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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**"The lady of the lake" : a motif analysis of the legend "The lady of Llyn y Fan Fach" and a comparison with twentieth century works**

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"THE LADY OF THE LAKE". A MOTIF ANALYSIS OF THE  
LEGEND "THE LADY OF LLYN Y FAN FACH" AND A COMPARI-  
SON WITH TWENTIETH CENTURY WORKS

Christiane Ulmer-Leahey

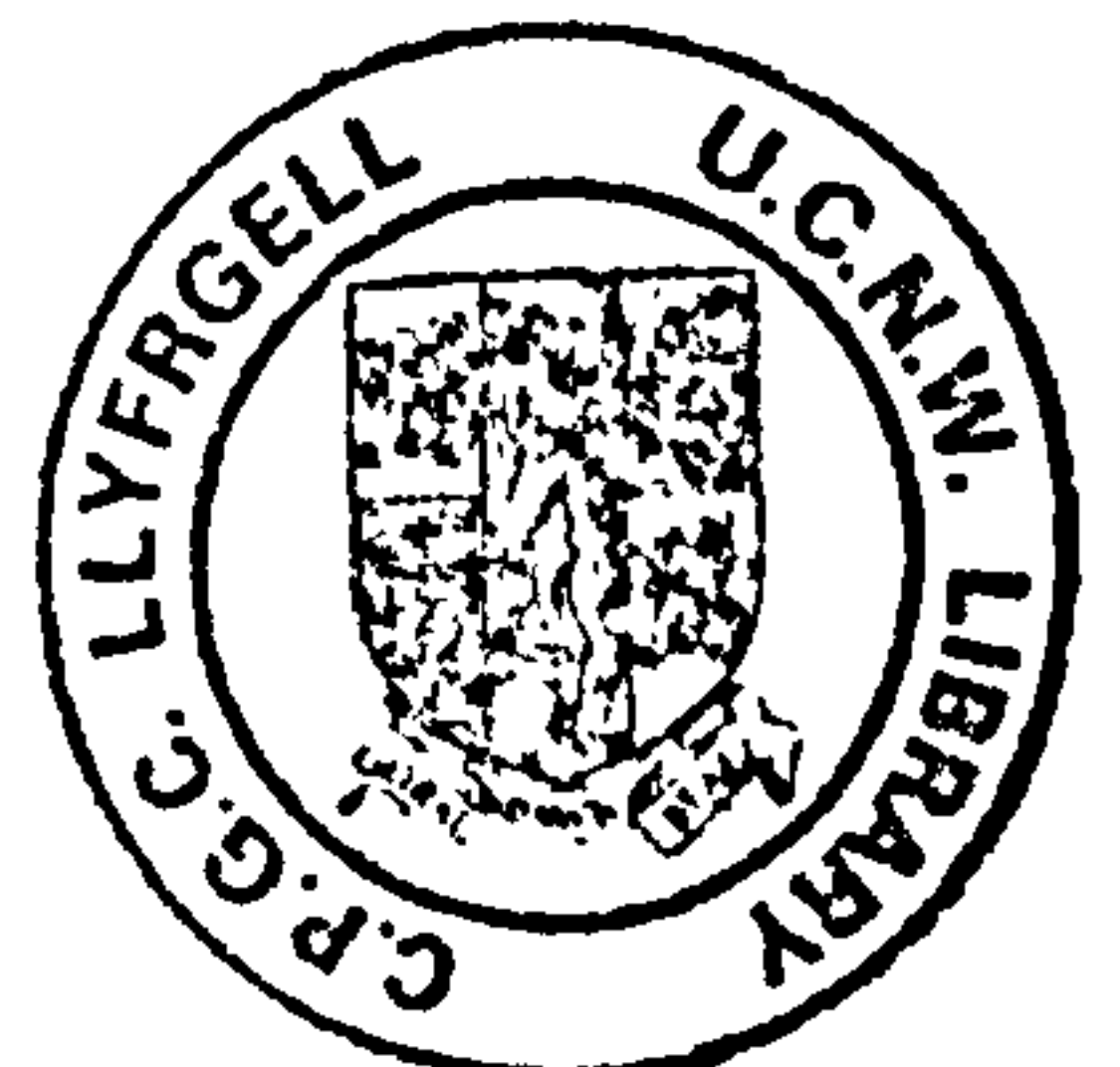
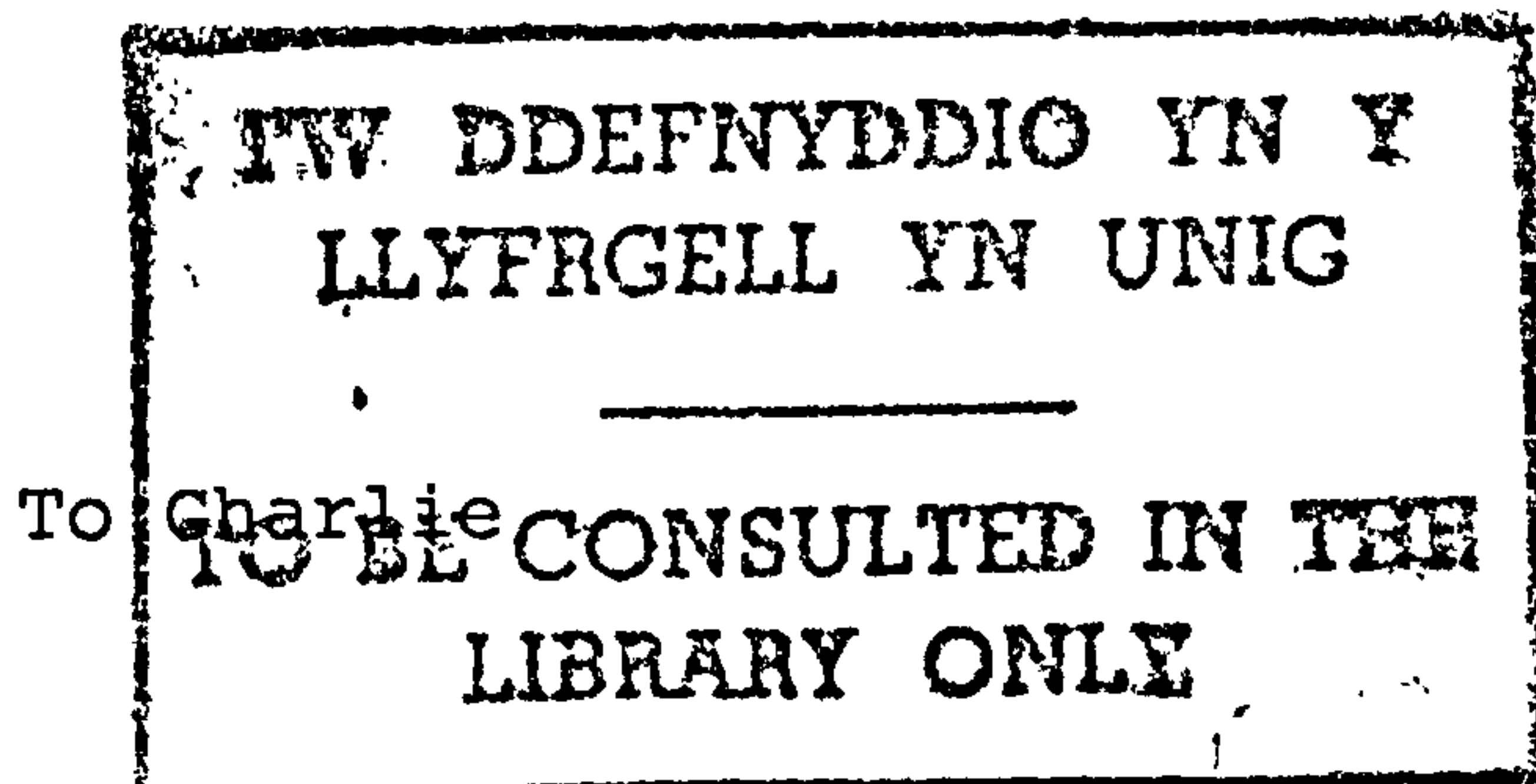
(Bangor 1994)

"Was so mannigfach und immer von neuem erfreut,  
bewegt und belehrt hat, das trägt seine Notwen-  
digkeit in sich und ist gewiß aus jener ewigen  
Quelle gekommen, die alles Leben betäut, und  
wenn es auch nur ein einziger Tropfen wäre, den  
ein kleines zusammengehaltenes Blatt gefaßt  
hat, so schimmert er doch in dem ersten Morgen-  
rot."

.....

'What has filled us with pleasure in so many  
ways and has always excited us anew and en-  
riched us, bears its necessity within itself  
and has surely come from that source that  
bedews all life; and even if it were only one  
single drop that was held within a little  
folded leaf, it would still glow and sparkle in  
the first morning dawn.'

(Grimm 1979, I, p.23)



## SUMMARY

The objective of this thesis is to investigate examples of mythological motifs regarding their history and meaning. The thesis aims to show that the symbolic language used in myths, legends, folk and fairy tales have an important role within modern society and still have an effect on people's lives.

Chapter I gives an overview of the Lady of the Lake tales contained in John Rhŷs' work Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx and investigates whether those tales express in symbolic language actual historic events and issues of the times during which those tales were formulated.

Chapter II widens the perspective by looking at various examples of water legends in Wales which are related to the Lady of the Lake cycle. It becomes evident that the uniting factor of all those tales is that they deal with conflicting ethical systems.

Chapter III engages a detailed analysis of the motifs contained in the Legend of the "Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach" and combines the historic interpretation approach with a psychological method of interpretation.

Chapters IV and V are concerned with tracing the motifs discussed in the previous chapters in twentieth-century works. Chapter IV looks at how one author uses motifs and universal symbols to make personal statements. Chapter V interprets the Walt Disney cartoon "The Little Mermaid".

The Conclusion expands on the previously introduced idea of the development of the human mind. It has been suggested that symbolic language can reflect aspects of human reality and an attempt has been made to show how symbolic language operates. The Conclusion discusses the idea that the mythological way of thinking should be amalgamated with the rational capabilities of the human mind in order to create a new and effective understanding of reality.

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to investigate examples of certain mythological motifs. Their history, transformation and meaning will be examined. Eventually it will become clear that such motifs, contained in myths, legends, folk- and fairy- tales, still have an important role within modern society and still have an effect on people's lives.

In order to do so the thesis will concentrate on a particular legend cycle. It will begin with tales about the 'Lady of the Lake'. Then the 'Guardian of the Well' and 'Sunken Dwelling' motifs will also be discussed. It will be necessary to trace the relevant motifs and sequence of motifs back in history as far as possible and, subsequently, to compare, interpret and evaluate their (re-) occurrence in twentieth century works. There will be a discussion whether these old folk tales bear witness to sociological and historical changes which took place in, for example, mediaeval Wales. These will then be studied to see whether they reflect conflicts between Christian and pre-Christian moral and ethical concepts. Finally the question will be raised whether even today mythology can be a spiritual resource.



Myth or Fairy Tale?

This thesis will not put great emphasis on a classification of the material dealt with into, for example, myths or fairy-tales. Scholars have made the observation that this can be a very difficult, if not an impossible, undertaking since the common elements of those categories outweigh by far their distinguishing characteristics. There do not seem to exist strict criteria that enable us to differentiate between folk tale, myth or fairy tale but rather there are gradual tendencies that might establish a tale as belonging to one group rather than another. Bruno Bettelheim, for example, writes:

"In den meisten Kulturen sind Mythen und Märchen nicht scharf getrennt, zusammen bilden sie die Literatur der Gesellschaften ohne schriftliche Überlieferung..." (1)

Bettelheim goes on to explain in more detail the relationship between these different types of folk literature. He sees a possible development that has taken place, turning some myths into fairy tales and folk tales. He also sees the possibility of an amalgamation of the different literature species. The common denominator between myth and folk literature is, according to Bettelheim, the fact that they contain a society's 'cumulative experience', that they were used as a vehicle to bring back to memory the wisdom of by gone ages and to pass them on to



further generations. (2)

A further reason why it can be difficult to establish whether a tale should be classified as a myth, a folk tale or a fairy-tale could be that, during the transformations from myth into fairy-tale, there are no clear-cut steps but rather various stages which the tales have had to undergo and which are running smoothly into each other. This process has been described in more detail by Reidar . . Christian-  
sen who also states:

"...the fact that no strict line of division can be drawn between folk-tale and legend. Epic legends, even if ultimately founded on belief and personal experience, gradually tend to assume the character of the folk-tale during the process of oral tradition. By constant retelling, over the centuries they become coloured by the imagination of countless storytellers and slowly assume a definite shape even if the connection with actual belief remains." (3)

If one were looking for a meaningful definition that could help to distinguish fairy tales from mythological material one could concentrate on the function of fairy-tale and myth. In this context Bettelheim suggests that contrary to a myth the fairy tale invites its listeners to identify with the hero and to see him as a figure who should be emulated:

"Weit mehr als im Märchen wird aber im Mythos der Held dem Hörer als eine Gestalt vorgeführt, der er in seinem eigenen Leben nacheifern sollte.

Ein Mythos kann wie ein Märchen einen inneren Konflikt symbolisch zum Ausdruck bringen und Wege zu seiner Lösung anbieten, aber dies ist nicht unbedingt sein Hauptanliegen. Der Mythos entwickelt sein Thema in majestätischer Weise,

er ist von geistiger Kraft erfüllt, das Göttliche ist präsent und zeigt sich in übermenschlichen Helden, die an gewöhnliche Sterbliche große Anforderungen stellen. So sehr wir, die Sterblichen, uns bemühen mögen, diesen Helden zu gleichen, werden wir ihnen doch stets und nur zu offensichtlich unterlegen bleiben. (4)

According to Bettelheim a fairy-tale's characters and plot also describe inner conflicts but the tale is more careful when hinting at possible solutions of those conflicts. Bettelheim sees the fairy-tale as less demanding than the myth and as evoking optimism, hope and confidence in a happy ending. (5)

"Um zu entscheiden, ob eine Geschichte ein Märchen oder etwas ganz anderes ist, könnte man fragen, ob es dem Kind gefalle, weil es mit Liebe erzählt wird. Dies wäre kein schlechter Weg zur Klassifikation." (6)

A classification according to the above-outlined criteria would mean that material investigated in this thesis in chapters I and II has been taken from folk tale traditions at the root of which one might suspect mythological material. Chapter VI deals with a fairy-tale on which a Disney cartoon has been based, while Gerhart Hauptmann classifies his works himself as 'fairy-tale tragedies'. However one has to bear in mind that these are artificially created narratives that have not grown and developed over centuries, unlike the 'organically grown' folk literature.

The Language of Symbolism

One crucial factor which all the material dealt with in this thesis has in common is the fact that it has been formulated in symbolic language. This means the assumption that beneath a tale's plot, that is, its manifest and obvious statements, lies a latent content which can be understood by those people who are adept in this symbolic language. Here the interpretation approach developed by Eugen Drewermann will be applied. (7) When discussing the meaning of these archetypal symbols Hedwig von Beit will be frequently quoted. She works on the assumption that:

"... die Ähnlichkeit der Motive beruht vielmehr auf der Strukturgleichheit der menschlichen Seele." (8)

Regarding the function and importance of this symbolic language the investigation will here refer to Erich Fromm's theories who writes:

"Die Symbolsprache ist eine Sprache, in der innere Erfahrungen, Gefühle und Gedanken so ausgedrückt werden, als ob es sich um sinnliche Wahrnehmungen, um Ereignisse in der Außenwelt handelte. Es ist eine Sprache, die eine andere Logik hat als unsere Alltagssprache, die wir tagsüber sprechen.." (9)

Fromm also stresses why it is so important to understand this symbolic language:

"Wenn wir diese Sprache nicht verstehen, verlieren wir einen großen Teil von dem, was wir in den Stunden wissen und uns sagen, in denen wir nicht damit beschäftigt sind, die Außenwelt zu beherrschen." (10)

It is not easy to understand and use this language



and Fromm describes important elements which help us to achieve this aim. He points out that this symbolic language is a language in its own right and as such is the only universal language that human kind has ever developed. Therefore it is important to understand it rather than 'translate' or 'interpret' it as if it was an artificially created secret code. (11) Symbolic language can be particularly important when describing feelings. One can imagine, for example, a dream where the dreamer finds him/herself shortly before daybreak in the outskirts of a town, the streets are still empty, the houses give a wretched impression. The dreamer does not know this part of town and misses the usual means of transport which could bring him/her back to more familiar areas where he/she would feel at home. This dream communicates within seconds a feeling of greyness and desolateness. Words like "I feel lost and abandoned, the world feels grey and, if not threatening, nevertheless disquieting", describe this feeling not only in a more long winded way but also do not communicate its full depth and intensity. (12)



Occurrence of mythological Motifs in Contemporary Film and Literature

Even though the following investigations will lead back into different historic periods and even though the interpretation will frequently make use of a historical critical approach, this thesis concerns itself ultimately with the present, and with twentieth century life. Nobody can argue about the existence of tales and stories written in this symbolic language. Traditional fairy-stories or contemporary works based on ancient tales and their motifs still feature strongly amongst new publications of children's literature. Looking at, for example, one of the 1993 catalogues of the main publishers of British youth and children's literature brings the following results:

**Pan Macmillan Books for Children and Young Adults**  
(13)

- Leo Hartas and John Yeoman; King Arthur's Spaceship.

This book seems to use the mythological character's name in the title even though the real theme of the book seems to be a different one. (14)

- Lester, Helen (illustrator Lynn Munsinger); The Wizard, the Fairy and the Magic Chicken.

- Rose, Gerald; Neptune and the Litter Louts

seems to connect the modern up-to-date theme of

environment protection with the classical figure Neptune.(15)

- There is a new edition of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, by Lewis Carroll (illustrated by Sir John Tenniel). This is an addition to the whole series of Alice books which includes books for various ages.

- Ibbotson, Eva (Illustrator Alice Englander); Not Just a Witch.

- Reeves, James (illustrator Sara Silcock); Heroes and Monsters. Legends of Ancient Greece.

- Helland, Susan; The Ugly Duckling. A picture book for the very young.

Also in print are the following tales by Hans Christian Andersen retold by various authors;

- The Tinderbox

- Thumbelina

- The Wild Swans.(16)

In addition, three volumes of fairy-tale collections are available.(17)

- Oakly, Graham; Once Upon a Time - a Prince's Fantastic Journey. The title hints at a retelling of a classical fairy-story.(18)

- Patterson, Geoffrey; The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg.

- Spirin, Gennady; The Enchanter's Spell.

"A beautiful collection of five world-famous classic tales from different European countries."(19)

- Willimas-Ellis, Amabel (illustrator Moira Kemp);  
The Enchanted World (parts one and two)

"Two anthologies of fairy tales and traditional tales, illustrating the rich variety of story-telling around the world." (20)

- Koller, Jackie French (Illustrator Judith Mitchell); The Dragonling

"Darek belongs to a tribe whereby the proof of manhood is to slay a dragon. But Darek makes friends with a baby dragon and knows he cannot hurt it." (21)

- Ibbotson Eva, /Annabel Large; Which Witch.

- Wilson, David Henry (illustrator Jonathan Allen);  
There's a Wolf in my Pudding.

"Why did Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother tell lies, why do princesses kiss frogs". (22)

- In print are also two Irish fairy-tale books by Valera de Sinead, (illustrator Chris Bradbury).

A list of childrens' and adolescents' publications in connection with mythological and fairy-tale motifs by 'Simon and Schuster' as well as by the 'Andersen Press' can be found in the annex.

