represents its connection to the 'lighter' and more conscious realm of the wise woman. Moreover, gold is the color of the sun, and is complemented by the silver light of the full moon, eventually to foreshadow the upcoming reunion of the married couple. The reason the wife is depicted with black hair instead of blond hair could represent

¹¹² Verena Kast, Wege aus Angst und Symbiose (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 95.

again, like in the first hair image, the involvement with the unconscious forces of nature. Combing the hair with a golden comb can be translated as bringing a conscious energy into the darker part of the self.

Another observation is that the wife is combing her hair at the pond not in the pond. This means compared to the nixie she has more distance towards the unconscious; she is not completely immersed like the nixie and her husband. A pond usually has a calm surface. Together with the moonlight, it functions as a mirror. Again, it is a scene in which the woman consciously reflects. The same hair motif occurs later in "The Goose Girl at the Spring" (See 2.4).

The ritual with the golden comb only brings the husband's head to the surface of the pond. Only the area where hair grows, the head, is attracted by the comb. Afterwards, the wife repeats the ritual with a golden flute and a golden spinning wheel, which finally releases her husband. Then, the millpond's water rises, the wife and her husband are transformed into a toad and a frog, and torn apart. Back on land, they regain their human shape but meet and recognize each other only after many years. This shows according to Verena Kast that the wife could not carry alone the responsibility to save their relationship. Both partners had to experience a growth process by themselves before meeting again and living happily together.

Summarized, hair symbolism is used as a means of characterization (the white hair symbolizing wisdom and lightness). Furthermore hair combing is used in relationship to oneself (bringing order into the psyche), and in relationship to others (attracting the husband, seduction). Again, hair occurs with the element of water.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Nixie in the Pond"

(only the second and third hair motif)

White hair	Wisdom, lightness
Combing long black hair	Femininity, sensuality, beauty, eroticism, seductiveness, attraction Connection with water Control, bringing order into the psyche and relationship
Black hair	Connection with the unconscious, with darker forces
Golden comb	A tool connected to higher forces, that brings order Connection with the sun and the consciousness (gold)

The fairy tale "The Water Nixie" is much shorter than "The Nixie in the Pond" but also contains similar hair symbolism. A brother and a sister are playing and fall in a well. At the bottom, a nixie takes them away with her, and forces them to work hard. One Sunday, when the nixie is in church, they run away. The nixie follows them but first the girl throws a brush behind her, which forms into a mountain with thousand bristles. When the nixie succeeds in climbing over this obstacle, the boy throws a comb behind him that transforms into a mountain with thousand teeth. Again, the nixie manages to climb over that mountain. Only, when the girl throws a mirror behind her, which turns into a glass mountain, the nixie is forced to return and get an ax. By the time she comes back, the children make their escape.

Similar to the nixie presentation in the previous tale, the nixie here represents the negative mother-image; she calls forth the mean stepmother figure. Moreover, she seems to be a very human nixie, since she goes to church, and can climb. The children have to confront this mother, or this mother-aspect; first they have to escape, and then they have to stop her from catching them.

The children make their escape with the help of magical objects: the brush, the comb, and the mirror. Vladimir Propp classifies magical objects according to their common origin. His first group includes claws, hair, skin, and teeth. Those objects are most of the time related to the magical helper because they have the same origin. An example from the Grimm's fairy tales is found in "The Three Sisters"¹¹³. The rubbing of three bear hairs, three eagle feathers, and three scales from a whale connects the young man with the bear, the eagle, and the whale. They are his enchanted brothers-in-law, and assist him on his journey to free themselves and his sisters. Vladimir Propp concludes that parts from an animal are the oldest form of magical objects. For instance, it was believed that if one had a hair from a horse's tail, one had power over it. The second group of magical objects are tools. Again, according to the common beliefs, the magical power comes from the material it is made of, be it an animal, a stone, or a tree. This, as well as the fact that the people had to work less, and instead saw the tool working for them, lead to a deification of the tool. Vladimir Propp continues to explain the concept of power. Power is an abstraction, and it is imagined that the power of an animal is in every part of it, even if the part is separated from it. The idea that power is an invisible being leads to the next step in which power is transferred onto other objects, for instance, rings.¹¹⁴

The first two objects in "The Waternixie" most likely derive from animals. The brush could have been made of wood or out of horn, and has boar or porcupine bristles. In the original texts it says *Stacheln*, stinger or thorns which is connected more to the animal or plant kingdom than to metals. Also the comb could be made out of wood or metal but more likely it is made out of horn. It has

¹¹³ Zipes, 674.

¹¹⁴ Propp, 238-243.

been part of initiation rites in many cultures to get in contact with an animal spirit that was a personal guide and helper. For example, in the Hawaiian culture, this animal friend is called 'Amakua.' The two children undertake a form of initiation. They are making a big step towards their individuality by separating from the restrictive treatment by the nixie. First, it is striking that the three magical objects they use are tools that are related to beauty and femininity. The girl throws the brush behind her, which could symbolize the connection to the boar. Jutta Voss, in the process of researching the history of menstruation discovered "the shocking and fascinating connection between the pig and menstruation"¹¹⁵. The boar has represented in various matriarchale cultures the Goddess of fertility, birth, and rebirth. Therefore, the girl uses her 'femininity and sexuality' to fight the nixie. She uses a tool that beautifies and puts order into the hair, representing her beauty, femininity and libido. When she throws the brush it becomes big and aggressive. Her sexual energy is reinforced by the power of her 'amakua' the boar, and is used in an act of strength and necessary aggression towards the controlling nixie.

The boy uses the comb. On the basis of the assumption that the comb is made out of horn, this tool represents his animal helper the ram. The comb originates from a masculine animal, and it also strengthens the boy's energy. Instead of aggressive stings, the nixie has to deal with aggressive teeth. Nevertheless, the nixie manages to climb over both obstacles. Vladimir Propp found out that often the first two obstacles are of a mechanic nature, whereas the third one is a magical obstacle.¹¹⁶ In this fairy tale, all three obstacles are mechanical as well as magical. However, the third obstacle, the mirror is

¹¹⁵ Jutta Voss, Das Schwarzmund-Tabu: Die kulturelle Bedeutung des weiblichen Zyklus (Stuttgart: Kreuz Verlag, 1988) 9.

¹¹⁶ Propp, 447.

different from the other two. First, it does not have a connection to the animal world, hence not obviously as aggressive. The mirror reflects and rejects the nixie in this fairy tale, and reminds one of the mirror effect of the lake and the full moon in the previous fairy tale "The Nixie in the Pond." Again, the way to become stronger than the Nixie is to use her weapons, to use herself. Eventually, it is the girl who throws the mirror, which leads to their freedom.

Marie-Louise von Franz explains that it is characteristic for the magical escape to throw objects behind. To throw these objects means a sacrifice, and a letting go of something that actually leads to more freedom in movement. Those objects usually transform into nature, and into something they have been before. For example, a comb becomes a forest; it becomes a part of nature, the hair of the earth.¹¹⁷ Since it is the girl who throws two and especially the significant obstacle, this fairy tale could be interpreted as a depiction of a mother-daughter conflict. The brother then represents the animus, the male part within the daughter. The release of the three objects related to beauty and femininity represents the daughter's process towards womanhood. She can let go of her vanity, and becomes more secure of herself and more assertive. The water nixie went home to get an ax. She does not like what she sees in the mirror. Whether it is her age that she cannot confront, or her facial features that have become ugly through her bitterness and control, she wants to destroy the mirror. The symbol of the mirror appears in the next fairy tale "Snow White" with much greater intensity. The hair symbolism in "Snow White" resembles the one in this fairy tale, and is also about the mother-daughter relationship.

¹¹⁷ Marie-Louise von Franz, Psychologische Märcheninterpretation (München: Knauer Verlag, 1989) 169-170.

The hair symbolism in "The Water Nixie" is covered by objects related to hair that refer to femininity, beauty, sexuality and aggression. These objects are used in a magical way to alter the relationship to another person, in particular towards the mother, and to grow as a person.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Water Nixie"

The brush	A tool that beautifies, put order into the hair A magical tool that becomes an expression of sexual and aggressive power, or instinctive animal consciousness Connection to the boar
The comb ram	Same as the brush, except it has a connection to the

The fairy tale "Snow White" starts with a motif that includes the hair, and is repeated several times throughout the tale. In the winter, a Queen sits at the window and sews. She pricks her finger with a needle and three drops of blood fall in the snow. Then, she utters her wish that sounds like a magical formula:

If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window frame! Soon after she gave birth to a little daughter who was as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair as black as ebony.¹¹⁸

There are various interpretation of "Snow White" available. In order to understand the symbolism of the black hair, different versions of the color symbolism are presented. For instance, the Queen wants to become pregnant, and addresses herself to the Goddess of birth and fertility. When the Queen speaks out her wish, she calls upon the colors of the great Goddess. White is the color of the young Goddess; it symbolizes innocence and purity. Red is the color

¹¹⁸ Zipes, 196.

of fertility, and black is the color of the old, wise Goddess from the underworld.

Jutta Voss writes

that 30,000 years ago human beings started to reprint their hands on the walls of caves. They used red or black on a white background. These three colors developed from the perception of the menstrual cycle that has three phases. The white phase is the rebuilding of the uterus membrane, red is the process of filling the uterus with blood, and black is the time of sterility when the blood leaves the body. Externally this is a 'red' phase too but internally, mythologically recognized, it is a time without blood. Moreover, black is related to the new moon, also called the black moon, the time of menstruation. The black-white-red cycle is the religious experience of the menstruation and the moon.¹¹⁹

This motif is based upon the triad of the colors black, white and red. To use the combination of these three colors for the description of a woman, black seems to be the logical choice for the hair, white for the skin, and red for the lips. This is probably the main reason why Snow White is depicted with black hair. Compared to other Grimm's fairy tales, black hair occurs less often than blond, golden or gray hair.

Robert Bly interprets the same color symbolism in his book about the fairy tale "Iron Hans." The fairy tale's hero rides three horses of different colors: red, white, and black. Robert Bly calls this the masculine sequence as opposed to the Great Mother sequence:

White, red, black names the three phases of the moon: first the white of the Virgin as the New Moon; then the red of Motherhood as the Full Moon; and finally the black of the Crone as the Old Moon.¹²⁰

In an anthroposophical interpretation of "Snow White" the Queen's wish for a child is seen as the wish for a change in a soul's consciousness. The color white expresses this change on the mental level, and red on the heart level. The

¹¹⁹ Voss, 248. (my translation)

¹²⁰ Robert Bly, Iron John: A Book about Men (New York: Vintage Books, 1992) 201.

black color of the wooden frame refers to selfless work that has to be strong as the black ebony. A person with black hair is considered to have abundant iron in his or her blood, which represents an 'iron will.'¹²¹ Sybille Birkhäuser-Oeri sees the colors differently; white is connected to the supernatural, to the other worlds; red symbolizes warmth, life, emotions, and black represents the evil. According to her Snow White is not just a pure innocent girl but has vanity, jealousy, and hate in her, represented in the character of her stepmother.¹²² Similar to the black hair motif in "The Nixie in the Pond," Sybille Birkhäuser-Oeri sees Snow White's black hair representing darkness. However, Snow White's hair color has to be defined within the triad instead of as a single color.