In the German Book trade in 1993 there have been eighty-seven titles of Brother Grimm's stories available. Of these there were fifty fairy-tale collections. (23)

When children come into contact with this material

it seems to form a long-lasting part in their memories. A recent edition of the television series 'That's Life' featured an inquiry which showed that adults could better recall the names of the seven dwarfs in the English version of 'Snow White' than they could remember the names of seven members of the British cabinet. (24)

Traditional fairy-tales have found their entry into modern media. They have a safe place in cartoons, for example, The Beauty and the Beast or Disney's Cinderella or The little Mermaid to mention only a few recent examples. There has also been a flood of films, cartoons and books in recent years whose subjects have mythological motifs at their roots. Amongst these a peculiarity worth mentioning is the ever increasing number of science fiction films, retelling many of the ancient stories in a new 'universal' setting. (25) Here the whole of the Star Wars series springs to mind with Dark Vader as the personification of evil and with a prince and a damsel in distress. But here the damsel has been given a more active role, adequate to the taste and expectations of a twentieth-century young audience. Then there are films relating to the Arthurian cycle like, for example, Excalibur or the Monty Python version In Search of the holy Grail. A quite recent example of contemporary television using the 'mermaid motif' was the film Splash. This was a light



## Introduction

entertaining American film following in the main the traditional plot. A mermaid and a mortal human fall in love. However, the human is so special that he can breathe and survive under water. He shows affinity with the mermaid's world. The mermaid follows the human into his world which is American suburbia. Here they have to face many dangers and threats by nasty people who want to get to the bottom of the couple's secret. Eventually they flee to the mermaid's country. They live on a paradise island until the hero feels the need to return to his world where new adventures are waiting.... In its superficial manner the film clearly deals with the theme of the challenge that heroes are faced with when they have to adjust to a new world. (26)

Mythological motifs are also widely used in television commercials even if this often happens in a more humorous and sometimes quite superficial way. One example shall be pointed out and briefly looked at. It promotes 'Carling Black Label Beer' by making use of the 'Lady of the Lake' tale.

The 'Carling Black Label' advert uses the 'Lady of the Lake' motif in an obvious and descriptive way. The commercial starts with a scene where, after the last battle, Arthur's men ride towards the lake to hand the sword back to the lady. Solemn, classical music in combination with a smouldering fog sur-

rounding the riders create a tragic and hopeless mood. A gloomy voice calls out: 'Lady where art thou?' while the eye of the camera glances over the misty surface of the lake. At this moment the mood is broken. Again the choice of music is used to achieve this. A light-hearted waltz by Johann Strauss is played and out of the no longer misty water appears one female hand, dressed in a tight blue silvery coating. This is followed by a further number of hands, arms and finally legs moving with the music. A group of women comes to the water surface. They build a formation and perform an underwater dance. The sudden new humorous and show-business atmosphere finds its final climax when the ladies emerge out of the water posing on a glittery, generously illuminated plateau that is lifted out of the water. The camera pans back to the land where the previous gloomy atmosphere has changed accordingly. We see one knight observing the events on the lake addressing another: 'I bet they drink Carling Black Label'.(27). On receiving no reaction the speaker finds out that he has been talking to empty armour. Its previous occupant is preparing to go for a swim, stating in happy anticipation, 'I'll just go and ask'. The advert ends with a hand coming out the water and holding a 'Carling Black Label' glass instead of the sword. At the bottom of the screen appears the slogan "Our best bet yet."

An interpretation of this commercial spot does not meet with great difficulties since here well-known symbols have been used in a very much simplified, plain way and have been divested of almost all their intricate meaning. In the course of this commercial the Lady of the Lake and her sisters have been deprived of several strong and powerful elements which they possess in the tales on which this commercial is based. She has been reduced to a slightly ridiculous object of desire equipped with a 'toothpaste smile'. The portrayed message could be translated as follows:

First of all it is made obvious that through drinking this particular brand of beer something threatening and frightening can be turned into something light-hearted and enjoyable.

The advert also calls for identification with the hero, and thus justifies his foolhardy, plucky attitude. (28) There could however also be a more hidden, slightly more fundamental message which may be summarised as follows: 'Drink Carling Black Label and you will be able to come close to the Lady of the Lake - and gain power over her?-' In other words, drinking this particular brand of beer will enable the consumer to participate in the original myth as an expression and embodiment of deep basic human awareness.



There are further examples where the advertising industry makes use of mythological motifs for commercial purposes. This suggests that associating products with archetypal material will have a beneficial influence on the product's sales. There is for example the RAC advert promoting the 'Knights of the Road' (ITV 1992), or a Jeans advert making use of the 'Cinderella' motif in reverse by featuring a young woman choosing the 'right' man by means of a pair of Jeans which different men have to try on until eventually she finds the right owner (ITV 1992). A Citroën advert features the Greek god 'Amor' (ITV 1993).

Two conclusions can be drawn from the fact that commercially-orientated advertising agencies make use of those motifs. It means that the commercial industry must, firstly, work from the assumption that these belong to the general knowledge of the broad television audience and that, secondly, a connection of certain products, reaching from a beer brand to an automobile rescue service, with those motifs will lead to an increase in sales.

### The Material dealt with in this Thesis

Historically, as well as mentally, there is a large gap to be bridged between a twentieth century tele-

vision advert and the old folk-tales which form the basis of it. The thesis will investigate the Lady of the Lake in many of her appearances. It will also attempt to trace those motifs back by means of a historical-critical approach. Then, in order to understand the possible contemporary semantic content, psychological and philosophical modes of investigation will be pursued.

In order to be able to understand the importance and the effect of certain motifs for the present, some of them shall be investigated with regard to their historic change and transformations and their possible origins.

Every area of research has to be limited if only for practical reasons. The geographic framework chosen for this thesis is Wales in the first instance; later, modern works from Germany and the USA will be looked at. However, in spite of this limitation in the area of research it has to be stated that it should be possible to prove that the elements of the myth are a universal spiritual resource.

The restriction of the theme to myths and legends which are connected to lakes, almost to the exclusion of other water legends, has been undertaken for practical reasons. To begin with, the thesis ap-

proaches the very broad 'Lady of the Lake' legend cycle in Wales by dealing with the Lady as the female protagonist of the story and then looking at the lake as an evocative source of many symbols.

In brief this thesis' structure has been organised as follows.

### **I. The Lady of the Lake in Wales**

At first, by means of a historical-critical method, Walter Map's version of the tale, the oldest written source of any version of the tale, shall be investigated. This text is especially suitable for close investigation because it was composed in the twelfth century in Latin. We are thus presented with a version that has been isolated out of the tradition of oral transmission which ended for the other tales only in the nineteenth century. The translated version given by John Rhys will be compared with my own contemporary translation.

Subsequently the various presentations of the character of the Lady of the Lake will be looked at with regards to the way in which they are portrayed in Rhys' work. A comparison of the different versions of the 'Lady of the Lake' legends will soon show the close relationship of these ladies with the inhabi-



tants of the fairy country which, very often, also has some connection with water. Sometimes it can only be reached by going through lakes and pools, sometimes fairies may be perceived as lake dwellers.(29) Water, 'marshy ground' etc. is sometimes seen as the border to fairy country.(30) Fairies were thought to live on the banks of rivers, for example "the little river on Waun y Trawsgoed (Trawsgoed Meadow)".(31) And there is the legend of the "Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach".(32)

It will also be necessary to investigate another - mainly the darker - aspect of the Lady of the lake as catalogued by, for example, Mary Trevelyan. Beautiful ladies are not the sole inhabitants of fairy tale lakes. Very often hostile creatures live under the water. However, beside obvious differences there are quite a few things the Ladies of the Lake have in common with those creatures. It is a well-known fact throughout folklore that the beauty of water fairies and mermaids can have a very dangerous aspect. There are, for example, Odysseus' sirens in classic Greek mythology and there is the Loreley of the Rhine legend, who also lures the sailors into dangerous grounds where they will be threatened with death. The stories dealt with in this thesis are not totally unfamiliar with this fearful and threatening element. This dark aspect is not inherent in the personality of the Lady but

it can usually be connected with a member of her family. See, for instance, the parallel story recorded by John Rhys where the suitor does not negotiate with the lady's father but meets a monster emerging out of the lake. (33)

The first subject for detailed investigation will be the version recorded by Walter Map. It is very unlikely that all those 'later' tales were based on an 'original' by Walter Map. What can be clearly stated is that the relationship between the earliest written recorded version and all the other tales is in some cases closer and more obvious than in others. This thesis will try to support the theory that Walter Map's version is most probably a summary/synopsis of a story cycle which already in the twelfth century must have existed in many variations and formations.

At the end of the first chapter a clear overview of a small sector of the folk tradition shall be presented. This will concentrate on the similarities and differences between individual groups of tales which will also emphasise those elements and motifs which are common to all the versions examined. Possibilities of interpretation will be pointed out. Here a historical approach will be implemented in the first instance. It will become apparent that there are regional characteristics within the tale's

many variations. Hopefully, it will also emerge that the wide geographical distribution of the tale reflects the universal importance of its motifs within the imagination and the spirit of mankind.

### II. The Lake

While Chapter I puts the emphasis on the character of the Lady, Chapter II will take a closer look at the comprehensive symbolic meaning of the 'water' motif, the element from which she emerges and which must be seen as an important part of her essence. This water world occurs in most of the Lady of the Lake stories only indirectly insofar as it must be seen as her home, and the home of her family and cattle. But this home is never directly described. Its significance becomes evident only when looking at another closely related and equally widely spread story cycle which concerns itself with life under the water surface. It is not the object of this chapter to produce a complete catalogue of the respective material collected by Rhys. In order to fully appreciate the consequences of the fact that the Lady of the Lake stems from the water world it will suffice to establish a link with the 'Guardian of the Well' and the 'Sunken Dwellings' motifs by means of a few selected examples.



The connection of the Lady of the Lake with the Guardian of the Well and the Sunken Dwelling motif needs to be made in order to understand the water world, the Lady of the Lake's origin which forms an important part of her essence.

Those stories will again primarily be looked at from a historical point of view. The conclusion of this chapter will be similar to that of Chapter I, namely, that at the root of many of those tales lies a deep conflict that arose between the newly-establishing Christian idea and its pagan predecessors. Erich Fromm demonstrates how different levels of interpretation, for example, the historical and the mythical level exist next to each other. An interpretation of the symbolic language of each level can be used to support statements contained in each level. (34)

The thesis will then move on to another level and investigate more closely the ambiguous relationship between those different ethical and moral concepts which may have existed not only in different groups of society but may also have presented moral conflicts for individuals living at particular periods when they were influenced by contradicting moral systems. The work will look at the possible psychological meaning behind these stories. For example, how does one interpret the cities and countries,

which supposedly existed at one time on the surface of the earth, before they sank into the waters, often leaving one survivor to bear witness to their catastrophic endings. The reasons for the fate of the sunken cities will be looked at as well as the mystery behind the prevalent belief that one day, given the right conditions, the sunken land will again emerge out of the water.

### **III. The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach**

Equipped with a better understanding of the two basic elements of the Lady of the Lake tales, that is, the lady and the lake, in Chapter III a detailed analysis will be made of the story 'The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach'. The research will be based on John Rhys' work, taking into consideration other versions of the story found by himself or recorded by others. At first a formal analysis of the legend's structure will be made. Motifs and independent sections will have to be identified within the tale and will have to be looked at separately. The study will investigate their origin, their history and development, as well as their literary classification and, finally, their meaning. A comparison of the form analysis with Thompson's motifs index will facilitate the reference for the detailed motif investigation. Results taken from the methods applied in Chapters I

and II will be checked and confirmed and further developed.

The tale of 'The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach' can be described as one of the fullest versions of the Lady of the Lake group and it incorporates most of the motifs relevant to such tales.(35) It will be necessary to analyse the tale's structure. This will be done according to Stith Thompson's Motif Index of Folk Literature.(36) The motif sequence which will thus be identified will form the basis for the detailed analysis of the Llyn y Fan Fach tale.

The work will take a large step backwards in time and lead to the prehistoric epoch when the great goddess, the earth mother, was worshipped by many peoples on earth. Her various manifestations, traits and attributes which are prevalent under the surface of this tale will be emphasised.

In the interpretation a new dimension will be added to the historic approach. In order to comprehend the mythological, semantic content of the motifs they must be examined from a psychological perspective.

To a certain degree, the selection of this particular tale for close investigation has been an arbitrary



trary one. The choice was made, inter alia, because in "The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach" the equine element has been connected to the story. Also the different historic layers can be clearly distinguished and detached from the superficial assignment of the tale to the twelfth century, as happens in Rhys' version of the tale, and the incorporation in it of the 'Physicians of Myddfai'.

#### IV. Gerhart Hauptmann's Fairy-Tale Dramas

Chapter IV will investigate two examples where motifs previously discussed have been used by one particular author in order to make individual statements. In order to do this the work makes a historical, geographical and cultural jump to Bohemia at the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century. Here the existence of the motifs previously discussed will be pointed out and it will also be demonstrated how an individual author has used and adapted them in order to formulate his own personal messages and statements. Two works of the German author Gerhart Hauptmann, who is generally classified as a naturalistic writer (37), will be dealt with. The two fairy-tale dramas Die versunkene Glocke and Und Pippa tanzt form, to an extent, a radical change in the author's artistic career, combining within themselves 'realistic' with mythological motifs. A

comparison of the two main characters will again pay attention to the close links between the fairy-like 'Pippa' and 'Rautendelein', the water creature. Hauptmann's new creation and interpretation of the dramas' main figures is thus his personal perception of the ancient motifs and his own way of dealing with them.

### V. Walt Disney's 'Little Mermaid'

The thesis will conclude by looking in detail at a product of the film industry. Unlike the dramas discussed in Chapter IV, Walt Disney's The Little Mermaid is, in the first instance, aimed at children. However, adults also can hardly escape its attractive force. This may partly be due to the elaborate humorous remarks and the satiric description of some of the characters which can really only be understood by adults. The previous investigations and their results should have equipped us with the skills and knowledge necessary to understand exactly what messages are conveyed - especially to young, susceptible viewers - when they watch this film. Also the question will be raised as to why Disney's story deviates in parts from its 'model' story, Hans Christian Andersen's Meerweibchen. This modern adaptation of the mermaid story has a 'happy' ending, unlike Andersen's Meerweibchen. The

question has to be posed as to what basic original messages in earlier versions of the story might have been changed in the film version, and what the motivation behind these changes might have been.

When interpreting the cartoon film The Little Mermaid an additional component in the interpretation approach will be the philosophical one. In order to achieve this an attempt will be made to apply a method of interpretation which incorporates research results of various disciplines such as Psychology, Theology, Linguistics and History. This approach will be heavily based on the work of Eugen Drewermann.(38) The historical-critical approach of bible interpretation (39), as well as a sociological explanation for the creation and transmission of fairy-tales (40) will also play a part in the investigation. Previous research work undertaken in the area of symbolism, for example by Hedwig von Beit (41) will be frequently consulted. It is hoped that it will thus be possible to get an overall view of the meaning behind the film version of the Little Mermaid and show that it has relevance for people living today.

At the end it is hoped that it will have been shown that mythological thinking is not a phenomenon that should be restricted to learned books, specialists and their institutions. The use of archetypal



motifs is prevalent in today's society where they are widely applied, perhaps not always in the interest of the general public. A better knowledge of the meaning behind those motifs and processes can perhaps prevent a misuse of this material and lead to a freer, more self-confident and self-destined existence.

Footnotes

- (1) Bettelheim, Bruno, Kinder brauchen Märchen (München, 1980) pp.33ff.

'In most cultures there is no strict distinction between myths and fairy-tales, they form together the literature of a society without a written tradition'.

- (2) Ibid. p.34.

- (3) Christiansen, Reidarth, The Migratory Legends. A Proposed List of Types with a Systematic Catalogue of the Norwegian Variants (Helsinki, 1958) p.4.

- (4) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.34.

'However, in a myth, far more than in a fairy-tale, the hero is introduced to the listener as a character who should be emulated in real life.

Like a myth a fairy-tale can also express an inner conflict symbolically and offer ways to its solution, but that is not necessarily its main purpose. The myth develops a theme in a majestic manner and is filled with spiritual power, the deity is present and appears through the superhuman heroes who make great demands on normal mortal human beings. However hard we, the mortals, may try to be like those heroes, we will always be obviously inferior.'

- (5) Ibid. pp.34f.

- (6) Ibid. p.35.

'In order to decide whether a tale is a fairy-tale or something else one could ask whether a child likes it because it has been told with love. This would not be a bad way of classification.'

- (7) Drewermann, Eugen, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese. Band I, die Wahrheit der Formen. Traum, Mythos, Märchen, Sage und Legende (Olton, 1985).

- (8) Beit, Hedwig von, Symbolik des Märchens. Versuch einer Deutung. (Bern, 1986) p.15.

'...the similarity of the motifs is based on the structural symmetry of the human soul.'

(9) Fromm, Erich, Märchen, Mythen Träume. Eine Einführung in das Verständnis einer vergessenen Sprache (Hamburg, 1981) p.19.

'The symbolic language is a language where inner experiences, feelings and thoughts are expressed as if they were sensual perceptions, as if they were events taking place in the outside world. It is a language which has a different logic from our every day language which we speak in the day.'

(10) Ibid. p.16.

'If we do not understand this language we will lose a large part of those things we know and talk about during those hours when we are not busy mastering the outside world.'

(11) Ibid. p.9.

(12) Ibid. p.17

(13) Pan Macmillan Books for Children and Young Adults 1993. Complete list including information on new books for 1993. For Booksellers - Librarians - Teachers, 1993.

(14) Ibid. p.4.

(15) Ibid. p.9.

(16) Ibid. p.25.

(17) Ibid. p.28.

(18) Ibid. p.33.

(19) Ibid. p.35.

(20) Ibid. p.36.

(21) Ibid. p.40.

(22) Ibid. p.40

(23) Köhler Verlag, Kurz-Titel Katalog Koch, Neff and Oettinger, Köhler and Volckmar GROSSHAUS Wegner, Könemann, Umbreit, Wehling. Stuttgart, 1993.

(24) That's Life BBC I, Saturday, 28 March 1992.

(25) For closer discussion about the interdependence between accountants with extra terrestrials and fairies see Peter M. Roscewicz's essay, "Between one Eye Blink and the next. Fairies, UFOs and Problems of Knowledge", Narváez, Peter (ed.), The Good People. New Fairylore Essays (New York - London,



1991) pp.479-515.

(26) Splash Granada, Sunday, 31 January 1993, 7.45 p.m.

(27) Here the commercial follows the pattern of previous spots where at some point one or more persons find themselves in strange, unusual often funny situations and are commented on by two 'detached observers' with the sentence 'I bet ....drink(s)/do(es) not drink Carling Black Label'.

(28) The actor 'Mark Arden' has become known through starring in the popular series 'London is burning' where he played the part of a Lady Killer.

(29) Jones, T. Gwynn, Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom (London, 1930) pp.52f.

(30) Gwyndaf, Robin, "Fairyllore: Memorates and Legends from Welsh oral Tradition", Narváez, Peter (ed.), The Good People. New Fairyllore Essays (New York - London, 1991) pp.176ff.

(31) Ibid. p.187.

(32) For a brief summary and overview of research issues regarding this particular tale see: Gwyndaf, Fairyllore: Memorates and Legends from Welsh oral tradition pp.188f.

(33) Rhys, John, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) pp.18f and pp.40f.

(34) Fromm, Märchen, Mythen, Träume p.153.

(35) Gwyndaf, Fairyllore: Memorates and Legends from Welsh Oral Tradition, p.169.

(36) Thompson, Stith, Motif Index of Folk Literature. A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folk Tales, Ballads, Myths, Tables, Mediaeval Romances, Exemplos, Fables, Jest Books and Local Legends (Copenhagen, 1955).

(37) See for example Bytkowski, Sigmund, Gerhart Hauptmanns Naturalismus und das Drama (Hamburg, 1908).

(38) Drewermann, Eugen, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese.

(39) For a comprehensive introduction into this method and a brief overview over its main representatives see Conzelmann, Hans/Lindemann, Andreas, Arbeitsbuch zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen, 1976).

(40) See for example Fletcher, Iring, Wer hat Dornröschen wachgeküßt? Das Märchenverwirrbuch (Frankfurt/Main, 1978).

(41) Beit, Symbolik des Märchens.

I THE LADY OF THE LAKE

I.1 John Rhys' Work in Connection with Other European Contemporary Folklore Research

It is not intended within the framework of this thesis to give a comprehensive overview over the whole of the European folklore research with regards to water legends or even to cover completely the research carried out by John Rhys.(1) In what follows those scholars, theories and tendencies will be mentioned which will provide a better understanding of the objectives and the position of Rhys' work and its connection to this thesis.

John Rhys compiled his folklore collection at the end of the last century during an epoch when, in other parts of Europe, folklorists also felt a strong motivation to write down orally transmitted material of their respective cultures. John Rhys consciously followed this tradition with his venture.

"I did so [to collect Welsh folklore] partly because others had set the example elsewhere..."(2)

In 1697, the Parisian architect Charles Perrault (1626 - 1703) had published a volume of fairy-tales, Contes de Fees, which was a narration of children and miracle stories, which he had heard in his youth. Thus he was a French predecessor of the German brothers Grimm (3), who considered that they



were working against time while completing their fairy-tale collection which they had begun in 1806.

"Perhaps it was just the time to commit these stories to paper, because those who should preserve them become increasingly rare." (4)

The first volume of their fairy-tales was published in 1812. It contained 86 fairy stories. The second volume, containing seventy fairy-tales, followed in 1815. During their lifetime the brothers saw seventeen editions of their work, a fact which shows the great popularity of these stories during the romantic epoch.

In particular, the Romantic School helped to overcome the negative attitude towards fairy-tales and myths, which had till then prevailed in learned circles and had denied this literary species a deeper value and meaning. The new romantic movement resulted in the creation of new fairy-tales, like for example, Goethe's *Kunstmärchen* and Wilhelm Hauff's fairy-tales which are, according to Bernhard Zeller, the editor of Hauff's collection, based on E.T.A. Hoffmann's theory of fairy-tales.(5) The idea

"daß das Mythische kleinen Stücken eines zersprungenen Edelsteines gleiche, die auf dem von Gras überwachsenen Boden nur entdeckt werden wollen, kennzeichnet die Anfänge jener mythologischen Denk- und Forschungswege, die das ganze vergangene Jahrhundert in den verschiedensten Richtungen durchzogen." (6)

One group of scholars wanted to collect original fairy-tales in order to establish their true origin. Within the framework of this purely historic ap-

proach Theodor Benefey suggested India as the country of origin of all fairy-tales and in this way explained, to his own satisfaction, the great similarities of motifs throughout all countries. This suggestion was initially widely accepted. (7)

Other scholars tried to prove Egypt and Babylon to be the fairy-tales' homeland. W.E. Peuckert believed that folk tales originated in the eastern Mediterranean during the Neolithic period. (8) Eventually, however, anthropological and ethnological research showed that the question of a so-called original homeland had been posed inadequately. Adolf Bastian sought to explain the omnipresence and the homogeneity of mythological conceptions of different peoples through the principal structural identity of the human spirit. He called those notions "Elementargedanken" (elementary thoughts),

"Grundstoffe... über die sich dem Standpunkt unserer jetzigen Kenntnisse nach nicht hinausgehen läßt." (9)

However, he could not explain the development and the functioning of those 'elementary materials' within the mind of the 'primitive man'. He concluded that the 'elementary thoughts', which he also called a reflecting/specular mirror image within the human soul ("spiegelndes Reflexbild"), appear in numerous ethnic variations which he terms 'ethnic elementary thoughts' or 'peoples' thoughts' ("ethnische Elementargedanken" oder "Völkergedanken"). (10)

The 'ritualistic' theory which originated mainly among French and Russian folklorists like, for example, Paul Saintyves and V.I.Popp, needs to be mentioned here. This school of thought explains the universal relevance of folk tales by the hypothesis that they are the memory of totemic initiation rites.(11) Nevertheless, the theory of migration of tales could not totally be disregarded because, in several instances, the movement of individual motifs could be proved.

"Diese Erkenntnisse haben daher mit einem gewissen Recht zahlreiche Forscher dazu geführt, unter bewußtem Verzicht auf die Grundfragen von Entstehung und Bedeutung der Mythen und Märchen sich literarhistorischen, philologischen, ästhetischen und völkerpsychologischen Einzeluntersuchungen zuzuwenden."(12)

In this category falls, for example, the Finnish School which was, however, up to a point still looking for the original form and location of individual tales or motifs, as for example Stith Thompson and Arnold Aarne.

"The Finnish School has held that by meticulous study of the variants they could arrive at the 'primordial form' (Urform) of a tale. Unfortunately this was an illusion: in most cases the Urform was only one of the many pre-forms that have come down to us".(13)

Most folklore researchers were mainly concerned with the origin of the fairy-tales by means of a historic comparative approach. The theory that myths and fairy-tales possessed a hidden, deeper meaning, was dismissed as being unscientific.(14) One scholar who nevertheless pursued this particular line was



Rudolf Steiner. In his Märchendeutungen the anthroposophic approach came very close to the psychological one. (15)

The psychological approach, however, could only develop after the phenomenon of the subconscious had been revealed. Amongst the pioneers of such an approach were Arthur Schopenhauer and Carl Gustav Carus, who pointed out the existence of the subconscious as a form of life which was of a principally different spiritual nature from the 'Ego'. (16) Carus looked upon the subconscious as the universal part of the soul which is connected to the world and forms the broader base of the consciousness. (17) Carus concluded that since the subconscious is connected to the world, dreams contain a certain element of truth that is experienced in form of symbols by the ego while it is submerged in subconsciousness. (18)

Initially, however, these ideas were not transferred to the area of myths and fairy-tales. But at the end of the nineteenth century Ludwig Leistner made an attempt to explain fairy tales, local legends and folklore motives as phenomena of nightmares. (19)

Sigmund Freud's scientific research into the manifestations of the subconscious, and in particular its main expression, the dream, cast new light on the literary species of fairy-tales. However the interpretation of motifs as, in the first instance,

erotic tendencies proved not to be sufficient, since the meaning of the investigated material could not be fully explained in this way. The main merit of Freudian psychology for fairy-tale research was that it discovered the principal essential relationship between the dreams of contemporary human beings, the imagination of children and archaic peoples. Freud suspected that there was a meaning in the pictures of the dreams and mythology that could just as well be expressed in conscious language. (20)

Deviating from this Carl Gustav Jung sees in these pictures the expression of a psychological basic structure, which takes effect in the subconscious and causes the spiritual and instinctive functions of the soul. The forces which are at the base of these images are referred to as "archetypes".

"Das kollektive Unbewußte ist als ein Niederschlag der Erfahrung und zugleich als ein Apriori derselben ein Bild der Welt, das seit Äonen sich gebildet hat. In diesem Bilde haben sich gewisse Züge sogenannte Archetypen oder Dominanten, im Laufe der Zeit herausgearbeitet. Sie sind die Herrschenden, die Götter, d.h. Bilder dominierender Gesetze und Prinzipien durchschnittlicher Regelmäßigkeiten im Ablauf der Bilder, welcher die Seele immer wieder aufs neue erlebt". (21)

These archetypal pictures can appear everywhere and at any time spontaneously. Thus many hypotheses regarding the fairy-tales' migration become superfluous because the motifs' similarity is based on the structural compatibility of the human soul. The archetype in itself is undetermined, it is not

identical with a mythological picture, but the picture is one particular formation of the underlying archetype. This means that it is not possible to experience the archetype in its pure form. We depend on all the numerous formations or examples of the archetype. There is a great abundance of modified possibilities and images of various archetypes in different motifs and plots.

"The fairy-tales resemble colourful blossoms on the tree of the spiritual and mental inner life of human kind".(22)

Collections like the works of, for example Rhys and the Brothers Grimm, seem to be a long way from those hypotheses. Nevertheless they did form the important groundwork for all later works which until today depend to a great extent on those initial compilations for reference.

Whilst it was clearly the intention of the Brothers Grimm to collect and write down their stories "faithfully and truthfully" this collection was intended in the first instances to be suitable for the nurseries of the bourgeoisie during the Biedermeier period.

" Was die Weise betrifft, in der wir hier gesammelt haben, so ist es uns zuerst auf Treue und Wahrheit angekommen. Wir haben nämlich aus eigenen Mitteln nichts hinzugesetzt,... sondern ihren Inhalt so wiedergegeben, wie wir ihn empfangen hatten;" (23)

John Rhys had set himself the task of collecting his material as it was (24) and thus, in a way, his work



can be described as more authentic, even though he talks about difficulties with regards to the reliability of his informants as far as the completeness of these stories is concerned. It should be remembered that he began his research more than fifty years later than the Brothers Grimm.

Rhys has, however, undertaken some editorial work in order to form connections between individual pieces of reference which he found. His intention was to collect material rather than to compare the stories, and he mentions the relative novelty of the idea that the collection of folklore can be useful and more than a collection of stories of "heathen lore and superstition".(25)

## I.2    Walter Map

This chapter deals with John Rhys' collection of the 'Lady of the Lake' tales. To begin with we will look at the oldest recorded version of this story cycle which can also be found in Rhys' collection.(26) In the following investigations three translations of Walter Map's Lady of the Lake tale will be involved. At first I will give my own translation (A). The one provided by John Rhys (B) as well as M.R. James' translations (C) will be also consulted. The Latin text quoted in this thesis has

been taken from C.N.L. Brooke's and R.A.B. Mynor's revised edition of M.R. James. (27) The main differences between Rhys' and James' texts as well as their English versions will be acknowledged in the comments which follow directly after my own translation (A).

**I.2.1 The Lady of the Lake in Walter Map's De Nugis Curialium (Latin according to M.R. James) (28)**

Aliud non miraculum sed portentum nobis Walenses referunt. Wastinum Wastiniauc secus stagnum Brekeniauc, quod in circuitu duo miliaria tenet, manisse aiunt et uidisse per tres  
5 claras a luna noctes choreas feminarum in campo auene sue, et secutum eum eas fuisse donec in aqua stagni submergerentur, unam tamen quarta uice retinuisse. Narrabat eciam ille raptor illius quod eas noctibus singulis post submer-  
10 sionem earum murmurantes audisset sub aqua et dicentes: 'Si hoc fecisset, unam de nobis cepisset', et se ab ipsis edoctum quomodo hanc adeptus sit; que et consensit et nupsit ei, et prima uerba sua hec ad uirum suum: 'Libens tibi  
15 seruiam, et tota obediám deuocione usque in diem illum quo prosilire uolens ad clamores ultra Leuem me freno tuo percusseris.' Est autem Leuem aqua uicina stagno. Quod et factum est; post plurime prolis suscepcionem ab  
20 eo freno percussa est, et in reditu suo inuentam eam fugientem cum prole insecutus est, et uix unum ex filiis suis arripuit, nomine Triunein Vagelauc.

**I.2.2 Translation (A)**

The Welsh relate to us another thing, not a wonder but a miracle. (I) They say that Wastinus from the lineage of the Wastiniauc would live by the pool of Brekeniauc (II) which has a circumference of two miles, that during three nights brightly illuminated

by moonlight he saw a row of women dancing in the corn field, that he followed them until they submerged into the water of the pool, but that he caught one the fourth time. (III) The captor of the one also told that during each of these nights, after their (IV) submerging into the water, he heard murmuring and utterance "If he would have done it so and so, he would have caught one of us", (V) and that he had been instructed by them themselves in what way he could get hold of her, (VI) that one consented (VII) to marriage and married him, and these were the first words to her husband:

"I will serve you willingly in total obedience and devotion until that day when you will strike me with your bridle, wanting to jump to the cries beyond the Leuem. (VIII) But the Leuem is a water near the pool. This is what happened; after she had borne him numerous offspring, she was struck by him with the bridle, and on his return he saw her fleeing with the children, he pursued her, and he could barely get hold of one of his sons whose name was Triunein Vagelauc.

### I.2.3 Comments

(I) The translation of 'miraculum' and 'portentum' (line 1) (29), as if the terms are being set against each other in a contrast, provide some difficulties. John Rhys interprets this passage "not so much a miracle as a portent", (30) The translation by M.R. James (C) sets 'miracle' against 'prodigy' in both the 1923 and the 1983 edition. It is in fact very difficult to find a distinct differentiation between 'miraculum', which simply means 'a wonderful thing' and 'portentum' which can be interpreted as having an immanent futuristic tendency and can perhaps be



translated as 'indication that something wonderful is going to happen'. The author may have been used to the word 'miraculum' in a religious context and thus looked for another term to indicate the difference between a religious miracle and a (non religious) supernatural event. At this stage, however, this is speculation.

(II) The lake's name (line 3) must have been taken directly from Welsh into the Latin version, since the name 'Brekeniauc or Brekeinauc (Rhŷs, translation B) kept the letter 'K' which is unknown to the Latin language. However the translation in the different versions is not strictly synonymous. Rhŷs translates 'Brecknock Mere'. The 1923 translation (C.1) states 'lake of Brekeniauc' which has been altered in the 1983 translation (C.2) to 'Brycheiniog', which is in Welsh 'Llyn Syfaddon or Llangorse Lake'. (31) Juliette Wood sees in 'Brychan' and 'Wastin' two names for the same character and interprets 'Brychan' as the real name behind the "corrupted" form 'Wastin'. (32) Wood does not comment on the fact that Rhys as well as James changes the name 'Wastinum Wastiniauc' (line 2) in their translation into the Welsh form 'Gwestin of Gwestiniog' (Rhŷs, translation B), respectively 'Gwestin Gwestiniog', (James, translation C).

(III) *retinuisse* - to hold back/to capture (line 8); the time used is important in so far that the indirect speech has been used throughout the tale to indicate that the story is thought to have been told by Westin himself. This seems to be an essential issue for the narrator who reminds his listeners repeatedly about this fact, for example in 'narabat' (line 8). Thus a certain distance between the tale and the writer is established; this intention is also supported by the expression 'Nugis' in the heading.

(IV) The 'earum' (line 10) is thought to refer to the women's submerging as well as the murmuring, however related stories which will be looked at show the tendency to depersonalise voices coming from the water.

(V) 'Si hoc fecisset, unam de nobis cepisset' (lines 11f.); the rhyming end of this verse could of course be a coincidence and simply caused by the same grammatical *tenor* ending; on the other hand it could be reminiscent of a formulaic saying, and thus could hint at a very early stage in the tradition, that in its original language the narration would have been formulated in rhymes.



(VI) 'adeptus sit', (line 13) the masculine form must be a mistake made in both editions. Rhys mentions his 'correction' from the original to 'adeptus'. The change can be explained as an adjustment to 'hanc' without taking the meaning into consideration. The 1983 edition of M. R. James (C) refers to a version which states 'adepta' (33)

(VII) consensere - consent (line 13); two interpretations are possible, to agree or to give in. It is neither possible nor necessary to decide here in favour of one or the other version, since this tension, the Lady of the Lake's ambiguous attitude towards her (future) husband, runs throughout the plot of many of these parallel stories.

(VIII) "in diem illum.." (lines 15f.) is followed by the future perfect indicative, indicating that something is going to happen. The present participle 'volens' leaves the sentence with two subjects. Strictly, if the lady would be the subject, the form should be 'volentem' and the James version (C) translates "...when you are about to rush out at the shouting beyond the Levem." There seems to be some doubt with regards to the correct name of the water from where the cries are supposed to come. James (translation C) gives in a footnote the information that "The Llyfni (or Llynfi) flows out of the lake." Rhys avoids making a decision with regards to who the mentioned person may be; "...until that day when, desirous of sallying forth in the direction of the cries beyond the Llyfni...". Here it also needs to be stated that Rhys sees the bridle strike as a result of the desire "of sallying forth in the direction of the cries beyond the Llyfni", which indicates that the lady seems to be the person who is longing for the waterworld. James (translation C) avoids here the decision, using the conjunction 'and' which, even though it connects the reaction to the cries from the lake to the bridle strike, does not see one as the direct result of the other. The missing 'quo' in the Rhys version was probably a coincidental omission.

There is good reason for keeping the unclarities in the translation for, as will be seen at a later stage, this particular passage can be interpreted on many levels and in the end does not offer an unambiguous interpretation. This stands in connection with the Lady's ambivalent attitude towards her husband, that is inherent in the tale from its beginning. She does not look upon the connection she is about to make as one that will last forever "...usque in diem illum..." (lines 15f.)

Grammatical errors and inconsistencies are quite common throughout the Latin texts which show several characteristics that can be frequently found in mediaeval Latin texts, as for example the use of 'c' instead of 't'. See 'eciam' in M.R. James, where Rhys' version shows the correct form 'etiam'. In the same category falls the continuous replacement of 'v' by 'u' in the James version. However see the use of the capital 'U' in the name 'Vagelauc' by Rhys. Nevertheless these aspects show that the Rhys version seems to attempt a 'more correct' Latin, for example it sets the noun 'obedientiae' against the verbal form 'obediam'. Here, however, both versions show the simplified diphthong. For an interpretation which is mainly concerned with the tale's semantic content it is not essential to establish by means of a text critical analysis whether both versions, the one of James and the Thomas Wright edition from where John Rhys quoted the tale, refer to one original manuscript. The principle that the version that provides the greatest semantic and grammatical difficulties should be seen as the older one, points to the Wright version. The Wright text does not show the shortening of diphthongs, for example, suae - sue, quae - que, haec - hec. On the contrary here a tendency to 'hypercorrect' by adding artificial diphthongs can be established, for example feminarum - faeminarum.

In conclusion, it has to be said that the Latin text in all its later editions shows typical mediaeval characteristics, misspellings etc. However these do not generally present a major problem with regards to the syntax.

#### I.2.4 Interpretation

Below, this oldest recorded version of the story cycle, where a husband loses his wife after having touched her with iron or a bridle, will be discussed in some detail regarding its semantic contents.

This short tale shows a very close density of structure. The complexity of its individual elements will become apparent only with further investigation



which will look at the developments, the branching out and deviations, which motifs and strands in this version underwent in, for example, the Welsh variations where the oral tradition could continue unimpeded while the Latin text, once put down in writing, stayed static.

In the introduction a distinction is made between a 'miraculum' and 'portentum'. Let us assume that the theory regarding the translation of 'miraculum' and 'portentum' as the differentiation between setting 'miraculum' in a religious context while assigning a more profane meaning to the latter term is correct. This would mean that emphasis is placed from the very beginning on the circumstance that even though the story deals with occurrences which belong to supernatural spheres, these are not of a religious nature - the term 'religious' being used here as synonymous with the Christian religion.

The tale is apparently set in an exact geographical frame, naming the hero as a "Wastinum Wastiniauc" who lived by the pool of "Brekeniauc". There is no mention of a historic date when the following events may have taken place. The narrator uses the name "Wastinum" as if it was a self-explanatory term, and one can deduce that, from the narrator's point of view, the events told in the tale did not happen a long time ago but perhaps within his and his audien-

ce's living memory.

The first scene of the tale shows the fairy dance "a row of women dancing in the corn/oat fields" who, when pursued, submerged into the water. Thus even though the Latin version uses the general term "faeminarum" their description contains the characteristics of fairies, water fairies and even mermaids. The magic number "three" is mentioned in the form of the three nights: this will have to be rated as a stylistic adjustment. Apart from this the Latin version lacks the magic and mysterious element in a peculiar manner, when compared with similar tales where, for example, the conditions which have to be fulfilled by the suitor in order to marry the lady are explained far more. In those stories he might have to provide exactly the correctly baked bread and have to distinguish her from her identical looking sister. Two possible explanations for this fact spring to mind: firstly the magic element might have been removed by the author when the text was written down or, secondly, the incorporation of and emphasis on the supernatural was a later addition which happened during periods of the oral tradition and development that the Latin text did not undergo. The first theory seems to be the more likely one. (34) This is supported by the following 'murmuring' and 'uttering' of the women

"If he would have done so and so, he would have caught one of us".