Later, the stepmother¹²³ wants to be the most beautiful woman, and asks her magical mirror who is the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. When Snow White is seven years old, the mirror answers that it is she who is now the most beautiful woman. The Queen orders a huntsman to kill her but he feels pity for her, and lets her go. Snow White finds shelter in the home of the seven dwarfs, but since the mirror continues to tell the Queen that Snow White is the most beautiful, the Queen has to think of other ways to kill her. The Queen changes herself into an old peddler woman, and offers Snow White a staylace that suffocates her. However, the dwarfs save her, and when the Queen returns home, she asks her mirror:

'Mirror, mirror, on the wall,

¹²¹ Friedel Lenz, Bildsprache der Märchen (Stuttgart: Verlag Urachaus, 1984) 27.

¹²² Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri, Die Mutter im Märchen: Deutung der Problematik des Mütterlichen und des Mutterkomplexes am Beispiel bekannter Märchen (Stuttgart: Bonz, 1977) 62.

¹²³ In the original "Snow White" the mother does not die. The Grimms added the step-mother in their later version probably with the intention to make the tale more suitable for children. A real mother could never be that mean, therefore the figure of the step-mother was established.

who in this realm is the fairest of all?'
Then the mirror answers as usual:
'You, my queen, may have beauty quite rare,
but beyond the mountains, where the seven dwarfs dwell,
Snow White is thriving, and this I must tell:
Within this realm she's still a thousand times more fair.'
When the queen heard that, she was so upset that all her blood rushed to her heart, for she realized that Snow White had recovered. 'This time I'm going to think of something that will destroy her,' she said, and by using all the witchcraft at her command, she made a poison comb.¹²⁴

Then the Queen transforms into an old woman, and sells Snow White the comb. She suggests giving Snow White a proper hair combing, and as soon as the comb touches Snow White's hair she falls to the ground. Again, this time the dwarfs save her, and the third time the Queen offers her a poisoned apple. Now, the dwarfs are helpless because Snow White is dead. Yet, her body does not decay; therefore they place her into a glass coffin, in which she rests for many years. Finally, a prince sees Snow White, and asks the dwarfs for permission to take her with him. When his servants carry the coffin away, the piece of apple is released from Snow White's throat, and she awakes. The wedding of the prince and Snow White follows. The Queen is also invited but she has to put on hot iron slippers, and dance until she is dead.

According to Gerhard Szonn this fairy tale is about the mother-daughter relationship. It shows the solution for the daughter to break free from a naive child-like fixation. Only the relationship to another person, here represented by the prince enables the daughter to transform the neurotic bond. This interpretation can be used for the same development on an inner level, within a person. Snow White and the prince can be seen as the anima and the animus of either a man or a woman.

¹²⁴ Zipes, 200.

First, Gerhard Szonn points at the various symbols and motifs that characterize the mother-daughter relationship as cold, indifferent, and competitive. The mother's rejection and jealousy become hate that results in the wish to kill the daughter: "The daughter was already dead for the mother because her motherhood was never alive"¹²⁵. In order to kill the daughter, the mother has to approach her in a maternal role. He continues to analyze the meaning of the staylace, the comb, and the apple. The staylace represents the mother's influence over her daughter's body. The daughter's feminine body forms are tied up, so that they cannot threaten the mother anymore. Gerhard Szonn claims that the comb is not just a simple hair combing tool. Moreover, it is a piece of adornment worn by girls or women on special occasions because "it pleased her so much". Consequently, he interprets that the daughter's secret wish to beautify herself was suppressed, and endangered her when it surfaced.¹²⁶ Yet, the Queen's suggestion to give Snow White a "thorough hair combing" that his assumption in that pieces of adornment were usually not used for hair combing. However, whether the comb is meant to adorn the hair or to comb it, in both cases the comb has to do with beautification and thus represents a powerful tool. Gerhard Szonn sees the poisoned apple as another symbol connected to the daughter's sexuality. Furthermore, he points out an interesting aspect of the symbol trilogy: as Snow White bites into the apple she shows more activity than before when the Queen puts on the staylace or combs her hair. She is in between maturity and fixation, acceptance and rejection of the motherly

¹²⁵ Gerhard Szonn, Entwicklung und Reife im Märchen: Einige Märchen der Brüder Grimm tiefenpsychologisch gedeutet (Fellbach-Oeffingen: Bonz Verlag, 1989) 61.

¹²⁶ Szonn, 63.

role model. Her childlikeness is powerless against the awakening of her sexuality, and she withdraws into a state of fixation, Erstarrung.¹²⁷

Sybille Birkhäuser-Oeri interprets the staylace as well as the hair poisoning as tools that kill Snow White's vanity. When the Queen puts the staylace on Snow White she takes away her ability to breathe, and the life breath represents the mental sphere a person lives in. Moreover, she sees hair as something that grows out of the head thus representing unconscious thoughts and fantasies. One group of thoughts is within the head and in order, whereas another group is not in order, and is represented by hair. A poisoning through hair could mean that a person hurts itself with poisonous thoughts and imaginations that kill real feelings. Here, these poisonous thoughts are of a jealous and vain nature; the poison comes from the Queen who personifies jealousy.¹²⁸

As shown earlier in the presentation of "The Virgin Mary's Child," again it seems that different schools of interpretation choose either the theme sexuality or spirituality when the hair image is analyzed. According to Gerhard Szonn the poisoned comb symbolizes a poisoned femininity and sexuality. In a different interpretation by Theodor Seifert, it says "as we know from Samson and Delilah, our hair symbolically can represent a spiritual power and an ability that only all too easily can be poisoned"¹²⁹. He offers a more general interpretation of "Snow White" that addresses the fairy tale's symbolism in regards to the question of how a man or woman can win back their life and feelings.

¹²⁷ Szonn, 64.

¹²⁸ Birkhäuser-Oeri, 67-68.

¹²⁹ Theodor Seifert, Snow White: Life almost lost (Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1986) 98.

The motif of the Queen who touches Snow White's hair with the poisoned comb resembles in its symbolic meaning the hair cutting motif in "Rapunzel"(see next section). In both motifs, one person takes over the other using the hair as the medium. In "Snow White" various belief systems and superstitions become transparent. First, the old woman resembles a witch. The text even says that she uses "all her witchcraft." Witches were said to be able to do all sorts of things with human hair. For example, if they manipulated a piece of a person's or animal's hair, this would made them sick or crazy.¹³⁰ In the end the Queen is burnt. The burning of witches was the most common practice to kill them because fire would dissolve especially their hair and blood which people feared. Again, as Vladimir Propp has pointed out, this shows the belief that one part of the human body represents the whole. Furthermore, physical contact with one part can influence the rest of the body positively (healing) or negatively (cursing) even if those parts are physically separated. A connection is established that is magical because it is not visible or obvious. In "Snow White" the poison that comes in contact with Snow White's hair affects her whole body. Commonly, poison has to enter a person's blood stream to cause sickness or death. Here, this principle is altered, and transferred onto hair. The Queen's magic poison enters Snow White's long hair, and is spread through the hair into her energy system. Paracelsus believed hair to be a very special substance. Indeed, hair is a part of the body that does not seem to be as physical as skin, muscles, and bones. As an extension of the body it reaches into the electro-magnetic field, the aura. Moreover, this hair motif proves that people did not see hair as something dead. Scientists of this century like to define hair as 'dead' because it only reproduces

¹³⁰ Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Volkskunde, 1278.

itself at its roots. This idea of hair does not consider the concept of the life force or life energy that can be stored, transmitted, or absorbed by hair.

Moreover, this hair motif contains the belief that the one who has power over someone's hair has power over that person. Inevitably, this motif brings up the relationship between mother and daughter because it is the stepmother who suggests combing the daughter's hair. The motivation behind this hair combing motif is opposed to the motivation expressed in, for instance, Gerard Ter Borch's painting 'Moederlijke Zorgen'¹³¹ Gerard Ter Borch (1617-1681) painted a mother who is carefully cleaning and combing her child's hair. The mother's facial expression shows concern and absorption. The child looks eager to continue playing with the red ball in the hands. The overall mood of this painting is loving and caring combined with tension because it seems that the child's patience will not last much longer. Also nowadays, the daily hair combing between parents and their children often tends to be rather tense. Children's impatience to sit or stand still collides with the parents' efforts to disentangle their hair as quickly as possible, which then results in painful sensations and screaming. Consequently, it is very difficult to motivate children to get their hair combed again. Usually, these unpleasant scenes happen at a young age but they start the experience of hair as something that is not under one's control.

The tension between children and parents about hair continues when the child reaches puberty or even earlier, like Snow White at seven or eight years of age. Then it is for reasons of rivalry, or rebellion. Gabriele Wohmann writes in the novel Paulinchen war allein zu Haus, about the relationships between the author-couple Christa and Kurt and their eight year old adopted daughter Paula. Gabriele Wohmann satirically describes all aspects of their living together, and

¹³¹ Translation: Motherly Concerns

criticizes progressive and modern educational behavior. She depicts a large number of intricate psychological patterns, problems and dysfunctional behavior. She uses the topic hair to express a dramatic (step-)mother-daughter conflict. In this conflict, Paula, who tends to disappear in the bathroom to watch herself in the mirror, is surprised by Christa.

She frightened me enormously. All of a sudden, she stood behind me. She ripped the comb out of my hand; she almost ripped out some of my hair, almost all my hair, definitely, she ripped out some hair, my dear poor hair.¹³²

This is the only scene in the novel that portrays physical violence. Christa breaks her own rule never to hit her child because she catches a little girl playing with her hair in front of the mirror. Why did she not lose control earlier or was this the final trigger to release built-up anger? There have been many more moments when Paula actually provoked Christa and Kurt. Afterwards, Christa continues to defend herself. She says that Paula looks funny and ridiculous, when she brushes her hair up. Paula's observations of Christa's hair styling expose Christa as a liar. Christa pretends to wear her hair naturally but she compensates for the thinness of her hair by brushing against it. She even uses rollers. Then Christa claims her hair style to be all natural. The scene in the bathroom looks like a modern reproduction combined of the mirror scene in "Snow White" and the main hair cutting motif in "Rapunzel." Christa recalls the evil stepmother who cannot bear to see someone else in the mirror to be more beautiful someday. Not quite as drastic as the sorceress in "Rapunzel" Christa takes away only some hair (and the magic beautifying comb) and hits the girl.