The text does not explain what action might have been required on the part of the protagonist in order to gain possession of one of the ladies. If we assume that there was no great time gap between the narrator and his story the question to be posed is, how could it happen that details which are so characteristic of the whole story cycle should have been either forgotten or accidentally omitted. Assuming a deliberate action behind the omission would call for an explanation. In the present version the woman may be speaking in a set formulaic way, since the Latin version is formulated with a rhyme. Juliette Wood interprets the passage where the young man overhears one lady reveal how they may be caught in this way.

"The narrative is synopsised here in such a way as to make it clear that the original had more information than Map is giving..." (35)

Women carrying out a dance in a corn field during full moon remind us of fairies dancing, a phenomenon of which many examples can be found in Welsh folklore:

"The fairies of Wales were very fond of music and dance. Many a young lad on moon lit nights claimed to have seen them dancing on hill tops or in the fairy ring..." (36)

It is said that a curse can follow when fairy dancing-circles are ploughed. (37) With regards to Welsh folklore there are two basic plots connected to fairies dancing. One is that a man can enter into the circle of fairy dances and enters thus the



fairy country,

"... the most beautiful country that ever could be ...",

like for example the "Nant y Bews" story which describes a fairy dance taking place by Llyn Cwellyn. (38) The second basic plot can be seen in the group of 'fairy dance tales' where the fairy bride leaves her home to marry a human husband, like the fairies in the caves from Cwm Stradllyn to Blaen Pennant, who were described in the following way:

"They were more beautiful than those of any other place, taller, with flaxen hair and bright blue eyes. They were seen playing, dancing and singing on moonlight nights..." (39)

There are many more tales of this kind, some of which will be discussed below. Probably a relatively recent account of a fairy dance was given by Mr William Jones who, however, was described as a keen reader, an informant of R. Gwyndaf, who recalled his grandfather's memories in 1969 and told about the following experience: (40)

"Well, they [the fairies] talked mostly about singing and dancing. And Taid knew step y gloesen (clog dance). He was a specialist in clog dancing. I saw my grandfather performing the clog dance. And he said that it was the fairies' dance and dawns y cylch (circle dance) - whatever that was... And that was the great dance of the fairies - the circle dance. (41)

Thus the lady in Walter Maps's tale can safely be identified as a fairy.

It is not possible within the framework of this thesis to reproduce the detailed discussion about

the origin and nature of fairies and fairy belief in Celtic countries.(42) In the discussion about who the fairies are or where they come from many theorists give religious explanations. In the following, only the main theories relevant for this work shall briefly be mentioned:

Fairies are sometimes seen as old gods of demoted religions. They can be interpreted as wandering souls of the dead and can also be fallen angels.(43) Sometimes the 'Tylwyth Teg', or the 'Fair Family' were regarded to be the souls of Druids, who, since they were no Christians could not enter the Christian heaven but were believed to stay in a heaven of their own.(44)

In many cases the conflict between official and traditional religion was not as great as might have been expected, since popular religion incorporated both Christian and fairy beliefs:

"There was no conflict between belief in the fairies and belief in the saints. Both belonged to the same popular religion and inhabited the same mythical universe".(45)

Robin Gwyndaf also points out the possible connection between the pre-Christian religions and fairy beliefs in Wales:

"In parts of South Wales, Glamorgan in particular, fairies were called Bendith y Mamau (mothers' blessing). One theory is that these were the descendants of the Celtic goddesses Matronae or Matres (mothers). Another theory is that originally the fairies would have been called Melltith y Mamau (mothers' curse) and

that the phrase Bendith y Mamau was used to please them and so avoid their curse." (46)

The apparent mixup between the deity's most positive and most negative aspects in this quotation is remarkable. This circumstance in connection with the theory that fairies are descendants of ancient pagan deities could provide an explanation for the ambiguous relationship which exists between the human race and the fairies. In any case, assuming a connection between the dancing women in the tale and pre-Christian beliefs and rituals may cast new light on the fore-mentioned differentiation between 'portentum' and 'miraculum'.

It seems, however, to have been the author's intention to avoid the direct mentioning of any non-Christian elements when telling his story. This intent was so strong that the narrator decided to adjust the plot to such an extent that the course of action was obscured. Here, however, it could be argued that the effect of this disaffection/estrangement was reduced with regards to his contemporary audience, which was more familiar with these kinds of story and perhaps even with their origin and meaning.

The description of the courtship contains considerable tension. The man has to capture, "hold back" the lady on one hand while she at the same time assists him by advising him on what action to take.



Even though it is obvious that the women make a considerable contribution to the accomplishment of the relationship between the protagonist and one of the ladies, the man is described as the capturer.

It is peculiar that the story does not mention love. There seems to be an indifference in the hero's attitude to which one of the ladies he gets hold of. If one assumes that at the root of this scene lies an ancient ritual this lack of individual feeling could be explained by the fact that if the lady of the lake and the youth were acting out this ritual they would do it symbolically as representatives of their faith and not as individuals and thus the personalities of the couple participating would not be important, since the woman would purely be seen as representatives of the goddess who unites with a human man in order to make the earth fertile and fruitful.

"In this transition of the partner to the hieros gamos we see clearly the attempt to make the act an impersonal ritual." (47)

These rites were in the main fertility rites,

"deemed essential to the propagation of animals and plants". (48)

We probably find also in Walter Map's tale reminiscences of the worship of ancient moon and sun deities as they can be traced all over the world. For example, Harol Bayles in The lost Language of Symbolism points to the Isis cult, a form of worship also involving theatrical expression - even

though not a dance - which involves bulls and cows, animals which also play a part in the story cycle discussed here:

"In the worship of Isis it was customary for a priestess to impersonate the Moon-goddess and for a priest to play the part of Osiris her Sun-god Bridegroom. The ceremony thus assumed the form of a dramatic dialogue - and occasional chorus between Isis and Osiris. It is probable that pageants of this mystic marriage between the Sun and Moon were once a widespread custom, they were certainly customary in Crete, where periodically the King and Queen, wearing the mask of a bull and cow respectively, acted the solemn rite." (49)

It would be understandable that later versions of this story cycle have introduced scenes where the hero falls in love instantly upon meeting the lady for the first time. This can be explained as an attempt to adjust the plot to the ethic and moral norms of a later historic epoch. There is evidence of pagan customs being carried out in the British Isles and the fight of the official church against these practises. For example, the canon issued by the Second Council of Arles (about 452):

"If in the territory of a bishop infidels light torches or venerate trees, fountains, or stones and he neglects to abolish this usage, he must know that he is guilty of a sacrilege." (50)

The woman who gives her consent to the marriage seems, however, to expect it to end at a certain time rather than that it should be a lifelong arrangement. On the whole, the tale portrays an idea of marriage that clearly states and accepts a subservient female, but one who is by no means powerless and without rights, and sees the institution of

marriage as a relationship which concerns not only the man and woman involved but the whole of the family, in accordance with custom and law of the times when the text was laid down and transmitted. The law texts regulate the possibility of a separation between husband and wife and do not seem to regard marriage as a life-long institution in all circumstances:

"If a man take a wife by gift of kindred, and he desert her before the end of the seven years, let him pay her three pounds as her agweddi, if she be the daughter of a breyr, a pound and a half as her cowyll, and six score pence as her gobr; if she be the daughter of a bondman, one pound and a half as her agweddi, and six score pence as her cowyll, and twenty-four pence as her amobr. If after the seven years he leave her, let all be shared equally between them, unless privilege should give precedence to the husband; two parts of the children come to the husband and one part to the mother - the eldest and the youngest. If they be separated by death, let everything be equally shared between them.

...

A man is free to forsake his wife if she notoriously attach herself to another man; and she is to obtain nothing of her right excepting the three things which are not to be taken from a woman, and the seducer is to pay to the lawful husband his sarhad." (51)

Certainly in Welsh mythology and folk tales there is evidence of the fact that a woman had a say in whom she wanted to marry. Also the fact that in all the tales the man's ownership of the land is never questioned corresponds with the actual legal situation of Wales during mediaeval times, where women were on the whole excluded from inheriting land. (52) In all tales that will be discussed in this thesis the Ladies of the Lake have to give their consent to



marriage, respectively set the conditions which the suitor has to fulfil (in some versions this task is taken over by the Lady of the Lake's father).

And thus the contradiction manifests itself that the Lady knowingly agrees to enter into a relationship that will make her totally dependant on her husband.

"I will serve you willingly in total obedience and devotion until ..."

The event that leads to the end of the marriage - the striking with a bridle - cannot simply be explained as the description of a 'normal' chastisement of a wife by her husband, even though later versions have at times interpreted this scene in such a way. (53) Welsh legislation acknowledged and regulated a man's right to beat his wife, and in case a man went against this he could be punished:

"If a wife utter a shameful word to her husband, let her pay to the husband three cows as camlwrw, for he is her lord, or let him strike her three blows with a rod of his cubit length on any part he may will, excepting her head. If a man beat his wife without cause, let him pay her sarhad to her according to her privilege." (54)

A more comprehensive explanation of this passage could proceed from the fact that a bridle is the instrument used by man to guide and control another creature. One may conclude from the 'bridle scene' that by giving her consent to the marriage the woman hands herself consciously into the man's power until such time when her husband decides to misuse it.

The interpretation of the second part of the 'prediction' presents considerable difficulties. "Wanting to jump to the cries beyond the Leuem", Leuem is later explained as "Water by the pond". However it remains unclear who would like to perform this act. With regards to the fact that the water world is the woman's place of origin one may assume that "wanting to jump ...." refers to her. This still leaves the question open whether this wish will develop in her once the taboo is broken or whether she in fact has the desire to go there now, while giving her consent to the marriage. Who is the person or are the persons to cry out and evoke in the lady the wish to follow? From where does the shouting come, from beyond the 'Leuem' or is this place merely the woman's desired destination?

The fateful incident itself is related only briefly. The couple must have lived together for a number of years and they had children. Again a prosaic look at the plot where a couple separated due to the man's wrong behaviour seems compatible with the legislation in Wales at that time.(55)

He strikes her with the bridle and on his return (?) she flees with her children. Her destination is not mentioned. Again the lack of the magical element in comparison to later versions becomes evident. The woman's attempt to escape is not the supernatural,

sudden disappearance of the later versions. It seems, moreover, to be a hasty flight. The husband's pursuit is partly successful, he gets hold of a son, named in the story. This sounds very much like an attempt to explain the supernatural origin of a local hero. Walter Map continues to tell the story of the lady's son "Triunein Vagelauc" who was held back by his father. Triunein became engaged in a battle with the men of prince 'Brychan of Brycheiniog' and is supposed to have died about the middle of the fifth century. Triunein lost the battle and was never seen afterwards. People believed him to have been rescued by his mother, and that he was still living with her in the lake.(56)

Naturally such an introductory interpretation opens up more questions than it can answer. While it is possible to find explanations for various scenes by submerging into different historic and spiritual levels it becomes evident throughout the tale that deep conflicts are prevalent.

First of all there is the relationship between husband and wife, and the story seems to talk about the fate of this particular couple. But both protagonists seem depersonalised and stylistic and must be seen in the first instance not as individuals but as representatives of a particular group. Personal feelings have been excluded. The clashing of



Christian and non-Christian values has been mentioned. The tale tells in brief the story of an incident where the husband did not fulfil the conditions under which the marriage was agreed. This resulted in the disappearance of the woman and all children but one (into the water). In the end it seems, at least on the surface, as if the explanation of the extraordinary origin and future fate of the couple's son, "Triunein", was the real reason for telling this story and keeping its tradition alive. (57) Wood also points out that since Brychan catches only one of their sons, Triunein Vagelauc, he seems to be Map's real concern, the reason behind telling the story. (58)

In short, the structural construction of the tale shows the following phases:

Part I, the introduction, it contains the geographic (and historic) framework of the story.

Part II tells about the dance of the women and the capture of the lady.

Part III consists of the consent and condition of the marriage set out by the woman.

Part IVa tells of the incident when he strikes her. There is no detailed explanation of the circumstances. IVb tells of the consequences directly resulting from this, that is, the lady goes off with her children. IVc tells of the pursuit of the husband and the capture of his son. (59)

I.3 A Selection of Welsh Tales by John Rhys

The following summary of stories related to Walter Map's tale of the Lady of the Lake has been based on the collection found by John Rhys. The page numbers given all refer to the 1983 edition of his book Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx. The legends will be quoted in the following way:

After naming the title that was given to the story, either by Rhys or his informants, the name of the Lady of the Lake, where given, will be stated, followed by the place name, or the name of the lake where the legend was recorded. The informant's name as quoted by Rhys will be given, possibly in connection with the date from which the version originated. It will also be stated whether Rhys found his references in oral or written form and the language in which they were first recorded. Where there exist a number of sources, the one nearest to Rhys has been quoted first. Finally the county from where the legends stem will be mentioned. Where any of this information has not been included, it could not be obtained.

RHYS I

Legends about lake fairies by Sikes, Wirt; British Goblins, Welsh Folk lore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions, London 1888, published in English (p.17) - Carmarthenshire

In the first version of Sikes the lady appears with her two sisters. The following is a brief summary of the version given by Rhys.

A farmer used to go to the lake to see some lambs he had bought at a fair when three beautiful damsels appeared to him from the lake. They always eluded his attempts to catch them and ran away into the lake, saying 'Cras dy fara. Nid hawdd fy nala.' 'Hard baked is thy bread. It is not easy to catch me'. But one day a piece of moist bread came floating ashore, which he ate and the next day he was able to talk to the ladies. He proposed marriage to one of them.

Food offerings play quite a large part in the relationship between mortals and fairies. T.G. Jones, for example, tells about a belief that fairies

"made bread which, when given to mortals, turned into toadstools unless eaten in darkness and silence." (60)

Apart from this, the impersonal manner in which the proposal is carried out becomes apparent.

The lady agreed to the marriage, however under a certain condition. She consented provided he could distinguish her from her sisters the day after.

There could be a connection to additional traditional marriage customs in Wales.

"In some cases, the bride was disguised, and for the bridegroom's attendant was asked to identify her." (61)



The story then follows the pattern of the 'Llyn y Fan' legend.

RHYS 2

Legends about lake fairies by Sikes, Wirt; British Goblins, Welsh Folklore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions, London 1880, published in English (pp.17/18) - Carmarthenshire.

On the surface this second version shows only a distant relationship to the previously discussed Lady of the Lake legends. Firstly the lady does not appear suddenly.

"... a young farmer had heard of the Lake Maiden rowing up and down the lake in a golden boat with a golden scull. He went to the lake on New Year's Eve, saw her, was fascinated by her, and left in despair at her vanishing out of sight, although he cried out to her to stay and be his wife. ... But a wise man, who lived on the mountain, advised him to tempt her with gifts of bread and cheese, which he undertook to do on Midsummer Eve, when he dropped into the lake a large cheese and a loaf of bread. This he did repeatedly, until at last his hopes were fulfilled on New Year's Eve. This time he had gone to the lake clad in his best suit, and at midnight dropped seven white loaves and his biggest and finest cheese into the lake. The Lake Lady by-and-by came in her skiff to where he was, and gracefully stepped ashore..."

The advice as to how to get hold of the lady does not come from the lady or her sister nor from the hero's parent as in some of the following tales, but from a wise man, who lives on the mountain. In this tale the motif of offering food (bread and cheese)

is used the opposite way to the one found in Sikes' first version.

RHYS 3

A Sequel to the Meddygon Myddfai story, by Mr Llywarch Reynolds of Merthyr Tydfil "from a rustic on Mynydd y Banwen, between Glynnêdd and Glyntawë" - probably orally transmitted - (p.18/19) - Carmarthenshire.

This is an interesting version of the story's conclusion. After the disappearance of the damsel into the lake, the husband and his friends want to drain the lake in order to get at her. (62)

Suddenly a huge hairy monster emerged from the water and threatens them "If I get no quiet in my place, I shall drown the town of Brecon".

Apart from the historic/geographical connection to the town of Brecon, the hairy monster emerging out of the water is a remarkable variation on the personification of the lady's father who plays a considerable part in many of the related tales.

RHYS 4

Llyn y Forwyn/Nelferch/Alfach/Elferch (63)

from the parish of Ystrad Dyfodwy in Glamorganshire in Cyfaill yr Aelwyd a'r Frythones; edited by Elfed and Cadrawd, published by Messrs Williams and Son,

Llanelly, version in Welsh (p. 23 - 27) - Glamorgan-shire (64)

An unmarried farmer "was walking by the lake early one morning in spring [and] he beheld a young woman of beautiful appearance walking on the other side of it. ... she gave him to understand that her home was in the lake, and that she owned a number of milk cows, that lived with her at the bottom of the water. The farmer fancied her so much that he fell in love with her over head and ears: he asked her on the spot for her hand and heart".

Even though she is described in a more 'realistic' and worldly way as 'walking' by the lake the lady lives under the lake and has a number of milk cows. Here we have a further connection between the Lady of the Lake and the fairy country which was sometimes also perceived to be at the bottom of lakes, for example at the bottom of Llyn Cynnwch. (65) It is legitimate to assume that most of the "Ladies of the Lake" come from a realm under the surface of the water, it is, however, in this version of the story that the land under the water is explicitly mentioned. (66)

The lady consents at last to the marriage upon the condition, that she would bring her cattle with her and live with him until he and she had three disputes with one another.

The act of striking the lady has been rationalised and turned into three disputes - the use of the number three has to be seen as a stylistic measure, which was also used in other versions and gives the tale a dense and strong structure. Bringing the cattle into the marriage seems to be a condition for the lady's consent, rather than as a favourable gift



or dowry, as it is seen in the rest of the tales. The story of Nelferch puts great emphasis on the lady's ownership of the cattle.(67) On the part of the woman there seems to be a necessity to clarify the situation, namely that she owns the cattle and lives at a very different place, under different circumstances and under different rules (and laws?). He reacts by making a suggestion which sounds like an appeasement. He invites her to come and live as his wife. There were, in mediaeval Wales more than one possibilities of a man and a woman living together. Marriage relationships between men and women were defined with regards to whether they were initiated and sanctioned by the couple's family, whether the union was based on the woman's consent or had taken place as a result of abduction or rape.(68) The different kinds of union that were acknowledged in the Welsh legal system have been summarised and classified by T.M. Charles-Edwards:

A: Unions by gift of kin,

B: Unions not by gift of kin, but with the consent of the kind)and of the woman herself,

C: Unions to which the woman's kin do not consent, but to which the woman herself does,

D: Unions to which neither the woman nor her kin consent,

(This latter union, which includes rape as well as the deception of a virgin, for example, by getting her drunk, has legal implications insofar as the woman and her family are entitled to compensation.) (69)

From a modern point of view such an understanding of

the relationship between men and women seems rather strange. The Welsh legal system portrays a concept

"..that unions may be graded along a continuous line ranging from the most honourable at one end to the least honourable at the other. There is no sharp division between lawful and unlawful, but rather a graded shading off." (70)

Charles-Edwards compares the Welsh legal system with the Hindu system in India where he finds similarities. Also in the Hindu marriage tradition cattle seem to play an extensive part, they are a gift which the bridegroom may give to

"those who have authority over the bride." (71)

In principle Charles-Edwards sees the Welsh law as a mixture between the Irish and the English, Christianised system, whereby the latter gained increasingly in influence. (72)

In general it has to be taken into consideration that the Welsh law texts are available in different redactions covering a large geographical area which has consisted, for most of the time, of different kingdoms. The legal system to which those texts refer have been developing and changing over many centuries:

"The Welsh lawbooks ... were produced by or for lawyers between the early thirteenth and early sixteenth century. The ultimate foundation of nearly all the books is a small core of material put together about the middle of the tenth century, in some way under the auspices of Hywel Dda. There are more immediate foundations in lawbooks put together in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, but in all the surviving manuscripts material has been added to the core, in order to make the book more

useful to the professional lawyer.

Any Welsh law manuscript therefore contains a good deal of material which is later than Hywel's time, and great care is needed before a Welsh lawbook is cited as evidence for tenth-century conditions. But the lawyers were very slow to discard obsolete material: great care is therefore also needed before a Welsh lawbook is cited as evidence for conditions in the century in which it was written." (73)

In the story cycle about the Lady of the Lake the lady consents eventually under certain 'conditions'. This term occurs in all stories and sounds sometimes out of context. In this version it sounds as if the condition of the marriage were the result of previous negotiations.

"She declined at first, but as he was importunate she consented at last on the following conditions, namely..."

The tale seems to indicate that from the outset the woman seems to expect that the relationship will end. As has been stated, divorces in Celtic marriages were not uncommon and relatively easy to obtain, even in the early Christian era. The Lady of the Lake enters into a relationship that, from the start, was expected to end. This state would perhaps more likely have been a 'legal concubinage.' The fact that when she leaves she takes cattle with her would support this theory.

"...In the end they fell out with one another, and when they quarrelled for the third time, she drove her cattle into the lake, and there they live to this day. And some believed that they heard the voice and cry of Nelferch in the whisper of the breeze on the top of the mountain..."

Here we have one version where not only the continu-



ing life of the lady under the water surface is mentioned but also a continuing interaction with the world above.

RHYS 5

Llyn Alfach, by Mr Llewellyn Williams from Porth (five miles from the lake), 1894 (p. 25) - Glamorganshire

In this version of Nelferch's story the tendency towards the story's rationalisation of the 'unrealistic' mythological elements has been further developed. The lady has been divested of all mythological characteristics and has been transformed into a maid who belonged to the farm of Penrhys. The hero is a young man from Rhondda Fechan. Consequently her final disappearance is given a completely worldly explanation. After their third dispute the wife leaves her husband and returns to her previous service, and afterwards, while taking the cattle to the water, she sinks accidentally or on purpose into the lake,

"so that she was never found any more".

A conflict seems to have emerged between the urgent need to follow the story's pattern and let the lady submerge in the lake with her cattle and, on the other hand the wish to stick to the concept of 'natural explanations'. Thus this particular ver-

sion leaves it open whether the lady's disappearance is an accident or the suicide of a normal mortal human being.

This story could be interpreted in a different way from an original historic core of the legend. Perhaps there is no need to decide in favour of one or the other theory since the tale of Llyn Alfach may well have a historic background and it may well have been one of many similar stories. The general dealing with this topic led eventually to the building of the legend, because

"legends hand down the realities of the past in a symbolic fashion".(74)

Rhys himself had already established the

"modern rationalism" which "has been modifying the story into something quite uninteresting but without wholly getting rid of the original features..."(75)

Rhys also gives an extended version of the fairy wife's call to her cattle that contains a hint of the existence of another woman and would give support to the theory that the Lady of the Lake was originally the young farmer's mistress if one translates the last lines:

Bwla, bwla,  
Saif yn flaena',  
Saf yn ol y wraig o'r Ty-fry,  
Fyth nis godri ngwartheg i!

Bull, bull,  
Stand thou foremost.  
Back! thou wife of the House up Hill:  
Never shalt thou milk my cows.(76)

RHYS 6

Llyn Elferch transcribed by Mr Llywarch, Reynolds, according to David Evans, formerly of Cefn Colston/Rhondda Fechan. Transcription dated 9 January 1899 (p. 27 - 30) - Glamorganshire.

Here we have a story which is very close to the story of the Lady of Llyn Y Fan Fach even though this tale seems to have existed independently of the 'Llyn y Fan' tradition. (77)

A young farmer, who lived with his mother ... one day saw the lady on the bank of the lake, combing her hair, which reached down to her feet. He fell in love with her at first sight, but when he tried to approach her she evaded him, and crying out "Dali di ddim o fi, cras dy fara!", she sank into the water. He saw her on several occasions, and eventually got his mother to make him some bread which was not baked (or not baked so hard). The lady agreed to become his wife, subject to the condition that if he offended her, or disagreed with her three times she would leave him and return into the lake with all her belongings.

The first disagreement was at the funeral of a neighbour, at which the lady wept excessively because of the "eternal misery that was in store for him in the other world".

The second disagreement was at the death of an infant child of the lady herself, at which she laughed, because she was glad that her child escaped from this wicked world and had gone into a world of bliss.

The third disagreement was not remembered by Mr Evans, but it also showed that the lady possessed supernatural knowledge. It resulted in the lady leaving her husband and returning into the lake, taking the cattle with her.

This version seems incompletely recalled and this shows particularly when stylistic elements have not been incorporated. For example, the Lady's final agreement to marriage is not preceded by three approaches: it is merely stated that the hero saw



her on 'several subsequent occasions'. Also the three disagreements are not only incompletely remembered but it is also probable that the plot originally did not cover two funerals - it would probably have been either three or one.

**RHYS 7**

The Lady of Llyn Du'r Arddu by the brothers of Siân Dafydd from Llanberis, Coed y Ddol, Snowdon, oral source (p. 31-32) - Caernarvonshire

A shepherd saw a fairy maiden on the surface of the tarn Llyn Du'r Arddu. Their acquaintance turned into courtship. The father and the mother of the lake maiden appeared to give the union their sanction and to arrange the marriage settlement. The wife would bring great wealth with her, consisting of stock of all kinds for his mountain farm. The husband was never to strike his wife with iron. They lived happily together.

The courtship here has not been ritualised. In this tale the hero has his origins in the mountains. Also there is no mention of children. This, however, could be due to an omission which might also explain the brief description of the courtship at the beginning.

"...one day, when trying to catch a pony, the husband threw a bridle to his wife, and the iron in that struck her. It was then all over with him, as the wife hurried away with her property into the lake, so that nothing more was seen or heard of her."

It is notable that the story mentions both parents of the lady, who is expressly characterised as a

'fairy maiden'. The condition for retaining a happy marriage deserves attention. It has not been rationalised, there is no talk of an argument that needs to be avoided or of blows, whether they be without cause or 'justified'.

"The husband was never to strike her with iron."

Also the occasion where the tragic incident takes place is not related to any religious festivity or ceremony.

#### RHYS 8

The story of Cwm Drywenydd and Mynydd y Fedw by Mr Hugh D. Jones according to Thomas Davies, Llanberis as remembered by Siân Dafydd and Mari Domos Siôn, transcribed in Welsh (pp. 33-35) - Caernarvonshire

This second version from Llanberis puts a particular emphasis on the connection between the lake and the mountain, since the top of the mountain is the actual meeting place between the hero and the lady who in this version is again depicted as a normal, mortal girl:

"To the farm of Bron y Fedw there belonged a son... He was in the habit of going up the mountain to Cwm Drywenydd and Mynydd y Fedw, on the west side of Snowdon, to do the shepherding..."

He frequently met a girl on the mountain and they became great friends.

The connection between the two young people is characterised by a normal courtship which leads to marriage.

They usually met at a particular spot in Cwm Drywenydd, where the girl and her family lived.

The description of the entertainments, the vague statement regarding the place where the girl and her family live, as well as the way in which one passes the time there with

"all kinds of amusements, music and nice things to eat..."

remind one of the descriptions that can be found in other stories telling about a mortal's journey to fairyland or to stay there.

"... but he did not make up to anybody there except the girl."

She agrees to marry him but only under the condition "that she would live with him until he should strike her with iron. They were wedded and lived together for a number of years and had children."

The set condition resembles the one in the first Llanberis version. The incident itself, however, is described in more detail:

"Once upon a time it happened to be market day in Carnarvon." Husband and wife wanted to ride there on ponies, like all farmers of that time. "So they went to the mountain to catch a pony each... The husband caught a pony, and gave it to his wife to hold fast without a bridle while he went to catch another. When he had bridled his own pony he threw another bridle to his wife for her to secure hers; but as he threw it, the bit of the bridle struck her on one of her hands. The wife let go the pony and went headlong into the pool, and that was the end of their wedded life."

This legend tells about a lake at the bottom of Mynydd y Fedw. The connection to the Lady of the Lake cycle is added at the end without clarifying whether her submerging into the lake means the drowning of a human being or the return of a water



fairy into her true element.

RHYS 9

The Ystrad Tale recorded by Mr. Samuel Rhys Williams from Bettws Garmon according to Margaret Williams from Drws y Coed aged over eighty at the time of John Rhys' publication (in Welsh). (p.38-40) - Carnarvonshire

In comparison to the tales already listed, this version is particularly interesting as far as the story's beginning is concerned:

A farmer's son, who lived at the Ystrad in Bettws Garmon, "when returning home from a journey, late in the evening, beheld a company of fairies."

This beginning, with the dance of the fairies, corresponds to the Walter Map version. Only, here, the hero plays a more active part:

"The youth was at once bewildered by the incomparable beauty of one of these ladies, so that he ventured to leap into the circle and take his idol away with him."

He does not depend on the lady's or for that matter anybody's advice as to how to get hold of her. Also a personal feeling for this particular lady has been incorporated through the introduction of the hero's sudden overwhelming feeling of love for her. This is also one of the few examples which openly mentions concubinage. She is at first his mistress

before he eventually marries her. The condition is again that he must never touch or strike his wife with iron of any description.

The tragic incident happens again while the husband tries to catch a horse. Seeing him unsuccessful, the wife wanted to help him. When the horse was galloping past him, he let go the bridle, which struck his wife. She vanished out of his sight on the spot.

In this case there is no mention of a lake. Only through a comparison with the parallels in other tales regarding the fairy dance, the marriage conditions, the bridle taboo etc. can this tale be recognised as belonging to the Lady of the Lake cycle.

#### RHYS 10

The Ystrad Tale by Rev. Owen Wyn Jones in the Brython 1863, p.193. Written in Welsh. (p.40-41) Caernarvonshire

"One fine sunny morning", when the heir of Ystrad was looking after his sheep on "the side of Moel Eilio, he met a very pretty girl, and when he got home he told the folks there of it. A few days afterwards he met her again, and this happened several times, when he mentioned it to his father, who advised him to seize her when he next met her. The next time he met her he proceeded to do so, but before he could take her away, a little fat old man came to them and begged him to give her back to him to which the youth would not listen. The little man uttered terrible threats, but the heir of Ystrad would not yield, so an agreement was made between them, that the latter was to have the girl to wife until he touched her skin with iron, and great was the joy both of the son and his parents in consequence."

The lady's feelings are not mentioned, which can either mean that they are regarded as less important

or that her attitude to the relationship could be interpreted as ambiguous.

"They lived together for many years and had children;...but once upon a time, on the evening of the Bettws Fair, the wife's horse became restive", and as the husband was attending to the horse, "the stirrup touched the skin of her bare leg, and that very night she was taken from him."

Even though clearly belonging to the "Lady of the Lake" group, regarding the plot, the tale does not seem to have clear connections with the water motif. This version is also remarkable because it is the hero's father who gives the advice to seize the lady. Before the young man takes the maiden by force, a little old man appears. One may interpret this as a personification of the lady's father who has been stripped of all power and dignity. He is in no position to set his daughter's suitor tasks or conditions or make decisions about a dowry. He is an old man who begs the young man to return his daughter. The following threats - made after the suitor refuses to listen to the father's pledges bears resemblance to the curses made by unsuccessful nasty fairy-tale characters as, for example, the figure 'Rumpelstilzchen' out of the Brother Grimm's fairy-tales.(78) In this tale the lady's descendants are mentioned, but they do not seem to be the motive behind the tradition.



RHYS 11

Waun Fawr version by Rev. Owen Davies from Llanllechid and Llandegai near Bangor. Written down in Welsh according to oral sources in the valley of Nant y Betws near Carnarvon ca. forty years prior to the publication of John Rhys. (pp. 41-48) - Caernarvonshire (79)

This is yet another story that starts with a fairy dance. T.G. Jones lists various circumstances and conditions under which fairy dances occurred. (80)

One evening in June on the banks of the Gwyr-fai, the heir of Ystrad watched the "fair family" dancing. Among the fairies he beheld the most beautiful damsel he had ever seen. From his hiding place he watched every move for his opportunity. At last he leaped suddenly into the middle of the circle of the fairies. He seized her in his arms and carried her away to his home at Ystrad.

She did not want to come with him but as she screamed for help, the dancing party disappeared "like one's breath in July". He treated her with the utmost kindness and finally succeeded in getting her to consent to be his servant at Ystrad.

In this tale the deep romantic feelings which the hero has for his lady are expressed in some detail. The fairy is at first not his wife, not even his fairy mistress but, to begin with, the mortal's servant. However, this could be a later adaptation in order to eliminate the 'mistress' element. (81)

Consequently there could be no dowry. Nevertheless, her presents still bring wealth into the household. She would milk the cows three times a day and have the usual quantity of milk each time.

"But she would never tell him her name."

Here the story adds a second taboo to the previously mentioned condition, namely not to strike his wife or to touch her with iron. The new element that the husband is not allowed to know his wife's true name does not seem to blend in with the story's further plot but disturbs its balance and harmony to a certain extent.

"Accidentally, however, one moonlight night, when driving two of his cows to the spot where they should graze"

- a rather strange time chosen by the hero to graze his cattle, one might comment -,

he came to the place, where he had seen the fairies dancing. This time he overheard one fairy saying to another "When we were last here our sister Penelope was stolen from us by a man." On his return home, the fairy was greatly astonished to hear him call her by her own name.

Eventually the heir of Ystrad offered to make her his wife. "At first she would in no way consent; but she gave way to grief at his having found her name out". Finally she agreed to marry him, but on the condition that he should not strike her with iron. If that should happen, she would leave him never to return. "They lived in happiness and comfort together for many years" and had a son and a daughter, who were the handsomest children in the whole country, and they became the richest family in the country "owing, also, to the skill and good

qualities of the woman." Apart from this the husband was also a wealthy man. But one day "they went out together to catch a horse in the field, and, as the animal was somewhat wild and untamed, they had no easy work before them. In his rashness the man threw a bridle at him", but it fell on his wife. She disappeared immediately, and nothing more was ever seen of her. "But one cold night, 'when there was a chilling wind blowing from the north', she came near the window of his bedroom", and told him to take care of the children.

In this version the motive of the lady returning in order to care for and influence the life of her children has been incorporated without however using the tale to explain the special origin and nature of the Lady's offspring. (82)



RHYS 12

Tale by M William Jones, of Regent Place, Llangollen, a native of Beddgelert. Transcript in Welsh according to the words of William Jones. (pp. 49 - 50) - Carnarvonshire

At first sight the connection to the Walter Map story and its cycle does not seem apparent. It can however be recognised through making a comparison with those versions which also start by describing a fairy dance that is being observed by a mortal; or through looking at, for example, the Llanberis version which hints at the hero's stay in fairyland.

"One bright moonlight night, as one of the sons of the farmer who lived at Llwyn On in Nant y Bettws was going to see a girl at Clogwyn y Gwin, he beheld the Tylwyth Teg enjoying themselves in full swing on a meadow close to Cwellyn Lake. He approached them and little by little he was led on by the enchanting sweetness of their music and the liveliness of their playing until he had got within their circle."

Here we have a very good description of how a human being is lured into the fairies' realm.

"Soon some kind of spell passed over him, so that he lost his knowledge of the place, and found himself in the most beautiful country he had ever seen, where everybody spent his time in mirth and rejoicing". He spent there seven years "and yet it seemed to him but a night's dream". However, on his return home, he found everything changed. His parents were dead, and his girl was married to another man. He died broken hearted in less than a week after coming back.

The ending belongs to a different story cycle, where the contact with the other world is too much for mortals to bear, and where the hero meets his fate

once he tries to return home to his own world and experiences the different time lapse.

This story deserves further examination because by making the male protagonist enter the realm of the lady rather than the other way round it establishes the connection between the "Lady of the Lake" cycle with those tales that deal with the world under the water surface that will need to be examined at a later stage. It is also important insofar that it demonstrates the possibility of exchanging the motifs between the male and the female protagonists.

RHYS 13

The Afanc Story in The Cambrian Journal 1859, pp.142 - 146, letter of Edward Llwyd dated 1693, supplied and copied from the original by Canon Robert Williams (pp.130ff) - Caernarvonshire (83)

This tale contains a similar motif transfer, where the male protagonist originates from the underwater world and enters into a relationship with a mortal woman.

The "Conwy Afanc" (84) is lured out of his home in the lake by the attractions of a young woman, who lets him rest his head in her lap and fall asleep. When he wakes to find himself in chains he tries to hurry to his old refuge into the lake taking with him in his claw the breast of the lady. But with infinite toil and labour and the help of two oxen he is dragged

beyond the Conwy watershed into one of the highest tarns of Snowdon; for there is no question of killing him, but only removing him where he cannot harm the people of the Conwy Valley. (85)

There are many similar versions of this tale in Welsh and Scottish folklore (86). What those tales have in common with the 'Lady of the Lake' cycle is that one partner from the couple is a mortal while the other one stems from the underwater world. However, in both groups it is always the lady who instigates the relationship by her extraordinary beauty. Furthermore it is always the man who falls for the lady, while she receives the suitor's advances with a very ambiguous attitude. Her doubts and fears seem to be greater in those tales where she is the mortal woman and the male protagonist a representative from the other world. The man is the one generally fond of her and does not seem to intend to harm the woman who is in great fear of him. Rhys mentions a story where:

"the girl knew that if she screamed there was an end of her, so she kept her terror to herself, and worked away till the man fell asleep as he was with his head on her knee." Then she runs away as fast as she can but "when she was getting near the houses, she gave a glance behind her and there she saw her 'friend' (cariad) coming after her in the likeness of a horse." (87)

Rhys points out that in these tales the equine element is very strong and he makes the connection with water horses (88). He also relates the 'Afanc' to the Lady of the Lake tales, particularly to the Llyn Y Fan Fach story (89) where he draws parallel's



to the Lady's father.

The story talks of the girl's great fear. However, the man's feelings towards her are by no means described as hostile or violent, he seems to trust her enough to fall asleep in her company, and when he follows her in his undisguised equine form the narrator refers to him as her 'caraid'.

RHYS 14

Belenë by Mr Hugh Derfel Hughes of Pendinas, Llandegai, version recorded from 'three old people' in Welsh (pp. 54 - 55) Caernarvonshire (90)

The following version may be comparatively late, where several earlier tales have been amalgamated. The seams have been smoothed. The two marriage conditions have been amalgamated, the first one, that the husband is not to know the Lady's name has been embedded into the plot, the striking taboo has been rationalised. It sounds now as if the Lady's only objection is to being beaten too hard (with iron), while punishment with a rod seems to be acceptable. The tale in its present form must stem from a period when a husband's right to punish his wife in this way was widely accepted.

"The fairies when engaged in dancing allowed

themselves to be gazed at, a sight which was wont greatly to attract the young men of the neighbourhood, and once on a time the son and heir of the owner of Corwrion fell deeply in love with one of the graceful maidens who danced in the fairy ring, for she was wondrously beautiful and pretty beyond compare." She consented to a marriage on the understanding, that firstly her husband was not to know her name, though he might give her any name he chose; and, secondly, that he might now and then beat her with a rod, if she chanced to misbehave towards him; but he was not to strike her with iron" or she would leave him at once. They lived happily together for some years and had "four children, of whom the two youngest were a boy and a girl".

...

One day they went to catch a pony, "the fairy wife, being so much nimbler than her husband, ran before him and had her hand in the pony's mane in no time. She called out to her husband to throw her a halter, but instead of that he threw towards her a bridle with an iron bit, which, as bad luck would have it, struck her. The wife at once flew through the air and plunged headlong into Corwrion Pool". The husband found out from Bryn Twrw "Noise Hill", that his wife's name was 'Belenë', thus the second condition to be fulfilled for the wife to leave her husband was taken care of. Belenë never came back to her husband, but she returned once to his bedroom window to tell him to look after the children.

The description of the mother's return has been extended in order to demonstrate its impact on the life of the next generation. Only at this point of the story are the cattle mentioned. Their cows and white bull now deliver the base for the wealth of the Lady or the Lake's children.