¹³² Gabriele Wohmann, Paulinchen war allein zu Haus. (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1974) 142.

Sie hat mich unheimlich erschreckt. Sie stand ganz plötzlich hinter mir, sie hat mir den Kamm aus der Hand gerissen, sie hat mir die Haare beinahe ausgerissen, beinahe alle meine Haare, bestimmt hat sie einige Haare ausgerissen, meine lieben armen Haare.

Later on Paula offers Christa to let her cut her hair. She has no idea that Paula sees haircutting as physical punishment. This rather masochistic attempt to win some sympathy back is not recognized by Christa as such.

Reflecting on these examples, the connection of hair with beauty, responsibility, and self-esteem comes to mind. Snow White likes the idea of being combed. She probably has not only a need for beautifying herself as Gerhard Szonn sees it but also wants to be taken care of. She does not recognize the old woman as her stepmother thus the old woman is a stranger to her. Her willingness to put her hair into the hands of a stranger brings up two traits of human behavior. First, it reminds one of the common influence that society's ideas about beauty have on people. The beauty ideals leave people in a passive state for the sole purpose to please others. Secondly, people tend to give up responsibility for their hair to the hair dresser as they give up responsibility for their bodies and health to the doctor. So does Snow White; she wants to please, and she is not mature enough to take care of her body and beauty herself. Her self-esteem is not very high, and she lets an external influence take over.

In no way do these interpretations intend to contribute to a negative woman or mother image. Again, as a process Snow White's fate can take place on various levels for child, man or woman. The mother can be an aspect within a person's psyche. For example, a man or a woman can set up a similar scenario in his or her life by attracting a mate who criticizes their appearance. The criticism can be experienced as 'being put down,' and only an effort to improve self-esteem will keep the individual immune to 'the poison.'

Whether an anthroposophical or a psychoanalytical interpretation is considered, this fairy tale is about beauty, and the hair images twice reinforce this theme. The first hair image is part of a profound color symbolism that

reinforces femininity, womanhood, and beauty as well as 'negative' characteristics such as vanity and jealousy. It is used in relationship with the same sex (the mother-daughter relationship) as well as to the opposite sex (the prince). The poisonous hair combing expresses the aspects of rivalry, destructiveness and hate in the mother-daughter relationship (within oneself or externally).

Summary of hair symbolism in "Snow White"

Black hair	Beauty, femininity, attractiveness Connection to the Goddess (to her darker aspects) Vanity, jealousy (darker characteristics)
Poisonous hair combing	Control over another human being's life, poisoning someone's life energy, thoughts Rivalry, jealousy, hate Suppression of sexuality Witchcraft
Hair	Thoughts

2.3. The hair cutting motif in "Rapunzel" and "Snow White and Rose Red"

The following interpretations for the fairy tale "Rapunzel," used for the understanding of hair symbolism, are mostly written from the perspective of the woman. As in "Snow White," "Rapunzel" also strongly addresses the mother-daughter relationship and aspects of womanhood by using hair imagery. However, the psychological interpretations can always be applied to the psyche of man and woman. Since the hair imagery is so essential in this fairy tale, the

following presentation summarizes the fairy tale first, and then continues with various interpretations instead of as earlier letting content and interpretation alternate.

The fairy tale "Rapunzel" starts with a couple who for a long time wishes a child. Finally, the wife becomes pregnant. During her pregnancy she looks into the neighbor's garden that belongs to a sorceress. She sees Rapunzel lettuce, and develops such an intense craving for it that her husband has to go and get her some. When he goes for the second time, he is caught by the sorceress who lets him take some but only under one condition. She asks to get the child, and promises to take good care of it. As soon as the daughter is born, the sorceress appears, gives her the name 'Rapunzel' and takes her with her.

Rapunzel grew to be the most beautiful girl under the sun. But when she was twelve years old, the sorceress locked her in a tower that was in a forest. It had neither door nor stairs, only a little window high above. Whenever the sorceress wanted to get in, she would stand below and call out: 'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair for me.' Rapunzel's hair was long and radiant, as fine as spun gold. Every time she heard the voice of the sorceress, she unpinned her braids and wound them around a hook on the window. Then she let her hair drop twenty yards, and the sorceress would climb up on it.¹³³

Years later, a prince comes by, and hears Rapunzel voice as she sings. Then, he observes how the sorceress climbs up to see Rapunzel, and the next day he uses the same formula. First Rapunzel is afraid but soon she finds a liking for him, and they plan to get married. They prepare the escape but one day Rapunzel speaks to the sorceress:

'Mother Gothel, how is it that you're much heavier than the prince? When I pull him up, he's here in a second.' 'Ah, you godless child!' exclaimed the sorceress. 'What's this I hear? I thought I had made sure you had no contact with the outside world, but you deceived me!' In her fury she seized Rapunzel's beautiful hair, wrapped it around her left hand several times, grabbed a pair of scissors with her right hand, and snip, snap the

¹³³ Zipes, 47-48.

hair was cut off, and the beautiful braids lay on the ground.¹³⁴

Then, the sorceress takes Rapunzel to a desolate land, returns to the tower, and waits for the prince. She fastens Rapunzel's braids to the hook on the window, and when the prince comes, she pulls him up. The prince jumps down in despair, and thorns pierce his eyes, so that he becomes blind. Then, he wanders around for years in misery. One day he hears Rapunzel's voice. She has meanwhile given birth to twins, a boy and a girl. When she recognizes him, two of her tears drop on his eyes, and he can see again. They go back to his kingdom, and live happily together.

At the age of twelve, the sorceress locks Rapunzel into a tower. At this point, three different interpretations are presented. It begins with the motif of the virgin's encasement, and is expanded with Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri's views on motherhood, femininity, and personal wholeness. Rudolf Meyer's and Rudolf Geiger's anthroposophical aspects are added, and then Eugen Drewermann's analytical approach provides further insights.

As in "The Virgin Mary's Child" and "The Glass Coffin," "Rapunzel" contains the motif of the 'virgin's enclosure,' and her hair is also of a golden color. The time that Rapunzel spends in the tower could be seen as a necessary isolation in her initiation to womanhood. Rites of initiation that seem to be cruel today, have been regarded in various cultures as sacred and essential for the development of young boys and girls. Rapunzel is isolated at the time when puberty, a new phase in her life, starts. The sorceress is called 'Frau Gothel,' which means Mrs. Godmother thus she represents the mother, and the teacher. During the time of Rapunzel's isolation, she visits her, and eventually teaches her about life, womanhood, and magic. Rapunzel's hair is the connection between

¹³⁴ Zipes, 49.

Rapunzel and the sorceress that can even be of a complete metaphysical nature. Rapunzel's hair symbolizes the link between heaven and earth. Moreover, her hairs are antennas, feelers that enable her to relate. Considering the matriarchal message in this motif, she could communicate telepathically with the earth aspect of the Great Goddess.

Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri explains the isolation in the context of the mother-complex. She sees the mother-complex as the psychological state of a person who is enchanted on one hand by the personal mother, and on the other hand by the mother archetype. Furthermore, the personal mother is empowered to enchant her child by the mother archetype that represents the bond with the collective unconscious. The unconscious, often requires an indispensable isolation that has the purpose to protect an inner growth progress.¹³⁵

The interpretation continues to describe this growth progress as a development towards wholeness. Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri sees the sorceress who lives in the garden behind a wall as a separation from one aspect of the mother or the motherly unconscious. Anything that is split off has a destructive effect, which explains her negative characteristics. Nevertheless, the sorceress has something that Rapunzel's mother craves for while she is pregnant. The mother wants to eat Rapunzel salad. This means that Rapunzel wants to be nourished with food that helps her to grow towards wholeness. Rapunzel salad consists of green leaves and strong roots. Symbolically, she demands the earth-aspect that stands for deeply rooted inner values. However, later Rapunzel is put in a tower, away from the ground. This means that she represents the lighter aspects

¹³⁵ Birkhäuser-Oeri, 156.

of femininity, and it is her task to find her way back to earth by integrating the darker earth-mother aspect.¹³⁶

Although the sorceress takes Rapunzel away, it is the mother who allows this to happen. The sorceress and the mother are representing two aspects of the mother. In reference to the aspect represented by the sorceress, it is a common psychological phenomenon that mothers can be overly protective of their children. Some mothers hide especially their daughters from outside influences, in particular from young man. The notion of protection reaches a state of control that the fairy tale prescribes as an imprisonment.

"Rapunzel grew to be the most beautiful girl under the sun ... Rapunzel's hair was long and radiant, as fine as spun gold." Rapunzel's beauty and her light aspect are stressed by the associations and comparisons with the sun and with gold. The golden hair symbolizes her connection to heaven and to the sun. Moreover, angels are often depicted with long golden hair. This association amplifies Rapunzel's link towards heavens just as the symbol of the golden hair does, already earlier in "The Virgin Mary's Child." The adjectives 'long,' 'radiant,' and 'fine' reinforce the sun imagery; they evoke the impression of the hair as the sun's rays.

Golden hair could simply stand for blond hair, or for blond hair in the sun-light. In that case it would originate from the blond hair that many European people have, especially in North and Central Europe. However, golden hair seems to be more than just a form of embellishment of people's hair. It has been a custom in different cultures to color the hair, or to adorn it with gold dust. For instance, in Egypt, Greece or Persia this was a privilege of

¹³⁶ Birkhäuser-Oeri, 161-165

royalties to express their specific status.¹³⁷ In that sense, golden hair can represent a crown, usually made of gold, and placed on top of the head. Moreover, hair described as radiant as the sun calls to mind a halo, in other words a spiritual crown. This halo radiates from the energy center in the middle of the head, the crown chakra. Through this chakra a person receives cosmic energy that illuminates the whole person. Again, it is the hair that seems to be the most appropriate symbol to suit this motif. Rudolf Meyer understands Rapunzel's golden hair as a state of an ancient and sacred consciousness, and as a state of enlightenment. Every time Rapunzel lets her hair down, her consciousness drops down into the depth.¹³⁸ It is pulled down by the negative forces represented by the sorceress.

Almost all hair symbolism is built upon two facts about hair. The first one is that hair grows; the second fact is that hair grows mainly on top of the head. Hair is associated as the seat of life energy or seen in connection with the life energy because it grows. Hair and nails are the parts of the body that grow visibly, whereas arms, legs, etc., from a certain age on do not grow anymore. Therefore, hair is a suitable symbol to express psychological or spiritual growth. In that sense, golden hair stands for a 'golden' process. Gold is a precious and rare metal; this means that the process of personal development makes a person precious and noble. In addition, it might be self-evident to associate hair with consciousness because most of it is located on the head, around the human brain.

Golden hair appears in the following fairy tales several times. It has to be clarified that the interpretations on the symbolism of golden hair refer to the color gold, not to blond. This is to avoid a reinforcement of the widespread

¹³⁷ Gorney, 520.