Belenë's grandson was married against the will of his father and mother, but they were very poor. One morning, "when they got up, they saw six black cows and a white-headed bull, which had come up out of the lake as stock for them from old grannie Belenë. They served them well with milk and butter", but when the last of the family died, "the six black cows and the white-headed bull disappeared into the lake, never more to be seen."

This tale contains an extended piece telling about the fate of the Lady of the Lake's offspring. Here we have a connection to those stories that would later justify the special knowledge, talents or wealth of people by tracing their origin back to the Lady of the Lake.

Rhys' informant also knew of three slightly different versions of this story

"(1) According to one account, the husband was ploughing, with the wife leading the team, when by chance he came across her and the accident happened. The wife then flew away like a wooden hen (iâr goed) into the lake. (2) Another says that they were in a stable trying to bridle one of the horses, when the misfortune took place through inadvertence. (3) A third specifies the field in front of the house at Corwrion as the place where the final accident took place, when they were busied with the cows and horses." (91)

All these incidences are connected with the 'striking taboo' rather than the - probably later - name taboo.

**RHYS 15**

The Lady from Pen y Bonc, recorded from Mr David Evan Davies of Treflys, Bethesda, also known by his bardic name, Dewi Glan Frydlas. (p. 61) - Caernarvonshire

"At one of the dances at Pen y Bonc, the heir of Corwrion's eyes fell on one of the damsels of the fair family, and he was filled with love for her."



The very carefully chosen statement that she belongs to the fair family leaves it open whether the maid is in reality a fairy or a normal fair haired human being.

There is again an amalgamation of the two marriage taboos:

she agreed to marry him, "but he had to agree to two conditions, namely, that he was neither to know her name nor to strike her with iron". They had children, and when the husband happened to go, during his wife's confinement, to a merry-making at Pen y Bonc, the fairies talked together, expressing their feelings of sympathy for his wife and mentioned her name within his hearing.

"Years rolled on". One day, the husband and wife went out together to catch a colt that had not been broken in. She was swifter on foot than him and got hold of the colt by the mane and called out to her husband to throw her a halter, "but instead of throwing her the one she asked for, he threw another with iron in it, which struck her. Off she went into the lake."

The connection to the lake is made quite abruptly and followed by an appendix telling about the next generation:

"A grandson of this fairy married one of the girls of Corwrion. They had a large piece of land, but no means of stocking it... One day a white-headed bull came out of the lake, bringing with him six black cows to their land. There never were the like of those cows for milk and they brought great prosperity to their owners. But when they both grew old and died, the bull and the cows went back into the lake."

This tale does not seem coherent and is somewhat disjointed, as if it was not fully transmitted. The fact that the lady's name is not given even though it plays an important part in the plot, supports

this theory.

The 'Confinement scene' is special to this tale. It is remarkable that apparently fairies and mortals join together in the 'merry-making'. It is not clear whether the fairies have sympathy with their sister because she is having a baby, or whether their 'feelings of sympathy for her' refer to the general situation of her being married to a mortal. It seems to be the concept of this tale to incorporate as many motifs as possible out of the whole cycle. Consequently the scene telling about the next generation and the Lake Lady's wealth bringing characteristic has been included.

#### I.4 Summary and Evaluation

All these legends have their individual characteristics. However they also possess important common elements which disclose their close relationship. In most cases the Lady of the Lake does not belong to the mortals' realm. In the few exceptional cases where the heroine seems to be a normal human being the male protagonist stems from the other world like, for example, Rhys 13 and its related tales, in particular Rhys 5. Either this, or it becomes apparent in the story that the humanisation of the main figure(s) has been a later development. The suitor sees the Lady for the first time either when



she comes out of the lake, for example Rhys 1, and where the Lady is first seen on the bank of the river as happens in Rhys 6 and Rhys 7. The youth can also witness a group of (water) fairies performing a ring dance. In those tales containing a ring dance the connection with a lake is not necessary, for example Rhys 9, Rhys 11 and Rhys 10. Also Rhys 12, which has been classified as somewhat separate from the Lady of the Lake cycle, starts with a fairy dance. Rhys 14 makes a sudden connection to a pool. (92)

In all versions the family of the two main characters play an essential part. This is not an unusual occurrence in mythology, however it is of particular importance here, since the various family members do not only initiate the hero's actions but have a vital impact on the plot. Many of the stories cover three generations. The protagonists' parents are introduced, the lady's father is mentioned and sometimes one or several identical looking sisters, for example, the Llyn Y Fan story and Rhys 1. Often we also meet the hero's mother or father and, later on, the children born into this marriage (Rhys 10, 11, 14). In some cases the explanation of the origin of the Lady of the Lake's offspring may even be seen as the true drive behind the story's long oral transmission. Here the most striking examples are the two tales discussed in detail in this thesis, namely Walter Map's version and the Llyn Y



Fan Fach tale.

In all instances the lady's reaction to the man's suit is at first a very skeptical one, and she has to be won, often through a threefold ritual offering of bread - and sometimes cheese. With regards to the correct preparation of the food the hero seeks the advice of a parent or this role can also be fulfilled by a wise man (Rhys 2).

The eventual consent to the marriage is dependent on conditions which are set by the lady and/or her father. The marriage is always connected to a taboo which may be:-

- not to quarrel or strike the wife (sometimes more than twice),
- not to touch her with iron,
- in some cases the husband is not allowed to know his wife's true name.

This last taboo gives perhaps the clearest initial indication that on one level of interpretation the Lady of the Lake can be seen as the personification of an ancient deity. Markale states with regards to a related tale;

"The whole legend revolves round the theme of the mother goddess who alone can assure the prosperity and happiness of men, but on strict condition that they do not know exactly who she is." (93)

In all stories they marry, and have children, and it is the wife who brings wealth into the family (in form of cattle). However, it can happen that this

wealth does not become evident until the second generation (for example Rhys 14).

The marriage comes to an end because the taboos are being broken. Where three blows are necessary, those happen at three crucial festivities; where striking with iron is sufficient, it happens during the act of catching a colt or a horse, but sometimes also in connection with attendance at a christening, a wedding or a funeral.

The lady's disappearance into the lake is a particularly strong motive that could even be incorporated into those versions which originally did not seem to have any connection with the water-motif (see Rhys 8, however see Rhys 9). The lady takes all the wealth with her and, in the oldest versions, her children too.

Apart from one example (94) she never returns to her husband. Her offspring are the only reason why she may emerge again, bringing them either riches and abundance, or rescuing them from poverty, or in order to equip them with wisdom and the powers of healing, or simply to ask the father to take good care of their children.

Individual stories may contain all or only some of these elements which characterise them as members of this particular mythological cycle. This cycle probably amalgamated two previously independent

traditions; one containing the motif of the Lady of the Lake and the other one a marriage between a mortal and a fairy that ended because a taboo - not to strike the wife with iron - was broken by her husband while trying to catch a horse.

When interpreting the Lady of the Lake tales the relationship between the fairy people and the human race as well as the connection between pre-Christian deities and the fairy people, need to be considered.

Without concentrating on a possible historic basis for the belief in fairies, the theory that all these tales can be traced back to a real historic group of people shall not go unmentioned.

"...In these legends the fairies appear as a primitive people who lived in caves and lake dwellings and who made use of the tools of the more technologically advanced human settlers." (95)

Also Rhys mentions fairies as living in hidden caves in mountains, like for example, the traditional belief

"that it was beneath Moel Eilio, also called Moel Eilian, a mountain lying between Llanberis and Cwellyn, [where] the Tylwyth Teg of Nant y Bettws lived". (96)

Welsh fairies were also perceived to be lake dwellers. The closeness of their places of living to water could serve as a means of protection against humans:

"This kind of fairies was said to live underground, and the way to their country lay under hollow banks that overhung the deepest parts of the lakes, or the deepest pools in the rivers, so that mortals could not follow them further



than the water, should they try to go after them." (97)

T.G. Jones mentions a theory according to which the race of fairies are supposed to have their origin in Palestine. (98)

Lewis Spence tries to prove that the Druidic culture stemmed from Britain and was spread from there to other Celtic countries. He sees the belief in fairies as a relict of this cult:

"The Celtic belief in a race of sidhe or fairies, by no means yet abolished, is most definitely a relict of the great Cult of the Dead as it flourished in Druidic times and, indeed, supplies all the evidence required that Druidism was essentially a mystery associated with the Otherworld and the belief in a process of reincarnation - but a reincarnation taking place at a period sufficiently removed from death to permit a more or less prolonged existence in the Otherworld." (99)

Spence comes to the conclusion that:

"Research has now made it clear that the Celtic sidhe or 'fairies' [...] are nothing more or less than the spirits of the dead." (100)

He thus contradicts T.G. Jones who - even though he finds considerable connections between the fairies and the land of the dead - was of the opinion that:

"The Fairies are immortal, and there is no suggestion in any Welsh material known to me that the realm was the land of the dead, beyond the fact that the grave is sometimes facetiously called 'Gwlad y Tylwyth Teg,' 'the Land of the Fairies', and that the statement made by the wife of a Lleyrn man who used to follow Fairies regularly once a month, that one's soul is allowed to go to their country after death." (101)

A good summary of the discussion about who and what the fairies are has been given by Katherine

Briggs:

"The question of fairy beliefs divides itself into two parts. In the first place we have the folklorists' researches into the reason why all over the world people have believed in a race of creatures either superhuman or slightly sub-human, who are neither gods, nor, strictly speaking, ghosts and who have much in common with humanity, but who differ from men in their powers, properties and attributes, and there are secondly the opinions held of fairies by those people who believe in them." (102)

Briggs follows the theory that fairies - and here she includes mermaids - are relicts of pre-Christian religions:

"Mermaids and the river and tree spirits, which remain in tradition often as souls of the dead, may once have been minor gods" (103)

Briggs also puts forth an interesting theory which attempts to combine fairy tradition with traditional Christian belief:

"..for instance the small size of the fairies, for in primitive times the soul was commonly thought of as a miniature form of the man which came out of his mouth in sleep or trance and had to return to the body before he could become conscious." (104)

This theory could be supported by tales which state that entry into fairy country happens when mortals fall asleep, usually in a special place: (105)

" ...in many of the British Celtic areas the fairies were given a theological origin: they were the less guilty of the fallen angels who were arrested on their fall through the universe towards Hell, and stayed where they fell, some in the air, some in rivers, the sea or lakes, some on earth and some under the earth on their way to Hell. ... According to the other chief theory in which the fairies and the dead are closely associated, their habitations are much the same. (106)

Briggs also finds evidence that fairy country is often situated under water. (107)



There are many different theories and explanations about the character, function and origin of fairies. And the fact that many of them seem to contradict each other does not seem to have been a hindrance for allowing those traditions to continue parallel. It has also been shown that, in some cases, attempts have been made to combine Fairy beliefs with Christian beliefs. Briggs states that:

"... a body of beliefs so diverse and uncoordinated as fairy lore seems to call for something less rigid than a single formula" (108)

What all 'fairy'-tales have in common is that they deal with the way in which humans and fairies interact with each other. Rojcewicz, for example, states that:

"...humans are often unwillingly involved with fairies in a symbiotic relationship essential to their very physical and psychological life."

and he puts forward the theory that:

"The primary reason why fairies fear mortals however, is because they need us. For reasons still unclear, fairies need us to recharge their fairy powers and guarantee their overall socio-psychological well-being." (109)

Fairies need, in particular, human food such as milk, cheese or grain. (110) Another common motif in the fairy marriage legends is the fairies' fear of iron. (111)

We have seen that the story cycle of the Lady of the Lake contains certain Christian as well as non-



Christian elements, which form a relationship of tension. In most cases it is the woman who stems from an earlier pre-Christian culture - symbolised as the realm under the water surface - while the male protagonists represent the Christian world. It could be established that the ambiguous relationship between the two ethical systems was to a certain extent reflected on a more worldly level, where the tales seem to contain statements about structures of power and ownership of goods within marriages, as well as about the conditions under which a divorce could take place. With regards to the marriage, the tales - by making frequently somewhat vague statements - seem to reflect accurately the actual legal situation in mediaeval Wales which knew of several ways in which a man and a woman could legally live together as man and wife. Traces could be found of different legal systems which were overlapping in mediaeval Wales. For example, Rhys made a statement which puts the exclusive name succession from father to children in Wales in question.

"As an example of the old-fashioned habits of the people of Beddgelert in my early days, I may mention the way in which wives and children used to be named. The custom was that the wife never took her husband's family name, but retained the one she had as a spinster. [Here follow several examples of this tradition] The mother had the privilege of naming her first-born after her own family in case it was a boy; but if it happened to be a girl, she took her name from the father's family,..."(112)

It has been established that the stories discussed here describe the circumstances and events that lead

to the marriage between a fairy woman and a mortal man and, eventually, to the break-up of their relationship. On a historical level the two protagonists can be interpreted as representatives of two sociological and religious concepts which did by no means lead a peaceful co-existence during the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages, the period during which the oral traditions discussed here were thriving. On the surface, existing religious conflicts must, in the first instance, have been internal ones, since officially the whole of Wales was a Christianised country. However, the Welsh church, in accordance with other Celtic countries had for a long time, quite a separate existence from the main body of the Catholic church in England and on the Continent. Since 768 the church in Wales had principally submitted to the authority of Rome. But this did not mean the acknowledgement of the claim to jurisdiction over the Welsh church which was put forward by Canterbury and which met with strong resistance.(113) Thus it was possible to maintain traditions and beliefs which might have contradicted Roman teachings and dogma. It was, however, the plan of the conquering Normans to change this state of affairs as soon as possible and to end the religious and thus spiritual independence of Wales. This was achieved, to a great extent, before the middle of the twelfth century, when the Welsh Church was almost under the complete control of the Arch-

bishop of Canterbury and the King of England.(114)  
G. Williams in The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation points out what these developments meant for the Welsh people at that time:

"It was a change big with consequences for Church and people in Wales, comparable in scope and magnitude with those later to be brought about by the Reformation or the Methodist Revival. The new structure of arch episcopal and royal control now established was to prove enduring, though, as will become apparent, it was severely strained by the convulsions of Welsh uprisings."(115)

These conflicts were not restricted to the religious life, but had an impact on the social life. For example, the prince of Gwynedd, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (1194-1240), insisted that criminal clerks should be tried at secular courts and he refused to:

"allow the ecclesiastical courts jurisdiction over sacrilege, matrimonial disputes, or probate, in accordance with English law but contrary to Welsh common law."(116)

Only during the third period of the Trent Council (13. Jan.1562 - 4. December 1563) was the decision made to include marriage amongst the Holy Sacraments.(117)

Statements regarding the historic framework in which the Lady of the Lake story cycle developed are necessarily of a somewhat vague nature. Wood states that:

"Speculation as to the origin of the tale would be inappropriate with so little early material."(118)

Wood also refers to related European tales that equip the Ladies of the Lake with an animal shape:



"The Welsh variants form a unique sub-group in that the woman is not in mermaid or animal shape and she sets the conditions under which she will remain, unlike the seal-woman common in Scotland and Scandinavia, who is vulnerable by virtue of being out of her animal skin, or the Irish mermaid who loses some object." (119)

There is, however, some evidence that White Ladies or Ladies of the Lake in animal shape were not totally unknown in Welsh tradition. John Rhys recorded the reminiscence of a version of the Llyn y Fan tale in the village of Myddfai where a youth:

"when he first saw the Lake Lady at a distance, thought she was a goose... but that by degrees he approached her and discovered that she was a lady in white." (120)

Wood classifies the tales geographically. The first distinction is made regarding the fairy dance, where in Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Merionethshire and Herefordshire the lady does not necessarily come out of the lake. She also states that in North Wales the taboo seems to involve touching with iron while in the South the husband gives the Lady of the Lake three blows. (121) Then, however, she states that:

"... It is perhaps more interesting and certainly more useful to look not for lost origins but how the tale may have functioned in a social context." (122)

The tales can also be looked at with a view to establishing how far they incorporate positive and negative elements when characterising the Lady of the Lake. To get a clearer picture of these darker aspects it is necessary to consult Mary<sup>ie</sup> Trevelyan's collection of Welsh folk tales in some detail. Here

we find a frequent connection to Christian religious elements, particularly where the destroying effect of the Lady's beauty is the front used to lure young men to their death.

"An old woman who was found telling nursery stories related to her by her grandmother said that the Taff whirlpool was frequented by a lovely lady who lured people whilst bathing. Youths were known to swim or row towards her, attracted by her beauty. They were then sucked into the vortex, and their bodies could never be found. She said that the lady was the devil in disguise."(123)

Here the lady's beauty does no longer enchant but bewitches and leads to the destruction of her suitors. Instead of outside beauty standing for inner values it is used to disguise a real and evil nature.

The tragic element, looked at from yet a different angle, can also be found in the legend of the "Pwll-Gwen-Marw", the 'Dead Lady's Pool'.

'The Pwll - Gwen - Marw, or Dead Lady's Pool, is in the river Afan, at the foot of Moel Mynyddaw, under Tewgoed Colliery. It is said that the spirit of a lady moans and hovers all night over the dangerous waters to warn people from the neighbourhood and point out tracts of safety.(124)

Even though this story shares the tragic element with the other version by Trevelyan referred to above, here the lady is seen in a protective rather than a threatening attitude.

Another version also shows the dark aspects of the Lady of the Lake, this time by depicting her as a

victim, who is condemned to haunt the lake as a ghost:

In Caernarvonshire lies the 'Llyn - Nad - Y - Forwyn, the Lake of the Maiden's Cry. Here a lady who was deceived by a man is haunting the lake. "Sometimes she appeared like a ball of fire rolling along the banks of the Collwyn. Her groans and shrieks could be heard a long distance away. Sometimes she arose out of the water with hair in disorder, and wildly waving her arms. People said she could often be heard weeping and moaning and plaintively uttering the words, "Lost! Lost." (125)

The connection between the Lady of the Lake and the element of fire in this story needs pointing out and will be looked at more closely in Chapter III, when investigating one example of these tales in detail.

Taking into consideration those tales and traditions which see the Lady of the Lake in a darker aspect, her relationship to human kind can be divided into the following categories:

In some versions we have the Ladies of Lakes of John Rhys, who emerge out of the water together with their cattle, bringing richness and happiness to the man who instantly falls in love with her due to her extraordinary beauty. However, eventually the lady returns back to her element, the water, leaving her husband in unhappiness and despair.

Then there are tales where the lady herself seems to suffer by having to live under the water surface. She is seen as a moaning spirit, haunting the area



around the lake. Her previous gentleness is sometimes still recognisable in that she tries to warn mortals to stay away from the dangerous waters so that they do not have to share her fate.

This friendly attitude towards human beings is then turned to its opposite by the Lady who still possesses her original beauty but who now deliberately uses it to lure youths who fall in love with her into the deep water and to their death. In particular, Marie Trevelyan reports in her collection of Welsh lake legends on this darker aspect of the lady like in the story about the Taff whirlpool mentioned above. (126)

The fact that it is stated that the bodies were never found, may allow the question whether it was really death through drowning that waited the young men who gave in to the lady's temptation. To say that they died by drowning could be seen as a misinterpretation of these men's journeys to the Other World. It is seldom that captives in Fairyland recover from their experience. (127)

The lake always manifests the location of a realm beyond or behind the human reality. Entering this world through diving under the surface can be seen as an enchanting experience, even if it is never without danger. The characteristics of the Other

World can be extremely frightening and threatening and, eventually, can totally represent the principle of evil, while beings living under the water are interpreted as creatures from hell.

The Lady of the Lake does not only originate in the water but she is its manifestation. Therefore the whole range of the mysterious associations of "water" can be transferred to the Lady of the Lake. She can be experienced in her life-giving and prosperous aspects as well as her life-threatening, darker and secretive aspects.

The relationship between the Ladies of Lakes and their attributes can be so close that they often cannot be distinguished, so that one can stand for the other, the Lady and the Lake can be used as synonym, they are exchangeable. Sometimes the Lady has retreated into the background and is only recognisable in the shape of one of her many manifestations, in this next instance as a bird:

Llyn Dulyn is described as a very black, deep and turbid lake. Birds will not go near this lake "which is dismal in the extreme. A causeway of stones leads into this lake, and at the end of it there is a stone called the Red Altar. If even on the hottest day of summer any person throws water so as to wet this altar, rain will fall before night." Shepherds in the surrounding mountains used to say, that the appearance of a dove near those black and fateful waters foretokened the descent of a beautiful but wicked woman's soul to torment in the underworld. (128)

This chapter has dealt with a variety of water and

lake legends which occur in the Celtic tradition. An attempt to press the main themes of those stories into a short statement has to remain an incomplete and, to a certain extent, unsatisfactory venture. However, it can be said that these stories deal, on the sociological level, with the relationship of men and women (husband and wife) (129), and that they often have a disguised, religious, philosophical dimension where they tell about a female deity portrayed mainly in her positive/light aspects.

"...no...matter what other qualities or characteristics the individual goddesses may have possessed, fertility and maternity were common to all." (130)

Juliette Wood counts about three dozen variants of the tale in Wales dating from the tenth to the twentieth centuries and talks about the possibility of charting

"the development of the tale in a changing cultural context." (131)



I.5 Footnotes

(1) For a good overview of the history of folk lore research see, for example, Hedwig von Beit Symbolik des Märchens. Versuch einer Deutung (Bern, 1986) and Bolte, Johannes/Polivka, Georg, Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Gebrüder Grimm (Leipzig, 1932).

(2) Rhys, John Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) p.I.

(3) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen gesammelt durch die Brüder Grimm vol.I (Frankfurt/Main, 1979) p.13.

(4) Translated from Grimm; Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I p.22.

(5) Hauff, Wilhelm Märchen vol.II (Frankfurt/Main, 1978) p.1.

(6) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I pp.9f.

'...that myths are like small pieces of a shattered precious stone, lying on the floor, overgrown by the grass, waiting to be discovered marks the beginning of those mythological ways of thought and research which ran through the whole of the last century, covering many areas.'

(7) Bolte/Polivka, Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm vol.IV pp.289ff. and vol.V p.249.

(8) Eliade, Mircea, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries. The Encounter between Contemporary Faith and Archaic Reality (London - Glasgow, 1968) p.197.

(9) Bastian, Adolf Beiträge zur vergleichenden Psychologie pp.62f. Quoted after Beit Symbolik des Märchens p.11.

'...the basic material ... beyond which we cannot go, according to our present state of knowledge.'

(10) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.11.

(11) Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries p.196.

(12) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.11.

'Thus these thoughts have led, to a certain extent with good reason, numerous researchers to turn towards literar - historic, philologic, aesthetic and psychologic individual investigations. They deliberately dispensed with the problem of formation and meaning of myths and

fairy tales'.

- (13) Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries p.196.
- (14) Bolte/Polivka, Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm vol.V. p.256.
- (15) Steiner, Rudolf, Märchendeutungen im Lichte der Geistesforschung. Zwei Vorträge (Berlin, 1988).
- (16) Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.12.
- (17) Carus, Carl Gustav, Psyche. Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele (Darmstadt, 1964) p.216.
- (18) Ibid. pp.216f.
- (19) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.13.
- (20) Freud, Sigmund, Abriß der Psychoanalyse. Das Unbehagen an der Kultur (Frankfurt/Main, 1980) pp.25f.
- (21) Jung, C.G., Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten (Frankfurt/Main, 1980) p.96.

'The collective subconscious is as a reflection of the experience and at the same time as an a priori of this experience a reflection of the world which has been formed for aeons. In this picture certain characteristics/forms, so called archetypes or dominants have emerged in the course of time. They are the rulers, the gods, i.e. the images of dominant laws and principles which the soul is experiencing again and again on a regular basis.'

- (22) Translated from Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.15.
- (23) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I. p.28.
- 'with regards to the manner in which we collected [our material] we cared in the first instance about truthfulness; we have not added anything of our own ... but reproduced the content in the same way we received it...'
- (24) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.I.
- (25) Ibid. p.I.
- (26) Ibid. pp.71ff.
- (27) James, M.R (ed.), Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium Courtier's Trifles (Oxford, 1983) pp.148-151.



(28) Apart from John Rhys' version the following editions of Walter Map's tale were consulted for this thesis:

- Map, Walter, De Nugis Curialium Courtiers' Trifles. Edited and translated by M.R. James (Oxford, 1983).

- Map, Walter, "De Nugis Curialium. Translated by R. James, edited by Sidney Hartland", Hartland, E. Sidney (ed.), Cymmrodorion Record Series No. IX, (London, 1923).

(29) The line numbers refer to the Latin version quoted in this thesis.

(30) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.71.

(31) James, Walter Map p.149.

(32) Wood, Juliette, "The Fairy Bride in Wales", Folklore vol.103 1992, pp.56-72.

(33) James, Walter Map p.150.

(34) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.57.

(35) Ibid.

(36) Gwyndaf, "Fairyllore. Memorates and Legends from Welsh Oral Tradition", Narváez, Peter (ed.), The Good People. New Fairyllore Essays (New York - London, 1991) p.163.

(37) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom (London, 1930) p.57.

(38) Ibid. p.65

(39) Ibid. p.66.

(40) Gwyndaf, Fairyllore p.193.

(41) Ibid. p.177.

(42) See to this for example T.G. Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom pp.51ff; O Giollain, Diarmuid, "The Fairy Belief and Official Religion in Ireland", Narváez (ed.), The Good People pp.199-214; and in greater detail Logan, Patrick, The Old Gods. Facts about Irish Fairies (Belfast, 1981); as well as Spence, Lewis, British Fairy Origins (London, 1946).

(43) Narváez, The Good People p.197.

(44) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.170.



- (45) O Giollain, "The Fairy Belief and Official Religion in Ireland" p.202.
- (46) Gwyndaf, Fairylore p.60.
- (47) Harding, Esther, Woman's Mysteries. The Inner Life of Women revealed in Religious Myth and Ritual (London, 1971) p.134.
- (48) Ibid. p.135.
- (49) Bayley, Harold, The Lost Language of Symbolism. An Enquiry into the Origin of Certain Letters, Words, Names, Fairy-Tales, Folklore and Mythologies. (London, 1951) p.169.
- (50) Bord, Colin and Janet, Earth Rites (St. Albans - Granada, 1982) p.19.
- (51) Richards, Melville, The Laws of Hywel Dda (Liverpool, 1954) pp.67f. Regarding an interpretation of the woman's position in marriage in mediaeval Wales see also Markale, who points out that preceding the marriage the woman's legal position was not such a powerless one, she had the 'theoretical' right to choose her husband and could not be married without her consent. (Markale, Jean Women of the Celts (London, 1975) p.32).
- (52) Richards, The Laws of Hywel Dda p. 78 and Jenkins, Dafydd, The Law of Hywel Dda. Law Texts from Medieval Wales Translated and Edited (Llandysvl, Dyfed, 1986) pp.98f.
- (53) See Rhys 14, the story of 'Belenë'.
- (54) Richards, The Laws of Hywel Dda p.67. See also Jenkins, The Law of Hywel Dda p.52.
- (55) Regarding a detailed description of the conditions under which a marriage could be ended in Wales, as well as regarding the way in which property was shared between husband and wife in case of a divorce see Richards, The Laws of Hywel Dda pp.67ff. and Jenkins, The Law of Hywel Dda pp.45ff.
- (56) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.72.
- (57) Ibid.
- (58) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.57.
- (59) Map also quotes another related tale which however does not contain a lake. Only the abduction of the bride by the hero 'Edric the Wild' followed by a conditional agreement of the supernatural bride (she will stay until he 'reproaches her with her origins)' point to this tale as belonging to the

here discussed legend cycle. (See to this Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.58).

(60) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.55.

(61) Ibid. p.190.

(62) This version is also mentioned in T.G. Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.63.

(63) Rhys recorded a debate with regards to the 'real' name of this Lady of the Lake (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.23-35)

(64) See to this also Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.64.

(65) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.135f.

(66) One explanation how Lake Ladies came to live in the lake is given by T.G. Jones in the legend of "Llyn y Morynion", Maiden's Lake.

"Young men from Ardudwy went to the Vale of Clwyd for wives, leading back with them a number of maidens. They were overtaken near the lake by the men of the Vale of Clwyd. A battle ensued, in which the Ardudwy men all perished. Seeing this, the maidens leapt into the lake and were drowned, hence the name ... They would come out of the lake early in the morning and comb their hair." (T.G. Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.106f.

(67) In connection with fairy cattle T.G. Jones points out that

"apart from the cattle in the lake stories ... reference to fairy cattle is rare." (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.56.

(68) Richards, The Laws of Hywel Dda pp.68f, as well as Jenkins, The Law of Hywel Dda pp.45ff. See also Markale, Women of the Celts p.36: Markale talks about the existence of a 'legal concubinage' in Celtic societies.

(69) For further details see Charles-Edwards, T.M., "Nau Kynywedi Teithiauc", Jenkins, Dafydd and Owen, Morfydd, E. (ed.), The Welsh Law of Women (Cardiff, 1980)pp.35ff.

(70) ibid. p.37.

(71) Ibid. p.38.

(72) Ibid. p.39.



(73) Jenkins, The Law of Hywel Dda p.XI. For a detailed discussion of the different redactions of the Welsh law texts regarding women see Jenkins and Owen (ed.) The Welsh Law of Women pp.132ff.

(74) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.17.

(75) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.25.

(76) Ibid. p.26.

(77) Ibid. p.27.

(78) See Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I pp.318ff. Even though the Grimm's fairy tale also contains the element of taboo with reference to finding out the true name of a protagonist - the motif is here used in opposite ways.

(79) Compare to this also the version about the fairy bride 'Penelope' in Beddgelert given by Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.86ff. A version of 'Penelope's story' is also recorded by T.G..Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.65.

(80) T.G. Jones lists various circumstances and conditions under which fairy dances occurred. (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.55f.

(81) There is some evidence that customs and regulations with regards to hiring servants were taken from the ways in which concubines were contracted, for example, the hiring for exactly one year which would expire on certain days that were relics of the feast of Beltaine and Samain. (Markale, Women of the Celts p.36)

(82) A similar ending can be found in a tale from Snowdonia about Llyn Cwellyn, (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Folk-Custom pp.64f.). The 'epilogue' has been taken further in yet another tale about a Lady of the Lake called 'Bela', who used to meet her husband, after she vanished "on a floating islet in Llyn y Dywarchen, as long as she lived". (T.G. Jones, Welsh Folklore and Welsh Customs p.65).

Regarding Bella's story see also Rhys, Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx pp.91ff.

For yet another version where the Lady returns to her husband see the tale about Llyn y Gader, respectively Llyn y Dywarchen, the lake into which the lady disappeared. (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.90)

Compare to this also the following tale from Cwm Strallyn to Blaen Pennant (Jones, T.G., Welsh



Folklore and Welsh Customs p.66):

Fairies live in caves, not in houses, however are described as very beautiful, tall, "with flaxen hair and bright blue eyes." They have a very special life style. Fairies were seen "playing, dancing and singing on moonlight nights. Young mortals were attracted by these fairies, who would try to attract fair persons to enter their dance circle, while dark persons would be avoided. One day a "handsome young man of Braich y Dinas" fell in love with one of them, "but she would not marry him for fear". At first she consents to serve him. "Everything succeeded under her charge. At last she promised to marry him, on condition that he should find out her name." <Here the name taboo has been used in the opposite way, finding out her name has become the condition for her marriage>. The fairy's name is "Sibi", which the hero finds out and "she agreed to be his wife, but she was not to be touched with iron, and the door of the house was neither to be locked nor bolted. <This latter condition is a new one, unique to this particular tale>. The eventual accident happens when the husband is bringing home a "bundle of rushes" which he throws playfully towards her. "The hook, which he had stuck in the bundle, touched her as she tried to step aside. She vanished at once."

Jones supports the theory that the iron taboo in this story cycle originally had reference to metal weapons and reminds of the modern belief "that gifts of knives or scissors cut friendship." (T.G. Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.68.) This belief is also known in Germany, where it includes needles.

(83) To the discussion whether the 'Afanc' is a beaver see also Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.131. The 'Afanc' could also be perceived as a crocodile, see "Afanc y Llyn", Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.39.

According to another tradition regarding the 'Afanc's lake'

"A young woman has been seen to come out of this lake to wash clothes, and when she had done she folded the clothes, and taking them under her arms went back into the lake." (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.133.

(84) "...one is bound to regard 'afanc' as one of the terms originally applied to the fairies in their most unlovely aspects." (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.430).

(85) See also T.G. Jones' version of the Conway Afanc tale. (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom pp.104f.) Jones also refers to a similar tale in connection with King Arthur and discusses here the theory that the Afanc can be interpreted as a beaver. (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom p.105)

(86) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.433f.

(87) Ibid.

(88) Ibid. pp.434f.

(89) Ibid. pp.428ff.

(90) See also the record of the 'Belenë' story in T.G. Jones with is reference to mining in the introduction:

"Llyn Corwrion, Bethesda, Caernarvonshire. Fairies were seen mowing hay, and their cattle grazing near the lake. Sometimes they could be heard hammering like miners, shovelling rubbish aside, or emptying cart loads of stone. They sang sweetly, and gracefully danced. The heir and owner of a farm near the lake marries a lake fairy ..." (Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.67).

(91) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.55f.

(92) Hedwig von Beit describes how the effect of a magic circle (symbolised in the dance) extends the inner as well as the outer area of the circle, resulting in a climactical movement (helix). Those circle images have to be understood as reflections of a religious aim or a spiritual centre; they can be found in most cultures and find their expressions in pictures, architecture or being described in literature. (Beit, Symbolik des Märchens pp.183f.)

(93) Markale, Women of the Celts p.122.

(94) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom p.65.

(95) Gwyndaf, Fairylore p.165.

(96) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.82f. For further accounts of fairies as cave dwellers see ibid. p.96.

(97) Ibid. p.84

(98) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom p.58.



- (99) Spence, Lewis, The Mysteries of Britain. Secret Rites and Traditions of ancient Britain restored. London, 1970 p.52.
- (100) Ibid.
- (101) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom p.54.
- (102) Briggs, Katherine, M, The Vanishing People. A Study of Traditional Fairy Beliefs London, 1978 p.27.
- (103) Ibid. p.36.
- (104) Ibid. p.37.
- (105) See tales about entry into the fairy country during sleep in Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Welsh Custom pp.58f.
- (106) Briggs, The Vanishing People p.81.
- (107) Ibid. pp.88f.
- (108) Ibid. p.38.
- (109) Rojcewicz, Peter, M, "Between one Eye Blink and the Next. Fairies, UFOS, and Problems of Knowledge", Narváez (ed), The Good People p.492.
- (110) Ibid. p.492.
- (111) Gwyndaf, Fairylore p.169.
- (112) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.76f. With regards to the succession through the female line and the inheritance of land through the mother see Richards, The Law of Hywel Dda p.82.
- (113) Williams, Glanmor, The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation (Cardiff, 1962) pp.1.ff.
- (114) Ibid. p.3.
- (115) Ibid.
- (116) Ibid. pp.11f. For the influence the church exerted on the Welsh legal system with regards to establishing monogamy in Wales see also Charles-Edwards, "Nau Kynywedi Teithiauc" pp.29f.
- (117) Heussi, Karl, Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte Tübingen, 1979 p.337.
- (118) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.58.



- (119) Ibid.
- (120) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.16.
- (121) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.60f.
- (122) Ibid. p.59.
- (123) Trevelyan, Marie, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales (East Ardsley, Yorkshire, 1973) p.9.
- (124) Ibid. p.13.
- (125) Ibid. p.12.
- (126) Ibid. p.68.
- (127) Rosjcewicz, Between one Eye Blink and the Next p.492. See also for example T.G. Jones' tale of Sion ap Siencyn, of Pant Sion, Carmarthenshire, who once returning to his previous home from fairy country, where he thought to have stayed only ten minutes, discovered that he was gone for years and he turned to a "little heap of dust". (Jones, T.G. Welsh Folklore and Welsh Folk Custom p.60).
- (128) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk-Stories of Wales pp.12f.
- (129) Fairies seem involved in making men behave well towards their women. Trevelyan knows of a story telling of a man who, on breaking the covenant to behave kindly towards his wife was plunged into the lake. (Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk-Stories of Wales pp.53f.)
- (130) Ross, Anne, Pagan Celtic Britain. Studies in Iconography and Tradition (London - New York, 1967) p.208.
- (131) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.60.

II. OCCURRENCE OF SUNKEN CITIES AND DWELLINGS  
IN WELSH MYTHOLOGY

"But to put it briefly, it is an ancient belief in the Principality that its lakes generally have swallowed up habitations of men..."(1)

II.1 Introduction and Legitimation

Initially this chapter will establish why it is necessary to include in this thesis an examination of legends which tell about human settlements that have been submerged under water. After common elements between this type of tales and the 'Lady of the Lake' have been worked out, an initial discussion of the ideological concepts on which these stories are based will have to follow.

This chapter will not consider whether the 'sunken city legends' are based on actual historic facts. This has been discussed in other places.(2) The following paragraphs will be concerned with the essential statements contained in these legends. Nevertheless, for the time being, the methodological approach has to be a historical one in the sense that we are trying to find possible answers to questions like:

- What ideological concepts or conflicts are contained within those stories?
- What do they disclose about the frame of mind of

narrator and audience in their respective historic epochs?

- What possible conclusions can be drawn from the investigation regarding the motivation and transmission of such tales?

It has already been stated in the previous chapter that the 'Lady of the Lake' cycle does not expand upon the under-water world. Nevertheless the presence of such a world is indirectly inferred as the home land of the lady, her family and the animals who follow the lady out of the lake. These stories reveal no more characteristics about this world, apart from the fact that its borders - the water surface - are translucent, at least as far as the water world's inhabitants are concerned, and they can pass unhindered between the two realms. Thereby often:

"the lake formed one out of the many communications between this outward world of ours and the inner or lower one [...] - the unknown world." (3)

The objective of the following investigations shall be, in the first instance, to establish that there are further common characteristics between the 'sunken city stories' and the 'Ladies of the Lake', which could prove the existence of a close relationship between those two types of legends. The corresponding results would legitimise the hope that a



study of the 'sunken city' motif can contribute considerably to an interpretation of the overall message contained in the legend of the Lady of the Lake.

Submerged cities or continents are known in mythology throughout the world and have played an important part in Celtic culture.

This chapter can only deal with a few examples of such tales. A more comprehensive compilation of this story cycle can be found in the works of T.G. Jones and John Rhys.(4) This chapter will frequently make reference to both of these sources. Also Marie Trevelyan refers to tales about sunken cities like, for example, the tale regarding Llangorse Lake, Kenfig Pool and an inundation story about Llyn Tegid.(5) Those tales will be discussed in some length below.

T.G. Jones has stated that to the 'inundation story cycle' very often a moral motive has been allocated which he sees as a later addition to this tradition.(6) Markale interprets those tales as reminiscent of ancient myths about the creation of the human race.(7) Those tales would see the sea as the primeval mother like, for example, 'Illmatar, Mother of the Waters' in the Finnish Kalevala.(8) He describes the process of how the belief in water

represented by a female deity as the origin of life developed into the identification of the element 'water' with the mysterious, and later frightening and dangerous aspects of life. Eventually the encounter with the deity of life and fertility was surrounded by many taboos.(9) Markale allocates great importance to the inundation story cycle and comes to the conclusion:

"The myth of the submerged town, the basic myth of creation for the Celts was embodied in the legend of the town of Ys..."(10)

There are some theories, by no means proven beyond doubt, that there is a close link between the Atlantean and the Celtic people.(11) Most of these sunken places are thought to have existed on the surface of the earth at one time. The legends tell about the events that lead to the submerging of the city and very often of the miraculous rescue of one survivor. The following tale about 'Llangorse Lake' (12) belongs to this group.