¹³⁸ Rudolf Meyer, Die Weisheit der deutschen Volksmärchen (Stuttgart: Urachhaus, 1940) 22.

unconscious and conscious stereotyping of blond hair as in any way superior to darker hair shades. The danger of this stereotyping is racism and discrimination against millions of people on this earth.

Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri builds her interpretation of Rapunzel's hair on a combination of the growth and location aspects. She compares Rapunzel's hair with fishing gear that is thrown down to earth, looking for the contact with reality. According to her, hair as something that grows out of the head, represents thoughts. Since Rapunzel's hair grows involuntarily, her thoughts are seen as unconscious imaginations that go very deep. Rapunzel uses her hair to pull up themes out of the lively depth, *der lebendigen Tiefe*. First it is the sorceress but then to her surprise she pulls up the prince. The meeting of the Prince and Rapunzel could only happen in an unconscious way symbolized by her hair.

Later, the sorceress cuts off Rapunzel's hair, which symbolically, cuts her off from her deep unconscious thoughts. This motif shows a momentary darkening of the values she personifies. The sorceress becomes the night that steals the golden rays of the sun. The night wants to devour the sun completely but instead initiates the rebirth. Rapunzel is now bald-headed, and starts another phase in her life that will lead her to wholeness.¹³⁹

Sibylle Birkhäuser-Oeri explains the symbolism of Rapunzel's hair as a reinforcement of the fairy tale's central theme. She summarizes this theme in that she interprets the fairy tale's title. Rapunzel is the name of a plant, and since Rapunzel carries the plant's name she has to develop its symbolism. The plant is one of the most beautiful symbols for wholeness. It grows towards the light, and stays connected with the earth. It symbolizes a connection between body and

¹³⁹ Birkhäuser-Oeri, 166-173.

spirit.¹⁴⁰ Hair is like a plant; it is rooted in the scalp and grows out of the head. In that sense, the dominance of the hair symbolism in this fairy tale becomes obvious. Rapunzel is her hair, or in other words, the plant Rapunzel salad and the hair are symbolizing the same: the personality development of the woman Rapunzel. This means that hair symbolizes more than the connection of different aspects of femininity. As shown earlier, it can be associated with consciousness (the golden hair) and with the unconscious (involuntarily growing thoughts) thus representing the whole psyche, the whole being.

Rudolf Geiger, too, interprets the fairy tale as the transition of a human soul from a mother-attachment to independence. The sorceress represents at first the Great Mother, then, when she cuts off Rapunzel's hair the goddess of revenge. The hair cutting symbolizes separation, and the loss of her hair is the prize that Rapunzel has to pay to gain the prince and her freedom. The pair of scissors function as a tool of separation; they separate the pure nature's gift from the soul.¹⁴¹

Also, according to Eugen Drewermann, the separation process of the daughter from the mother is described so that she can develop into an independent woman who is able to have a relationship. The hair represents the connection between mother and daughter. Later, the first man in Rapunzel's life, the prince, reaches Rapunzel through the same way. Since their loving relationship can not develop next to the unresolved relationship with the mother-figure, they plan an escape.

Eugen Drewermann points at the way that escape is planned. The prince could have brought a ladder instead of bringing each time a piece of silk. This is

¹⁴⁰ Zipes, 175.

¹⁴¹ Rudolf Geiger, Märchenkunde: Mensch und Schicksal im Spiegel der Grimmschen Märchen (Stuttgart: Urachhaus, 1987) 220-221.

because both need time, patience, and sensitivity for the process of bonding and separating (from the mother). Moreover, they do not choose another possibility: Rapunzel could have cut her own hair and use them as a rope. Yet, she is not willing to sacrifice her most precious attributes of beauty and femininity.¹⁴²

When the mother learns about her daughter's loving relationship she cuts off her hair that can be seen as the umbilical cord, the mother-daughter connection. Jeffrey Andersen claims that "the hair cutting has three functions: it causes the loss of a beautiful part of Rapunzel's body; it destroys the mother-daughter bond, and empowers the mother to have something that belonged to her daughter"¹⁴³. Eugen Drewermann compares Rapunzel with some girls and women in our daily life who suddenly in an act of self-punishment cut their hair very short. Most of the time this is some kind of *Bußritus*, penance ritual done out of fear for love. When Buddhist monks enter the order or Catholic clerics receive ordination, they shave their hair to express the renunciation of the wish for human tenderness and intimacy by sacrificing visibly one of their secondary marks of gender. So is the cutting of Rapunzel's hair an attempt to eradicate, *ausmerzen*, her appearance as something sinful. A woman's beautiful long hair has a peculiar fascination, *eigentümliche Faszination*, that seemingly has to be destroyed in favor of a motherly ideal of purity and morality.¹⁴⁴

The hair cutting motif also can express an act of punishment that has been practiced from earlier historical times on. Earlier on, homosexuals, whores,

¹⁴² Eugen Drewermann, Die kluge Else / Rapunzel (Freiburg i. Breisgau / Olten: Walter Verlag, 1987) 83.

¹⁴³ Jeffrey Andersen, Rapunzel: The Symbolism of the Cutting of the Hair in Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 1980, Vol.28 (1) 69-96.

¹⁴⁴ Eugen Drewermann, Die kluge Else / Rapunzel (Freiburg i. Breisgau / Olten: Walter Verlag, 1987) 85.

betrayers were humiliated by shaving the hair.¹⁴⁵ In Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm's Deutsches Wörterbuch it says that "cutting someone's hair was a dishonoring punishment. During war time, soldiers used to cut the hair off women's heads who came along with them, when they were tired of them. Then, they chased the women away"¹⁴⁶.

In her novel (sic)¹⁴⁷ Hiroshima, Mon Amour, Marguerite Duras describes in a moving way the experience of a twenty year old French woman who committed the crime of loving a German soldier at the end of World War II. She was imprisoned in a cellar for many days in order to become sensible; when she was released, and considered as a witch, her hair was shaved off.¹⁴⁸

Hair and nails are the only body parts that can be taken away from the body without physically hurting the person. Of course they can also be taken away in a painful way. Yet, the pain experienced often is of an emotional nature, and seldom subsides faster than the hair itself needs time to grow back.

Thematically, hair is used in "Rapunzel" to express the development of a woman, or human being towards wholeness and independence. The hair motifs occur in the relationship to oneself, to the mother, and to the opposite sex. Hair imagery in this fairy tale symbolizes connection, and integration, as well as separation.

Summary of hair symbolism in "Rapunzel"

¹⁴⁵ Eugen Drewermann, Die kluge Else/ Rapunzel (Freiburg i. Breisgau/ Olten: Walter Verlag, 1987) 99.

¹⁴⁶ Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1877) Vol.4, 2. Abteilung. 10.

¹⁴⁷ Hiroshima, Mon Amour is not a novel but a screen-play.

Marguerite Duras, Hiroshima, Mon Amour (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1960)

¹⁴⁸ Eugen Drewermann, Die kluge Else/ Rapunzel (Freiburg i. Breisgau/ Olten: Walter Verlag, 1987) 99.

Long hair	Beauty, femininity, attractiveness Connection to the Goddess (to the darker earth aspect) Connection between body and spirit Link between heaven and earth Antennas, feelers that enable to communicate Protection of an/and inner growth progress Bond to the mother, umbilical cord
Golden hair	Connection to heaven, to angels, and to the sun, sun rays Crown, royalty, halo, crown chakra Sacred or higher state of consciousness State of enlightenment
Hair	Thoughts Plant Whole being, whole psyche
Hair cutting	Detachment from the symbiotic mother and daughter relationship Separation Loss of the mother, loss of the daughter
Hair cutting against the will	Punishment, banishment, dishonoring, humiliation, emotional pain
Scissors	Tool of separation

The fairy tale "Snow White and Rose Red" is about two sisters who live with their mother in a cottage near the forest. Their idyllic life is interrupted one day, when a bear knocks at their door. He becomes the sister's playmate, and visits them all winter long. As spring time starts, he leaves to watch over his treasures that are endangered by dwarfs. Snow White and Rose Red meet one of those dwarfs three times. The first time, the dwarf's beard is caught in the crack of an old tree. Snow White helps him by taking out a pair of scissors and cutting

him free. Yet, the dwarf is ungrateful, and even insults the girls for having cut off his fine beard. Then, he takes a sack of gold, and leaves. The second time, the sisters meet the dwarf at a brook. His beard is entangled in a fishing-line, and a fish is pulling strongly on it. Again, they cut off a piece of his beard. The dwarf's response is as unfriendly as before:

You birdbrains! You've disfigured my face like barbarians. It was not enough that you clipped the tip of my beard. Now, you've cut off the best part. I won't be able to show myself among my friends.¹⁴⁹

Then, the dwarf grabs a sack of pearls, and walks away. The third time, the sisters save him from an eagle. When they return from their errands, they surprise the dwarf with all his jewels. Suddenly, the bear appears and kills the dwarf. The girls, who run away, hear their names and finally recognize their friend. As the bear approaches them, his bearskin falls off and he appears as a handsome prince. He has been under the dwarf's spell and only the latter's death could release him. In the end, Snow White marries the prince, and Rose Red marries his brother.

Eugen Drewermann explains how Snow White and Rose Red can be seen as two parts of the human psyche that strive for balance: Snow White represents the aspect of introversion, whereas Rose Red is more of an extroverted nature. Moreover, Snow White stands for purity, and Rose Red for passion. The bear, that comes to play symbolizes sensuality and the beginning of sexuality. He stands in opposition to the dwarf who represents morality.

Snow White and Rose Red meet the nasty dwarf and cut off part of his beard. This means that in their growth progress that requires the integration of sensuality and sexuality, they have to cut off 'a moral conscience' symbolized by

¹⁴⁹ Zipes, 520.

the dwarf's beard. In that sense, the pair of scissors represents the presence, and the beard stands for something old that is not longer of use. In the first hair cutting scene, they free the dwarf's beard from an old tree. The dwarf's 'beard is caught' is a translation of the original: '*der Bart ist eingeklemmt.*' Therefore, the dwarf is '*verklemmt,*' which translates as 'the dwarf is sexually inhibited.'¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, the dwarf's attitude towards his beard shows his vanity and his clinging on to the old.

Marie-Louise Franz asks why the dwarf gets stuck with his beard. She reflects on the meaning of hair, and states that hair reminds of animal consciousness, *Tierhaftigkeit*. Hair is what is left from the lost fur, and stands for primitive behavior and instinct. Around the head, hair represents unconscious thoughts and fantasies. The beard is hair around the mouth; therefore for her, it represents ideas and words that come out of the mouth. In this fairy tale, the beard of the animus stands for an uncontrollable unconscious flow of logos that can be very destructive. Marie-Louise Franz sees the dwarf as an egotistical, unthankful, and overly compensating trait of the exaggerated femininity expressed by the sisters.¹⁵¹ Following up on Marie-Louise Franz' views, every time, the sisters cut off his beard hair they make a step towards a more healthy femininity. Although it seems that they lose within their selfless helpfulness, they actually change the dwarf. They use a pair of scissors, a tool that can be considered an aggressive tool. Yet, it is an ingenious tool which is constructive for a hair dresser or tailor. Also, the scissors is associated with the intellect. It cuts like rational thinking; it cuts through pure will or feeling. In order to cut

¹⁵⁰ Eugen Drewermann, Rapunzel, Rapunzel, laß dein Haar herunter: Grimm's Märchen tiefenpsychologisch gedeutet (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992) 18-60.

¹⁵¹ Marie-Louise Franz, Das Weibliche im Märchen (Stuttgart: Bonz, 1977) 60-67.

hair one needs assertiveness and determination. There is no maybe or half way possible; either the hair is to be cut or not. As Rudolf Geiger points out, it is Snow White who has the pair of scissors and cuts off the hair because it is part of her introverted nature to analyze and to separate. Similar to Marie-Louise Franz he explains that even if it looks as if the sisters help the dwarf and not their friend the bear, they actually take away the dwarf's power. Rudolf Geiger thinks of the power that uncut hair has, as expressed in the story of Samson and Delilah, and sees the act of cutting the hair as a way to destroy the dwarf's aura, and therefore weaken him.¹⁵²

The hair symbolism in this fairy tale is used to express an inner growth process that is necessary for the development of healthy sexuality. The hair (beard) cutting represents assertiveness and self-determination.

Summary of hair symbolism in "Snow White and Rose Red"

Long beard	Age, old or conservative moral values Hanging on to the old, vanity
Beard cutting	Separation from restrictive moral values Releasing a bad conscience Assertiveness, determination Weakening that what is embodied by the dwarf A step towards personal growth
Hair	Unconscious thoughts
Beard hair	Unconscious words
The scissors	Tool of separation

¹⁵² Geiger, 427-428.

2.4. 'Hiding the Golden Hair' and other hair motifs in "The Goose Girl," "All Fur," "Princess Mouseskin," and "The Goose Girl at the Spring"

Also, in this section similar hair motifs from different fairy tales are discussed. Compared to the previous sections, now the hair symbolism starts to repeat itself; therefore the presentations of each fairy tale are held shorter.

According to Verena Kast, "The Goose Girl" is about the separation process between mother and daughter. The daughter has to confront different masculine aspects to become autonomous and *beziehungsfähig*.¹⁵³ In "The Goose Girl" a young woman is sent by her mother to a distant kingdom to get married. The chambermaid who accompanies her, forces her to switch roles during the journey. When they arrive at their destination, the princess has to tend the geese with a young boy called Conrad. Their contact is characterized by hair symbolism.

When she reached the meadow, she sat down and undid her hair, which was as pure as gold. Conrad liked the way her hair glistened so much that

he tried to pull out a few strands. Then she said:
'Blow, wind, oh, blow with all your might!
Blow Conrad's cap right out of sight,
and make him chase it everywhere
until I've braided all my hair
and put it up all right.'

Then a gust of wind came and blew off Conrad's cap into the fields, and he had to run after it. By the time he returned with it, she had finished combing and putting her hair up, and he could not get a single strand of it.¹⁵⁴

Verena Kast interprets this scene as an erotic game. The goose girl shows Conrad her beautiful hair but when he comes closer, she sends him away with a

¹⁵³ Verena Kast, *Wege aus Angst und Symbiose* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 55.

¹⁵⁴ Zipes, 324.

magical wind formula. The golden hair is highly associative with eroticism, especially with fairies who comb their golden hair to attract and enchant men. The goose girl sends the boy away, so that she can put order into her erotic fantasies. A relationship like this one resembles a flirt. Only the fascination in the beginning of a relationship is looked for instead of a deeper commitment.¹⁵⁵ From another perspective, the goose girl's hair combing can be seen as her way to straighten up her sexual energy. She realigns herself and gains control over her body.

This hair motif plays an important role in that the goose girl is recognized as the true bride. The old King has already noticed her fine features the first time he sees her; but after he comes out to observe her on the field, he encourages her to tell him the truth. Whereas Conrad represents a boyish and immature aspect, the King stands for the father figure. Once, the goose girl has faced them, she is ready for the relationship with a man of her age, and marries the prince.

Also, Bruno Bettelheim sees the main message of this fairy tale as the process to gain autonomy. He interprets the scene on the meadow as the goose girl's chance to prove her worth and to defend her body. In the beginning, she could not fight against the chambermaid but now she has learned to control who touches her body. Her assertiveness leads to the solution because Conrad complains to the King about her who then, follows up until the truth is revealed.¹⁵⁶

Arthur Schult sees the goose girl's hair as a symbol for her soul and Conrad, for the mind. Subsequently, he envisions the goose girl in a state of

¹⁵⁵ Verena Kast, Wege aus Angst und Symbiose (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987) 56-57.

¹⁵⁶ Bruno Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1977) 135.

meditation and reflection about her divine essence that is disturbed by her own mind.¹⁵⁷

Friedel Lenz emphasizes the hair combing as a symbolic action that expresses order. The goose girl combs her thoughts. Moreover, that her hair is 'golden' means she has been given wisdom, but this gift requires good care. Conrad stands for an immature form of will.¹⁵⁸

Hair symbolism is used in the figure's process to gain autonomy, in relationship to the self and to the other sex.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Goose Girl"

Opening of the hair	Sexual attraction, seduction Time spent with oneself (meditation) Empowerment (magical abilities)
Golden hair	Radiance, wisdom, higher consciousness Connection to the soul
Hair combing	Order, keeping thoughts (also erotic fantasies) together Combing the libido, the sexual energy
Putting up the hair	End of the erotic game Control of thoughts and energy
Long golden hair	Beauty, eroticism, magic, royal origins

The goose girl did not really hide her golden hair but when she undid it, it served as a means of recognition. The motif of 'hiding the golden hair' occurs in

¹⁵⁷ Schult, 185.

¹⁵⁸ Lenz, 141.

a more obvious way in the fairy tale "All Fur." The hair image is part of the incest motif. All Fur is a princess who escapes from her father because he wants to marry her. Her mother has golden hair and is described as the most beautiful woman. When she dies, the king has to promise her that he will only remarry someone who is equally beautiful and has golden hair. The father cannot find anyone like this, so one day he decides to marry his daughter who has golden hair and is as beautiful as her mother. All Fur is horrified and asks her father to fulfill her wish before. She wishes for three dresses: one as golden as the sun, one as silvery as the moon, and one as bright as the stars. Moreover, she asks for a cloak made up of a thousand kinds of pelts and furs; each animal has to contribute a piece of its skin. The day before the wedding she puts the dresses in a nutshell, takes her golden ring, spinning-wheel, and reel, darkens her face and hands, and runs off in the fur cloak. She spends the night in a hollow tree and is found the next morning by a king and his huntsmen. They take her to the king's castle, where she starts to work in the kitchen. Three times she prepares soup for the king and puts her golden objects in the bottom. Also, three times she visits a ball and wears each night a different dress. The last night, she is in a hurry and has no time to darken her face. When the king sees the ring he has put on her finger while they were dancing, he grabs her coat. "Suddenly her golden hair toppled down, and she stood there in all her splendor unable to conceal herself any longer"¹⁵⁹. Their marriage follows shortly thereafter.

The hair symbolism in "All Fur" is part of the incest motif. It expresses the similarity with the mother, especially the areas that hair represents such as beauty, sexuality or spirituality. Contrary to most of the previously discussed

¹⁵⁹ Zipes, 263.

fairy tales, "All Fur" is about the separation process in the father-daughter relationship.

Again, the golden hair symbolizes as already seen in other fairy tales royal origins and beauty. When All Fur leaves her father she wears an animal coat that signifies her involvement with the animal world and the animal instinct. The fact that she darkens herself and hides her true self, recalls a form of initiation, similar to the virgin's encasement. Indeed, it has been a custom in certain cultures to have girls dress in fur coats or sacks that would protect and allow their bodies to transform into the female shape.¹⁶⁰

Like in "Rapunzel," the title of the fairy tale "All Fur" is also the name of the main female figure. Both names can be related to hair symbolism' however, 'Rapunzel' connects hair with the plant world, and 'All Fur' links hair to the realm of animals.

When All Fur prepares the king's meal the cook warns her not to let a hair fall into the soup. Instead she puts special golden objects into the soup. The color gold of these objects connects them with her hair that is golden too. The cook senses this unconsciously when he assumes that she has dropped a hair into the soup. The spinning-wheel and the reel are tools of the Great Mother, the weaving goddess and represent femininity. The golden ring is a symbol for wholeness thus it brings the king and All Fur together.

The three dresses show All Fur's link towards the male aspect of the sun, the female aspect of the moon, and the higher cosmic order represented by the stars. In the fairy tale "The True Bride" the same motif occurs, furthermore it includes the hair. The woman uses three dresses to win her husband back, and she wears her hair in connection with each aspect. When she signifies the sun,

¹⁶⁰ Marie-Louise Franz, Das Weibliche im Märchen (Stuttgart: Bonz, 1977) 56.

she lets her hair drop down in long locks at her side. The night she wears the moon dress, she puts half-moons made of jewels in her hair, and when she appears in the dress with stars, her hair ribbon and belt are edged with starlike jewels.¹⁶¹

Similar to "All Fur" also the next two fairy tales address the father daughter relationship. The fairy tales "Princess Mouseskin" and "The Goose Girl at the Spring" start with the same motif. Their fathers have three daughters and want to find out who loves them most. Princess Mouseskin and the goose girl answer that they love them as much as salt. Both fathers misunderstand their daughter's wisdom. Princess Mouseskin's father orders to have her killed but the servant lets her go. The princess asks him for a garment that is made of mouse skin, puts it on and seeks work in a neighboring castle. As in "All Fur" it is the ring that reveals her as a princess. When she can no longer hide her identity, she unwraps her mouse skin, and her golden hair streams down. The father is invited to the wedding dinner and is irritated because of the unsalted food he is served.

The princess in "The Goose Girl at the Spring" is sent away and spends three years with a wise woman as a servant. In the evening she walks far until she reaches a spring surrounded by three old oak trees.

In the meantime, the moon was round and large and had risen above the hill ... The maiden removed the skin that covered her face, leaned over the spring, and began to wash herself. When she was finished, she dipped the skin in the water and laid it out on the ground so it could bleach and dry in the moonlight. But how the maiden was transformed! ... After the gray wig had been taken off, her golden hair flared like sunbeams and spread like a cloak over her entire body. Her eyes sparkled like glistening stars in the sky, and her cheeks gleamed with the soft red glow of apple blossoms. But the beautiful maiden was sad ... One tear after another sprang from

¹⁶¹ Zipes, 588.

her eyes and rolled through her long hair down onto the ground.¹⁶²

This image resembles the one found in "The Nixie at the Pond," and could have been categorized under 'hair covering the whole body' as well. The sun, moon and star symbolism, again, points towards wholeness. The skin that covers her face and the wig have probably the same function as the fur coat in "All Fur" and the mouse skin in "Princess Mouseskin": they protect the inner growth process of the princess. Only at night, when no one can see her, she reveals her beauty. This beauty is precisely described and reflects next to its symbolic meaning the dominant beauty ideals of the time the fairy tale was collected and recorded. Moreover, the hair connects the princess with Heaven and earth. It looks like sun beams and reaches onto the ground. The description of her tears that roll along her hair expresses her emotional state of sadness. The sadness is an expression of her isolation; she is isolated under her mask and enclosed in her hair.

The princess is seen by the prince who has met the wise woman before, and then has connected with the parents of the princess. Later, when they all meet, the princess is described as angel: "The door opened, and the princess emerged with her golden hair and sparkling eyes. She was dressed in her silk gown, and it was as if an angel had descended from heaven into the room"¹⁶³. Again, the hair image is part of the sun, moon, and star trilogy, and emphasizes the unity of heaven and earth. The hair represents sun and heaven, her eyes are now sparkling as stars, and her silk gown or her skin is white as the moon. The princess is depicted as the embodiment of an angel on earth.

Hair imagery in these three fairy tales is used to describe the figure's origin, growth progress and consciousness. The fur coats and the hair express

¹⁶² Zipes, 567.

¹⁶³ Zipes, 569.

the self as it hides, reveals itself, or is recognized. Hair imagery relates to the other sex, especially to the father and husband-to-be.

Summary of hair symbolism in "All Fur," "Princess Mouseskin," and "The Goose Girl at the spring"

Long golden hair	Beauty, royal origins, attraction, sexuality, spirituality, higher consciousness, angel
Showing the hair	Recognition
Fur, mouse skin, wig and 'hiding the hair'	Connection to the animal world, to the instinctive consciousness Protection of inner growth
	process
	Mask, hiding the true self Initiation
Hair	Sun, part of the sun, moon, star trilogy Connection of heaven and earth

2.5. 'Golden Hair' and 'Neglecting Hair Care' in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs," "The Devil's Sooty Brother," "Bearskin," and "Iron Hans"

The following fairy tales are narrated from the perspective of a male figure. Robert Bly has interpreted "Iron Hans" as a guide for male growth, and together with the fairy tale "Bearskin" it can be considered a 'male' version to "All Fur." Again, the fairy tales present all aspects of the psyche and especially the female/male polarities. Also, the main figure in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs" is male, yet Verena Kast is convincing in her interpretation that this fairy tale is about human fate and destiny.

In "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs" poor parents give birth to a boy with a caul. It is prophesied that he will marry the King's daughter. When the King learns about the boy, called Fortune's Favorite, he tries to kill him twice. Yet, the young boy reaches the court and marries the princess. The King returns and demands that if Fortune's Favorite wants to keep his daughter he has to travel to hell and fetch three golden hairs from the devil. So, the young man starts the journey. He passes through two cities and is asked for help. One city has a fountain that has run dry, and the other city has an apple tree that used to bear golden apples but now it doesn't even produce leaves. He also comes across a ferryman who wants to know why he has to take people back and forth.

Fortune's Favorite reaches hell and meets the devil's grandmother. He tells her that he needs three golden hairs and three answers. She promises to help him and changes him into an ant. The devil comes home, falls asleep and while she louses¹⁶⁴ him, she pulls out the three golden hairs and gets the answers: the fountain will flow again if the toad is killed that sits underneath a stone in the fountain; the tree will bear golden apples again if the mouse is killed that gnaws on its roots; and the ferryman simply has to pass on the pole to the next person who wants to go across the river.

Fortune's Favorite regains his human form back, thanks her, and leaves hell. On his way back he tells the ferryman the solution after he has been taken across the river. The watchmen and the two cities are very happy about his answers and give him four donkeys loaded with gold. Fortune's Favorite returns home and hands the King the three golden hairs. The King sees all the gold and

¹⁶⁴ Throughout this presentation the verb "to louse" is used instead of "to delouse." Although "to delouse" would be the appropriate verb according to modern English, the verb "to louse" was chosen because Jack Zipes used it in his translations.

becomes greedy. Fortune's Favorite tells him he found it on the ground after he has crossed a river. So, the King goes to the river, and the ferryman gives him the pole so that he has to carry people back and forth from then on.

Verena Kast sees the three golden hairs as the touchable equivalents of the three secrets. They show that these three answers of wisdom are very essential and enlightening. The revelation of the three solutions and the loss of the hair express the devil's powerlessness. The first two answers help Fortune's Favorite to set free the demonised areas of emotions and sexuality. The area of emotions is symbolically blocked by the toad, and the area of sexuality is blocked by the mouse.¹⁶⁵ The third answer helps to get rid of the King who constantly prevents Fortune's Favorite's marriage from happiness.

The three hairs are located on the devil's head and represent his connection to 'the above,' to the divine. The golden color indicates his previous light nature. Verena Kast adds that the shine of gold corresponds to the shining of sun, moon, and stars. Therefore, the color gold brings cosmic energy into the earthly existence. It takes in transcendence, and at the same time, the one who carries the golden color reaches towards the transcendence. Gold is relatively seen indestructible thus carries an aspect of permanence and eternity.¹⁶⁶

Oskar Ruf stresses that Fortune's Favorite's journey to hell is his second birth. First human beings are born from the dark womb into the light. This fairy tale is a dense form of the great myth to find light in the darkness. Finding the inner light of wisdom is the spiritual birth. Moreover, Oskar Ruf refers to Carl Gustav Jung who compares the sun hero's journey into the darkness with the sun

¹⁶⁵ Verena Kast, Der Teufel mit den drei goldenen Haaren (Zürich: Kreuz-Verlag, 1986) 93.

¹⁶⁶ Verena Kast, Der Teufel mit den drei goldenen Haaren (Zürich: Kreuz-Verlag, 1986) 67.

that sets into the ocean.¹⁶⁷ Again, the three golden hairs represent the light, the sun, and spiritual wisdom. Furthermore, according to Verena Kast, they stand for wisdom related to emotions and sexuality.

In "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs" as well as in five other Grimm's fairy tale a hair lousing motif can be found. The grand-mother louses the devil to relax him, to comfort him, and to put him to sleep, so that she can do her work. In "The King of the Golden Mountain" the wife louses her husband until he falls asleep. Then she takes the ring off his hand, and leaves him alone.¹⁶⁸ In "The Two King's Children" the youngest daughter helps the prince to fulfill his tasks. She brings him something to eat, and invites him to rest a little bit. Then she louses him, and when he is asleep she calls upon workers to help. When he awakes, the difficult work is done.¹⁶⁹ In "The Golden Maiden" lousing the old woman is part of the service the two girls have to fulfill. In "Hurleburlebutz"¹⁷⁰ a dwarf finds out that he finally got the princess when she complained about lousing the fox, and in "The Gnome"¹⁷¹ three princesses have to pick the lice of dragon's heads after they tasted the forbidden apples.

Some of these examples have in common that hair lousing has to do with the unconscious. Hair lousing leads to sleep, an unconscious state of one person, while the other person works, and somewhat betrays the one who sleeps. Psychologically interpreted, this could mean the conscious part of the psyche has to control the unconscious part; or since only female figures are lousing, the female part has to overpower the male part. Picking lice from the hair can

¹⁶⁷ Oskar Ruf, Die esoterische Bedeutung der Märchen (München: Knaur Verlag, 1992) 42-88.

¹⁶⁸ Zipes, 341.

¹⁶⁹ Zipes, 409-411.

¹⁷⁰ Zipes, 663.

¹⁷¹ Zipes, 334.

symbolize a desire to bring order into one's unconscious. This is also reinforced by the aspect of service or forced service as in "The Gnome."

The hair lousing motif is obviously a hair motif that is closely related to the time the fairy tales were collected. Hygienic improvements in the Western World have almost eliminated the problem of head lice. Yet, they still exist; in some parts of the world, one can still observe people lousing each other. Moreover, hair lousing is then experienced, not only as a necessary duty, but as a form of affection and tenderness.

Hair imagery in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs" is used as a symbol for the connection to Heaven, to the divine. The motif of fetching the devil's hair as a condition for the marriage shows that hair imagery is applied in the areas of sexuality, spirituality, and relationship.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs"

Golden hair	Connection to the cosmos, Wisdom Light, transcendence, enlightenment
Loss of hair Hair lousing	Powerlessness of the devil's force Accessing the unconscious Bringing order into the psyche Overpowering the male part, or the unconscious Affection, tenderness
Fetching the devil's hair	Integration of opposites, God and devil consciousness and unconscious, sexuality and spirituality.

The devil in connection with hair imagery also appears in the next two fairy tales. In "The Devil's Sooty Brother"¹⁷² and in "Bearskin"¹⁷³ a poor discharged soldier meets the devil who promises richness to him under one condition. He cannot wash himself, comb himself, trim the beard, cut nails or hair, or wipe the eyes. The soldier in "The Devil's Sooty Brother" has to serve for seven years in hell, cleaning and firing the kettles. When he comes out of hell he still hasn't washed himself. The knapsack of dirt the devil gives him, turns into a knapsack with gold. It is stolen by an innkeeper, and the soldier returns to hell to complain. Then, the devil washes and combs him, sends him back to the innkeeper. The soldier tells the innkeeper that if he doesn't return the gold the devil will fetch him. So, he gets his money back, wanders around, plays music. Eventually, he ends up marrying the King's daughter and gets the whole kingdom as well.

The soldier in "Bearskin" does not spend the seven years in hell but instead he walks around uncombed and unwashed in a bear skin. He has always money in the jacket the devil gave him, and helps the poor. Once he helps an old man who promises him one of his beautiful daughters. Again, it is the youngest one who decides to marry him. She waits patiently until the soldier returns as a handsome young man after the devil has cleaned and combed him.

Rudolf Geiger sees a soldier as a person that has strengthened the will power but neglected the care of the soul, feelings, and beauty. The devil demands complete surrender of any beauty and self-care, and in "The Devil's Sooty Brother" even opposed to cleaning everything else very carefully.¹⁷⁴ Only through extensive service, and in "Bearskin" through a generous heart, can the

¹⁷² Zipes, 367.

¹⁷³ Zipes, 370.

¹⁷⁴ Geiger, 355.

soldier regain control over his outer appearance. The seven years are spent in isolation; one soldier is in hell, and the other one is isolated because of his outer appearance. Isolation and neglecting hair care has been discussed earlier in reference to "The Virgin Mary's Child." Again, it has to do with an initiation process.

Vladimir Propp remarks that this motif, similar as in the fairy tale "All Fur," occurs ahead of the marriage. The motif of the 'dirty husband' derives from the ritual not to wash, comb, etc. before marriage that is an important part of the ceremony. It was also common that the initiated would cover himself with dirt to the point where he could no longer be recognized. Through this association the 'dirt motif' is connected to the 'motif of invisibility.' Vladimir Propp says that somehow the neglecting of body care prepares the man, in this case it is the soldier, for marriage. Furthermore, the motif of the unwashed husband is closely related to the motif of the animal groom, and it is in connection with the kingdom of death. Also, in initiation rites almost every part of the body has been manipulated. The manipulations of head and hair are mostly covering the hair, or shaving and cutting it. When the hair is covered and grows, it means that sexual potency grows also.¹⁷⁵ This could be a good explanation for the two soldiers in "The Devil's Sooty Brother" and in "Bearskin." Also, the motif of the 'uncombed man' can be related to the story of Samson who never cut his own hair. Another aspect is expressed by the dreadful appearance of the soldier. While the soldier in "Bearskin" develops selflessness, faith and heart, the hearts of the poor man's daughters are tested too. Even today it is sometimes a lesson not to judge someone by his or her outer looks but instead to value the person's character.

¹⁷⁵ Propp, 164-170.

Hair imagery is used in these two fairy tales to express a form of initiation and growth process. It plays a role in relationship to society (outsider) and to the other sex. Furthermore, hair care is depicted within the domain of the devil.

Summary of hair symbolism in "The Devil's Sooty Brother" and in "Bearskin"

Neglecting of hair care

Initiation, growth process
Outsider, isolation
Concentration on inner values
Strengthening spirituality and sexual potency.

In the fairy tale "Iron Hans"¹⁷⁶ a wild man is captured from the forest and encased at the King's court. One day, the King's son plays and his ball falls into the cage. The wild man wants to give the ball back only under the condition that the prince sets him free. So it happens, and because the prince is afraid to receive a punishment, he goes with the wild man. The next day, the wild man asks the boy to sit at a golden spring. He is not allowed to let anything fall into the spring but the first day he sticks his hurting finger into the golden water. The wild man, called Iron Hans lets him go that time but the next day he brushes his head with the hurting finger and a strand of hair falls into the water.

On the third day the boy sat at the spring and did not move his finger even when it hurt him a great deal. However, he became bored and began looking at his face's reflection in the water. As he leaned farther and farther over to look himself straight in the eye, his long hair fell down from his shoulders into the water. He straightened up instantly, but his entire head of hair had already turned golden and shone like the sun...He took his handkerchief and tied it around his head so that the man would

¹⁷⁶ Zipes, 482.

not be able to see it.¹⁷⁷

Then, Iron Hans sends him out into the world but offers his help whenever the prince needs him. The prince reaches a city and finds work in the palace. He works for the cook and always wears a cap to hide his golden hair. One day the King asks him why he would not take off the cap in his presence. The boy replies that he has an ugly scab on his head. Then, he is sent to work for the gardener. Once, on a hot summer day, he takes off his cap.

When the sun shone upon his hair, it glistened and sparkled so much that the rays shot into the room of the King's daughter, and she jumped up to see what it was.¹⁷⁸

The princess asks him to bring her some flowers, and when he enters her room, she grabs his cap, and his hair falls down his shoulder. The next two days she tries the same but the boy holds his cap tight. A war follows, in which the boy in disguise conquers the enemy with the help of Iron Hans. The King and his daughter want to know who the hero is and announce a festival. The daughter is supposed to throw a golden apple three times. The boy calls Iron Hans for help and rides each day on a different horse to the festival. He catches the ball and rides away. Finally, the daughter asks the gardener's boy if he is the knight. He admits it, and they go to talk to the King. The daughter says that she knew already from his hair that he was not a gardener's helper. After talking to the King they get married. His parents come to the wedding, and also Iron Hans who appears as a proud King who now has been released from his spell.

Robert Bly took this fairy tale and wrote Iron John: A Book about Men. He addresses issues like the remote father and the lack of male initiation rites in this modern culture. According to Robert Bly, the wild man represents the

¹⁷⁷ Zipes, 484.

¹⁷⁸ Zipes, 485.

positive side of sexuality, and the hairiness of the wild man indicates his closeness with nature. A man has to integrate the wild man within in order to enjoy life as a whole being. The three days at the golden spring are part of an initiation for the boy. The second day the wounded finger touches the hair. At that point, Robert Bly gives attention to the meaning of hair:

Hair covers the Wild Man and the Wild Woman ... When we look for cultural associations with the word hair, we notice at least four linkages. The first is to sexual energy. When a young Roman woman joined the Vestal Virgins, the other women ritually shaved her head. Monks during the Middle Ages were tonsured, and Orthodox Jewish women to this day wear wigs to hide their own hair. Because animals exhibit hair in profusion and because we see our own sexuality as animal, the linkage is unavoidable. ... Finally hair suggests excess. The hairiness of Enkidu, Babylonian Wild Man, or Pan, the goat-man, suggests that hair stands for what is beyond the boundaries of all middle-of-the-road-civilization ... When a woman's hair tumbles down, abundantly and richly, we hear the hair saying words about the value of excess. ... Hair also suggests thoughts. Hair keeps coming out of the head day and night, so hairs resemble thoughts that come out even when we are sleeping. Hair, then stands for all those intuitions that appear out of nowhere, following channels we cannot observe ... Hair is intuition. Hair is the abundance of perceptions, insights, thoughts, resentments. images, fantasies, waiting and ready to come out whenever we are thinking of something else ... If a human being takes an action, the soul takes an action. When a hair enters the water, the soul adds gold to it.¹⁷⁹

The moment the boy's hair turns golden a transformation happens to him. Most likely it concerns all the aspects related to hair that are mentioned above. Yet he cannot show this process to the world; he covers it with a cap for protection. The fact alone that pubic hair starts to grow at the begin of puberty underlines the deep connection between initiation, puberty and hair.

Robert Bly continues his observations on hair symbolism as he writes about the garden scene.

The princess meets the man with gold hair, but the gold head also meets the sun. The golden hair has been inactive up to now, something to be

¹⁷⁹ Bly, 45-48.

kept hidden. Now it *does* something. The young man senses that he is being seen and replaces the cap, but it is too late. This moment was the *kairos*, as the Greeks called it, exactly the right moment for what was lying hidden in one's fate to be revealed. We know we are in the presence of something elaborate here when the storyteller has the sunlight hit the gold hair, then bounce to the wall of the Princess' chamber, and from there sink into her eyes. Through the geometrical diagram the storyteller adopts a magnificent indirection, a way of introducing involving solar light ... The mood of it all is the playfulness of light ... We know from hundreds of texts that it is Mercury or Hermes who watches over the process of alchemy. This garden scene, with the light shooting about like a ball of mercury that one tries in vain to grasp, is truly mercurial in its invention: witty, astonishing, playful, serious, delighting in leaps.¹⁸⁰

Once more, the golden hair occurs with the sun and with light. These three symbols reinforce each other in the expression of beauty, attraction, and magic. In regard to one of the last passages, when the prince is asked to prove himself, Robert Bly says "that the time of the golden hair has come"¹⁸¹. The young man does no longer have to hide his gold; he is now mature enough to show his wisdom. In the end, Iron Hans is released from the magic spell and transformed into a King. When he joins the wedding of the young man, the integration of the wild man has been taken place within the man's psyche.

The Grimm's expressed similarly this contents in their annotations to "Iron Hans." They write that the hair documents the boy's process to reclaim his higher origins.

This fairy tale may have an old foundation. It talks about a half divine being that was captured by an earthly being to perform lower tasks until it reaches a higher position again; this is indicated by the golden radiant hair.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Bly, 126-127.

¹⁸¹ Bly, 220.

¹⁸² Jakob u. Wilhelm Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen Vol. 3 (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1856) 219.

Das Märchen mag eine alte Grundlage haben und von einem halbgöttlichen Wesen

Again, it can be stated that hair imagery in this fairy tale is used as a symbol within the context of initiation, and self growth. Especially, when the boy looks into his mirror image and all his hair falls into the golden water, symbolically a process of self-reflection and enlightenment is described. It is the hair that attracts the attention of the princess. She is not only drawn to the beauty aspect of the hair but it enables her to recognize him as someone special. Therefore, the golden hair serves as a motif of recognition and with relationship to the other sex. The hairiness of the wild man and the golden hair of the boy express the contrast between sexuality and spirituality.

Summary of hair symbolism in "Iron Hans"

Hair turns golden	Realization, inner growth, illumination' transformation
Hair hidden under a cap	Introspective, initiation
Golden hair	Royalty, wisdom, sign of higher origins Eroticism, attraction, sexuality, spirituality Sun, light
Wild hair	Animal life, instincts, sexuality, nature

erzählen, das in die Gewalt eines Unterirdischen gerieth und niedrige
Arbeiten
verrichten mußte bis es wieder zu seiner höheren Stellung gelangte; die
golden leuchtenden Haare weisen darauf hin.

CONCLUSION

The definitions of the poetic form-elements in Chapter One were enriched with numerous examples of hair imagery found in the fairy tales. It was shown that hair imagery occurs in various poetic forms, such as the image, the idiom, the metaphor, the simile, the symbol, and the motif. This endeavor was not only necessary to provide a basic frame of reference for the research of hair imagery in this thesis but it might serve as a reference as well for further studies on fairy tales as a genre. It became obvious that it is not easy to categorize a hair image into one of the poetic form-elements in favor of another. For instance, the hair image in the teller's remark ("I had my hair powdered with snow, but the sun came out and melted it") can be seen as a descriptive image or as a motif. Especially, the fact that in another teller's remark the hairdo made out of butter melts too, classifies this hair image as a motif. Moreover, this hair image contains a symbolic meaning: the hairdo is melting like the story that is fading. At this point the function of a hair image needs to be addressed. The symbolic meaning reveals insight into the literary function. The literary function of an hair image can be applied to form and content. Staying with the same example, the image of the melting hairdo supports the formal element in that it appears in the end of the fairy tale. The content of this image matches the intention of the narrator to bring the tale to an end. The question rises which theme is expressed by this hair image. The theme is the process of ending, fading, separating, a theme that occurs several times with hair. In Chapter Two the focus has been on the meaning of the content rather than on the functional aspects of hair imagery. The search for themes gained priority. Yet, before the results of this search are

presented, so much can be concluded from the examples of hair imagery given in both chapters in regards to the possible function of hair imagery.

Concerning the literary function of the hair, some of its images are essential for the story; for instance, the contents of "Rapunzel," "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs," or "Iron John" would break down without hair imagery. On the other hand, a hair image expressed through an idiom could be deleted or replaced without affecting the fairy tale's structure too much. Hair images can dominate the whole fairy tale as in "Rapunzel." They help to establish the main message as in "Snow White," or they support other motifs within the fairy tale. An example for the latter would be the description of the princess' hair in "The Glass Coffin." The motif of the princess in the coffin occurs with the motif of long hair, similar to the depiction of Snow White in the coffin.

It can be stated again that hair imagery goes far beyond simple description of a person's outer appearance. Hair imagery express internal aspects of a figure, for instance in "The Virgin Mary's Child." Themes related to hair do not have to be bound to time, yet the way they are expressed might change with the changing times. All the hair images from the fairy tales can be seen to have a place in today's world. For instance, the fairy tale's motif of 'lousing the hair of a loved one' is today's gentle playing with a loved one's hair.

Again, the possible functions of hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales can only be touched on. Further research, especially in reference to the social and historical context would be necessary to achieve a detailed view of its different functions.

Undoubtedly, hair imagery has an entertaining function. It enriches the spectrum of emotions the listener or reader experiences. Some emotions, reinforced by the hair imagery, are the enjoyment of beauty, the fear caused by

violence, or the excitement of the mating process. Hair imagery appears as an appropriate means to express sexual attraction and sexual experiences at the time the Grimm's recorded the tales. This time was definitely controlled by religious moral values of purity that excluded freely expressed sexuality. However, the description of hair leaves it up to the listener or reader whether to associate it with beauty, purity or eroticism. An angel as well as a seductive nixie is depicted with long flowing hair.

The content of hair imagery affects the listener and reader alike in an obvious way. The reader is entertained by unusual descriptions of hair, and is left to wonder that, for instance, hair serves as a ladder, or whether the devil really has golden hair. Also, the effect of some hair images previously discussed, can be frightening, especially for children. Most likely, every individual is affected differently by hair imagery. Even the image of braided hair can affect two people differently. In both cases the hair image belongs to the aspects of beauty and order. Yet, one person might have positive feelings about this while the other one has negative feelings towards braided hair. A person's past experiences influence those feelings.

It would be of great value to find literary sources that contain people's discussions and reactions towards hair imagery at the time they were recorded. Without this information it can only be assumed how people were affected. Did hair imagery have a therapeutic function two hundred years ago? The psychological interpretations presented, show the therapeutic possibilities of each fairy tale. Yet, these interpretations have been written in this century and for its people.

Hair motifs in Grimm's fairy tales have provided symbolism that affects the reader's unconscious and consciousness. The effect of a hair image on an

individual can be healing in the sense that a person identifies or realizes something important about hair in connection with his or her life. Furthermore, a hair motif can function as an example for people. The hair image of the princess in "The Goose Girl" is a model for assertiveness. First the goose girl's body was dominated by her servant. Then, on the meadow she sends the little boy away who tries to approach her. Therefore this hair image plays an important role in the goose girl's process of gaining autonomy. Eventually, this could have been understood as such also by the listeners of fairy tales in an earlier time. The profound symbolism of this hair image affects the collective unconscious, and symbolic language is the language of the unconscious.

Themes, related to hair imagery such as initiation, personal development, and attraction to the other sex are timeless. Today's hair initiations do not seem to be as sacred as in earlier times. They can be observed all around the world. Especially young people have become creative in designing and sculpting their hair; for example, they are inspired by Native Americans for their mohawk style. Of course, the aspect of psychological rebellion plays a big role in personal development and is not expressed in the tales through hair imagery.

Hair imagery has an educating function: the fairy tales promote cleanliness, purity, and beauty. These are aspects of life that every human being is told to strive for. Even if a fairy tale figure like the soldier in "Bearskin" does not comb his hair for seven years, he still promotes cleanliness. It is understood that the seven years are a special time. Again, it can be the function of a hair image to make the listeners wonder, and even to shock them. Also, social functions become obvious. One learns that beauty or rites of initiation lead to marriage and happiness. Eventually, the idealizing of beauty evokes the

understanding that this beauty does not have to be external but can be internal and express inner values.

The political influences of hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales can only be guessed at this point. The special status of princes and princesses expresses the *Ständegesellschaft*, the different social classes. Therefore, it might function as a role model for people of lower classes. The fact that the princes and princesses often undergo long growth processes before they claim their position could give credit to the idea of justice to the people. In other words, fairy tales connect both classes. Indirectly, they give the people to understand that the representatives of the upper class are in a better social condition because they inherited it, worked for it, or did something amazing. For instance, the young boy in "Iron Hans," or 'All Fur' had to do 'dirty' work during the first part of their lives. In that sense, the golden hair could be seen as an image that reinforces the suppression of the lower classes. This is supported by the fact that the aspect of social rebellion that could have been expressed by hair imagery does not occur in the Grimm's fairy tales at all. Yet, aspects of suppression or oppression can also be seen in the hair cutting scenes in "Rapunzel" and "Snow White and Rose Red."

The influence of Romanticism shows especially in the romantic looks of the fairy tale figures. There is a lot of long hair in the fairy tales because they were recorded at a time when women wore long hair. Curls and long hair accompanying either the sun, moon, or stars and the elements of water and wind express a relationship with nature. Not only did romantic authors write about nature, they wrote about it in an idealized way, which is another aspect found in the hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales. Although the beauty of the female persons is so idealized that it is unrealistic, every human being can imagine it. A possible effect of hair imagery in relation to nature could be a closer connection

between humans and nature. Men and women who are in touch with their own nature, connected to the life force, oppose to some extent the notion of political suppression just mentioned above. Humans try to control nature in many ways but are always shown that nature has a strength that cannot be controlled, as, for instance, floods or earth quakes demonstrate. The image of hair as the seat of power definitely serves the function of empowerment.

A gender-related function of hair imagery stereotypes men and women in many ways and still needs to be further explored. Only one out of two hundred and fifty fairy tales describes the head hair of a male figure. This does not mean that the reader imagines princes, dwarfs, or devils without hair on their head. The mind seems to fill in the information gap rather easily. However, descriptions of beards, as masculine attributes, occur twelve times. One is left to wonder what it means that hair imagery occurs more frequently with female figures throughout Grimm's fairy tales.

Not only does hair imagery confirm gender-related stereotypes but it also stereotypes hair color. Good and bad are associated with blond and dark. The possible consequences of such stereotyping are racism on a cultural level, and effects of inferiority and humiliation in reference to an individual's psyche. Parallels to such impact of hair imagery can be easily found in modern day's society. The popularity of female blond film and pop stars is only one example.

The main results of this study are comprised in the summaries of hair symbolism at the end of each presentation. The hair imagery used in Grimm's fairy tales relates symbolically to the following themes.

Hair imagery occurs in **relationship to the self**, to a personal growth process, especially into womanhood or manhood. In the "Virgin Mary's Child" or in "The Devil's Sooty Brother" this process is depicted by neglecting hair care

followed by beautifying the self. The neglecting of hair care allows a person to go inside. Hair covers a person and separates from external influences, see also the princess in "The Glass Coffin." In spite of Rapunzel's seemingly tragic imprisonment, it is the hair that gives her identity and power. Hair imagery expresses empowerment as well as initiation by way of neglecting hair care, beautifying the self, and hair descriptions including hair growth. The young boy in "Iron John" has to meet a very hair man in order to integrate darker aspects into his psyche. Hair imagery is connected to the unconscious and consciousness of the human psyche, in the sense of integrating or transforming lighter and darker aspects. Another example is the young man in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs." Hair imagery stands for the mind, thoughts, and in some cases for an aspect of order, see for instance, "The Goose Girl."

Hair imagery that falls under the theme **relationship with others**, describes the process of separating or bonding from parents or partners. This is the most frequent theme since it is represented in all fifteen fairy tales interpreted in Chapter Two. Hair imagery functions, for example, as a means of recognition or indicator of origins in the fairy tales "The Virgin Mary's Child" and "The Goose Girl at the Spring." It represents affection and tenderness as the lousing motif in "The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs." Notions of dominance, loss, release, and freedom are illustrated in "Rapunzel." The experience of social isolation is accentuated by hair imagery in "The Virgin Mary's Child," "Rapunzel," "The Glass Coffin," "All Fur," "The Goose Girl at the Spring," "Princess Mouseskin," "The Devil's Sooty Brother," and "Bearskin."

Furthermore, hair imagery stands in the context of **sexuality**. It is an expression of virginity and purity in some fairy tales opposed to an instinctive animal consciousness in others. It serves as a means of attraction, femininity,

sensuality, seductiveness, beauty, eroticism, and potency. Again, examples can be found in almost all fifteen fairy tales. Hair imagery often appears opposed to sexuality in relation to **spirituality**, as a religious and moral expression, dedication to a higher consciousness, or connection to Heaven. Obviously, the method of interpretation determines whether to classify a hair image under the theme religion or sexuality. The connections to Heaven and earth, to the elements of wind, fire, water, and to the cosmology of sun, moon and the stars relate hair imagery to **nature**. The theme nature connects the themes spirituality and sexuality, since nature reaches into the different areas: the plant kingdom, the animal world, human beings, the domain of nixes, dwarfs, and angels.

Magical events are characteristic for the fairy tale genre. Rapunzel's long hair is magical just because it is so long. It is magical that a man does not comb his hair for seven years. It is even more magical that combing her hair, brings the husband's head to the surface of the lake in "The Nixie at the Pond." Eventually, mysterious beliefs about hair like this one belong to the theme **magic**.

Generally compared, the themes found in the fairy tales are similar to the themes evaluated in the psychological study mentioned in the introduction. For instance, hair in relationship to the self was expressed by some conversation partners in regards to their self-finding process. In the fairy tales this process was depicted by hair imagery. This observation establishes the connection between hair and certain themes. Regarding further research, this makes it possible to focus on hair in relation to one of these themes in the beginning of an inquiry.

It makes sense that hair imagery is used to express the previous themes. The relationship to the self comes from the simple fact that hair is a part of the body, and therefore of the self. It plays a role in relationship to others. Indeed,

hair as a part of the body and the self is related to others because human beings do relate to other human beings. Hair has to do with sexuality because it relates to others, as well as an expression of the life force. This life force is the link to nature. Hair grows like plants, and hair is the human fur. Hair is located on top of the body, and gravity pulls it down. This makes it a perfect symbol for various connections. Hair imagery in Grimm's fairy tales often stands for opposites like Heaven and earth, or sexuality and spirituality. The fascination of hair is the fascination about life itself. The fact that hair constantly grows, or that the heart pumps thousands of gallons of blood throughout one's life is enough reason for the mind to wonder about this magic.

Further research possibilities to expand this thesis' topic abound. For instance, it could be a worthy research project to take only one of the fairy tales replete with hair symbolism and analyze the different cultural levels connected to the hair images. Research on hair imagery in other fairy tales, in other literary genres, and by different authors could further enhance the understanding of this topic in world literature.

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