## II.2 Mermaid, White Lady or Fairy?

Many of the tales dealt with in the first and second chapters have as their main protagonist a female figure who may be described as a mermaid, or may be seen as one of the 'White Ladies', or as belonging

to the fairy people. T.G. Jones, in particular, refers to Welsh Mermaids. He mentions a mermaid called:

"Gwenhidwy, whose sheep were the waves and that the ninth wave was the ram".(13)

There is also a tale about a mermaid caught at Pencader, Pembroke, who:

"tells her captors that unless they let her go, the next ship passing that way would be wrecked. She is liberated".(14)

However, not all encounters between mortals and mermaids were hostile. The following story, which also refers to the magical rhythm of the number 'three' is one such tale.

"A Pembrokeshire fisherman in the eighteenth century caught a mermaid at Cemmes. She said: 'If you let me go, I shall call to you three times when you are in danger.' He put her back into the sea. Afterwards he heard her cry three times, telling him to ship his nets and return to land. This he did, and was the only one out of twenty fishermen to be saved from a tempest".(15)

There is also a record of a mermaid who was caught at Conway, dying of exposure.(16)

Rhys evaluates the relationship between female protagonists of water legends and comes to the conclusion:

"I see no reason to make any profound distinction between lake maidens and sea maidens."(17)

There is, for example, the tale about a mermaid found by a

"fisherman from Llandydoch or St. Dogmael's near Cardigan."(18)

This story does not talk about love between the



mermaid and the mortal. He captures her and she wants him to let her go

"to walk the streets of the deep, and visit her sweethearts there." (19)

As a reward she saves him from drowning during a terrible storm. (20) A similar tale was told about a mermaid

"said to have been caught by men below the land of Llanwnda"

near Fishguard. This mermaid is also caught and set free after her begging to be allowed to return to her homeland. This time she leaves as reward

"three bits of advice". (21)

Rhys records further mermaid sightings in Wales in Porth y Rhaw, and between Fishguard and St. Davids. (22) T.G. Jones mentions records of mermaid sightings as recent as 1828 by a farmer and his family of Llanychaearn, near Aberystwyth. (23)

It is even possible to find examples of a relationship between mermaid and mortal in Wales which ends in courtship. Rhys records a long mermaid story from the coast of Caernarvonshire, somewhat of an epic however that has

"probably been pieced together from various sources." (24)

This might be the reason why the tale's content in its present form seems very condensed and at times confusing. In brief, the tale contains the following elements:

This mermaid is in a cave, her name is 'Nefyn', she got to notice a young man because of the way he sang. The mermaid marries him under the condition that he always keeps a cap she has given him out of sight. This cap taboo is eventually broken.

The couple go frequently to visit the cave. They have children who start playing a major role in the plot. They wonder about their mother's true nature and eventually find out that she is a mermaid. This revelation shocks some of them to such an extent that they die broken hearted. Some go into the water, however, they do not die but continue life in the sea, from where they appear frequently. It is explicitly mentioned that one of the daughters turns into a mermaid herself. Also a well plays a part in the story. A black knight is mentioned. Eventually even the name 'Cerdiwen', one of the many titles of the ancient Celtic mother goddess, has been incorporated and given to one of the mermaid's offspring. (25)

Rhys mentions that the cap of salmon skin also occurs as taboo in a tale regarding Loch Owel. The tale's plot follows in the main the Lady of the Lake story cycle. In this tale the woman is brought in connection with colts and fillies. When the woman finds the cap, she returns back to the lake, thus rediscovering her true nature and element. (26) The similarities in the plot and motifs between the Irish salmon cap tale and the Welsh cap tale again make apparent that there exists a close relationship between mermaids and fairy brides. The distinction between those two types of female protagonists is not always clear and some of these ladies show characteristics of mermaids, fairies, white ladies and the Lady of the Lake. Bord also comes to the conclusion:

"Some degree of overlap between the different types of lake dwelling maidens is suggested, because the Welsh fairy-maidens' habit of emerging from the water and combing their hair is exactly the behaviour one expects from a mermaid." (27)

Thus it is hardly possible to assign the heroine of a particular legend to one of these categories. At least with regards to Celtic/Welsh mythology such a distinction is also not essential, as far as an interpretation of the main messages carried within those stories is concerned. Fairies, Mermaids and White Ladies show more common than distinctive elements. In some of the tales discussed here those elements have been amalgamated.

### II.3 Why the Waters burst forth

#### **II.3.1 Grassi (28)**

The story of the "Glasfryn" Family shows how the border-line between the categories 'Mermaid' and 'White Lady' can become blurred. This family carries in its coat of arms a mermaid:

"who is represented in the usual way, holding a comb in her right hand and a mirror in her left." (29)

The family was also in possession of their own female ghost called "Grassi" who, according to the description of her appearance, must be counted as



one of the 'White Ladies'.

"...a tall lady with well marked features and large bright eyes: she was dressed in white silk and a white velvet bonnet." (30)

This Lady was seen by the banks of the lake "Glasfryn" in the parish of Llangybi as well as inside the family's house.

John Rhys expresses his disappointment that he did not find a "proper mermaid" during the investigations which he carried out based on the family's coat of arms. However Grassi has explicit connections with water, even if she seems to have appeared mostly inside the house.

"One story is to the effect, that on a certain evening she forgot to close the well, and that when the gushing waters had formed the lake, poor Grassi, overcome with remorse, wandered up and down the high ground of Cae'r Ladi, moaning and weeping." (31)

The description of Grassi's behaviour shows remarkable similarity to the lady haunting Llyn-Nad-Y-Forwyn as recorded by Trevelyan, but the reasons for her haunting the lake are different;

"In Carnarvonshire there is a lake called Llyn-Nad-y-Forwyn, or the Lake of the Maiden's Cry. A man and a maiden were betrothed, but he was a deceiver, and one evening, when the mists were rising from the water, he pushed the girl in, and she was drowned. Her spirit was said to haunt the lake. Sometimes she appeared like a ball of fire rolling along the banks of the Collwyn. Her groans and shrieks could be heard a long distance away. Sometimes she arose out of the water with hair in disorder, and wildly waving her arms. People said she could often be heard weeping and moaning and plaintively uttering the words, 'Lost! lost!'" (32)

There exists a version of Grassi's story which

mentions the fairies' realm and, at the same time, connects the Lady of the Lake with white animals into which she transforms or with which she is associated.

"...when the water broke forth to form the lake the fairies seized Grassi and changed her into a swan, and that she continued in that form to live on the lake sixscore years, and that when at length she died she loudly lamented her lot: that cry is still to be heard at night." (33)

### II.3.2 The Moral Justification (the Dualistic Principle of the Stories' Inherent Conflict)

The motif contained in Grassi's story and totally unknown to the tales so far discussed is the episode where Grassi forgets to cover the well with a stone, thus causing the water to burst out and submerging the surrounding land. Another example where the existence of a lake has been explained by a story in connection with an overflowing well is the tale about Llyn Llech Owain in Carmarthen. Here a well had to be covered, which was forgotten one night, thus causing the well's overflowing and the flooding of the surrounding land by forming the lake. (34)

There can be various reasons why waters burst forth in order to form a lake. For example the 'Great Mere at Ellesmere' (Shropshire) is supposed to have been formed as a punishment for a greedy farmer and his wife who would not let people go over his land to use it. (35) A holy well in Columcille parish (Longford) was desecrated when a woman washed her

clothes in it. A calf which lived in the well jumped out and ran towards the valley, followed by the well water, and thus was Lough Gamhud formed. (36)

Bord thinks that the multitude of inundation legends has a historic background:

"The majority of legends of drowned settlements come from Wales, and there is factual evidence that in the past ages certain land areas of Wales, especially around the coasts, have become submerged in reality." (37)

Many Scottish lakes are also said to have been created in this manner, for example, Loch Awe and Loch Ness. (38)

Clearly addressing the conflict between two different religious systems, the Bomere Pool near Shrewsbury, which was a village, is supposed to have been formed because the inhabitants turned back to paganism. According to the tale heavy rain at Christmas-time brought floods which drowned the dwellings. (39)

Returning to the 'Grassi' story, this tale has in common with the previously discussed cycle the fact that it contains reminiscences of pre-Christian religions. Rhys emphasises the close connection between gods of the underworld and water deities. And, for example, in Roman mythology the river 'Styx' has to be crossed in order to get to Hades, the realm of the dead. (40) The Other World, the



land of the dead can be an island, Rhys mentions a tradition according to which:

"Angelsey would have to be treated as having once been considered one of the Islands of the Dead and the home of Other-world inhabitants." (41)

Crossing the water - by means of a ship or a bridge - means entering the borderline between two spheres. We have here a dualistic concept which can be filled with many values. For example, this world and the Other-World can be seen as land of the living, land of the dead, they can stand for the Christian and non-Christian world, and they have been interpreted as representing the masculine and feminine elements respectively. Eventually the dualistic concept can express abstract terms like good and bad and can be associated with different, contradicting ethic systems. Dualism is a mental concept, a particular view of the world which probably originates from an individual human's experience of being separate from the rest of the universe. This concept can be filled with various spiritual values according to the respective prevalent ideas.

Within the context of changing cultural and religious values the narrators of the stories discussed here sometimes seem to have had some difficulties in defining their own moral point of view when attempting to judge the behaviour of their tales' protagonists.

II.4 Lough Sheelin (From the Guardian of the Well to the Well Taboo?)

"A long, long time ago there was no lake there, but only a well with a flagstone kept over it, and everybody would put the flag back after taking water out of the well. But one day a woman who fetched water from it forgot to replace the stone, and the water burst forth in pursuit of the luckless woman, who fled as hard as she could before the angry flood. She continued until she had run about seven miles - the estimated length of the lake at the present day. Now at this point a man, who was busily mowing hay in the field through which she was running, saw what was happening and mowed the woman down with his scythe, whereupon the water advanced no further."(42)

One can picture the following scene: A woman tries to escape the water, a man mows hay in his field nearby and observes the events; and his reaction is not to try and rescue the woman but to kill her in a very brutal manner, he mows her down like the grass.

Let us try to find possible answers to the following questions: - Why was it necessary for the man to take such drastic measures in order to stop the floods, and how did he know about the special connection between the oncoming angry floods and the fleeing woman?

Strangely enough, the story's narrator does not disapprove of the man's action. On the contrary, his action seems to find its immediate reward with the stopping of the flood. For this there could be different explanations:

The killing of the woman is justified as a punishment for some offence that the story in its present form does not make evident. This offence could be forgetting to close the well. Being in charge of the well also meant being the guardian of the ghosts and spirits which were connected with many wells and springs and thus must be seen as a position of power and responsibility. Forgetting to close the well meant not fulfilling an important duty which led to loss of power over the well's water spirits which in turn resulted in the water flooding the surrounding land and bringing disaster upon the whole community.

On the other hand, the offence could have been the fact that the woman went to the well in the first place, thus breaking a taboo which forbade women to attend to secret wells. Breaking a taboo meant an offence of the worst possible kind and would easily explain the need for the offender's severe punishment, often loss of eyesight or even death. Rhys knows of Irish tales:

"where the divinity of the well is offended because a woman has gazed into its depths..." (43)

This happens in connection with wells like, for example, the 'Trinity Well', the source of the river Boyne, in the County Kildare. A similar story is told about the river 'Shannon, in Irish 'Sinann', 'Sinand' or 'Sinend'. (44) Another way in which



women could offend the sacredness of a well is shown in a tale from the parish Columcille in Longford, where a woman insulted a holy well by washing her clothes in it. According to this tale Lough Gamhud was formed when a calf that lived in the well jumped out and ran towards the valley was followed by the well water.(45)

Having the task of well keeper could be seen as a curse, well-keepers were sometimes regarded as Anti-Christ.(46) Until quite recent times well keepers were believed to have the gift of fortune telling, see for example the tales regarding a well in Denbigh, or regarding Ffynnon Beris, near Llanberis.(47)

Rhys suggests that beneath those tales lies an

"...ancient tabu directed against women, which may have applied only to certain wells of peculiarly sacred character..."(48)

Rhys is aware of the apparent contradiction that consists between those tales who make the well a taboo for women and those tales where apparently the wells were left in charge of the women.

"It looks as if we had in these stories a confusion of two different institutions, one being a well of wisdom which no woman durst visit without fatal vengeance overtaking her, and the other a fairy well which was attended to by a woman who was to keep it covered, and who may, perhaps, be regarded as priestess of the spring."(49)

Bord states that more often an old woman would have been a well's custodian, a position that may have

been hereditary. See, for example, Ffynnon Sarah at Caerwys in Flint which was under the control of a witch, named Sarah, without whose help no benefit could be obtained from the well.(50) Even though this has to be, to some extent, speculation one could put forward the theory that one kind of tale - where the woman in charge forgets to close the well and therefore causes a great disaster can be used to justify the second type, making the well taboo for women. Since water has been interpreted as the symbol of femininity, the message in this cycle could be translated into a statement like 'Because women are unable to tame the life giving but fearful element of water, it has to be taken out of their control altogether'.

The two types of tale hint at a subdivision of these stories over a period of time. They exist quasi on two historic levels which in the tale of 'Lough Sheelin' have been amalgamated. The first part of this tale bears memory to a religious system that allocates the honour and responsibility of guarding holy wells to women. Part two reminds us of a later historic period that took away this powerful position from women and made it, on the contrary, a taboo to even come near those wells.

The man in the Lough Sheelin tale mowing the hay and

witnessing the floods pursuing the fleeing woman seems to make the instant connection between the woman and the water, that in a way both are identical. That is why he assumes that if he stopped her he would stop the water which is threatening his fields. A further explanation why the man in this tale acted the way he did is the assumption that the woman was not a mortal human being but a supernatural malicious creature, that caused the flood and consequently had to be destroyed in order to tame the water. This, of course, would raise the question how did the man know this?

A further hint which can contribute towards establishing the true identify of the story's protagonists may be:

"that cutting the green sward or disturbing the earth beneath was believed in certain cases to give offence to some underground divinity or other connected with the world of waters. That divinity avenged the annoyance or offence given him by causing water to burst forth an form a lake forthwith." (51)

Thus the man with the scythe may, in reality, have caused and provoked the floods, the lady then would not be fleeing from the water. Moreover, she would lead it in order to avenge her disturbance. Such an interpretation would give the man's reaction a logical motive.

In any case, the story talks about the existence of a very deep conflict between the two worlds whose



representatives are described in the main characters of our story. As in the Lady of the Lake tale the female protagonist is associated with the element of water. In the guardian of the well stories the woman is connected more closely to her world, she is stranger to the human realm and consequently represents to man almost exclusively the dark and threatening aspects of life which have to be overcome. The Lady of the Lake, afterwards a fairy bride, brought happiness and plenty - however only while she remained in the humans' realm; when she left, her disappearance resulted in despair for her family. As guardian of the well she has been totally removed from the humans' world, any contact is only seen from its dangerous and threatening aspect. (52)

#### II.5    Llyn Tegid

There are many stories where the flooding of a town or human dwelling is not caused by a woman. John Rhys records a legend regarding Llyn Tegid, where the sex of the person who forgot to place the lid on the well and thus causes the destruction of the town is unclear. (53) However, in this case it could be an omission of the name during a later stage of the oral tradition, when the importance of this detail was no longer recognised.

The following excerpt is quoted from Marie Trevelyan:

"Near Lake Tegid, now known as Bala Lake, there was a walled-in spring with a lid which had to be put on every night and locked, so that witches, fairies, and the devil might not disturb the waters. In close proximity to the spring there was a large and important town. One night the keeper of this spring forgot to put the lid on; others said the devil had opened it. The waters burst out and overflowed the town, destroying everything before them. The site of the submerged town became Lake Bala. In the story, Old Bala is under the lake, which is about three miles long and one mile wide. A prophecy still unfulfilled is to the effect that New Bala is to meet the same fate." (54)

The version given above makes no attempt to hide the fact that the danger threatening from the well is one from evil, non-Christian spirits. Some legends, however, show a tendency towards replacing the magic supernatural elements with rational explanations like, for example, the story of the submerging of Cantre'r Gwaelod. Here the flooding of "sixteen noble cities" was caused by a drunken keeper of the embankment who, one evening, left the sluices open which defended the cities from the sea.

"The sea broke through, and only a few of the inhabitants escaped." (55)

In Ireland Lough Neagh is said to have been formed when:

"the waters of the neglected well rushed forth." (56)

Lough Neagh has a Lady of the Lake, who has many names: She is, for example, called Liban or Muirgen. (57) Muirgen or Liban was not drowned when a well burst, but lived in a chamber at the bottom

of the lake formed by the overflowing well until she was changed into a salmon. In that form she lived for three centuries. Then a fisherman caught her and she received a Christian burial (presumably after she regained her original shape). (58)

Let us now look at yet another version about Llyn Tegid by John Rhys. (59) This tale uses the word 'edifeirwch', 'repentance', throughout instead of 'dial', 'vengeance'.

"... Bala Lake is but the watery tomb of the palaces of iniquity." The tale knows about "voices that can still be heard at times. 'Dial a ddaw, dial a ddaw', Vengeance will come' and another voice inquiring, 'Pa bryd y daw' 'When will it come'. Then the first voice answers 'Yn y drydedd genhedlaeth' 'In the third generation!'"

The legend goes on to tell about an oppressive and cruel prince. He heard the warning voice on many occasions but took no notice of it. Then ..

"One night a poor harper from the neighbouring hills was ordered to come to the prince's palace." Here noble lords, princes and princesses celebrated the birth of the first child of the prince's son, i.e. the first member of the third generation.

"... Never before had [the harper] seen such splendour at any feast." The legend mentions a lack of hospitality on the side of the celebrators towards the harper. During a break at midnight they left him sitting alone in the corner. He suddenly heard a voice singing in a sort of a whisper in his ear 'Vengeance, vengeance!'" The old harper follows the bird which "was all the time hovering in front of him and leading him along the easiest and safest paths. But if he stopped for a moment the same mournful note of 'Vengeance, vengeance!' would be sung to him in a more and more plaintive and heartbreaking fashion. They had by this time reached the top of the hill, a considerable distance from the palace." The old harper was tired and would have liked a rest. "He listened, but he heard nothing save



the murmuring of the little burn hard by. He now began to think how foolish he had been to allow himself to be led away from the feast of the palace: he turned back in order to be there in time for the next dance." But he lost his way "and found himself forced to await the break of the day. In the morning, as he turned his eyes in the direction of the palace, he could see no trace of it: the whole tract below was one calm, large lake, with his harp floating on the face of the waters." (60)

The 'Vengeance motif' in this tale will be discussed in more detail in connection with the tale about Kenfig Pool. This tale points towards the prince's greediness and lack of compassion and generosity towards his poor subjects as the cause of the catastrophe.

It was often a harper who witnessed the sinking of a city, while he was on a visit there. The reason for this could have been the story teller's artistic interest. It suggests indirectly that, in actual fact, he is talking about his own personal experience and thus made the tale more interesting and gives his story, as well as himself, more credibility. (61)

Rhys summarises his findings himself;

"These inundation legends have many points of similarity among themselves: thus in those of Llyncllys, Syfaddon, Llyn Tegid and Tyno Helig, though they have a ring of austerity about them, the harper is a favoured man, who always escapes when the banqueters are all involved in the catastrophe." (62)

In all those stories moral issues play an important part since the sinking of the city has to be seen as

a direct result of the wrong, immoral and frivolous behaviour of its inhabitants, or the wrong behaviour of the well's guardian. Rhys stated:

"Everything points to the comparative lateness of the fully developed ethical motive. At least one may add, in its preserved form. The conflict itself may well have been there from the beginning - as the motivation for the story's development." (63)

Thus an amalgamation of different story cycles may have taken place.

"In the case of Llyn Tegid, the less known and presumably the older story connects the formation of the lake with the neglect to keep the stone door of the well shut, while the more popular story makes the catastrophe a punishment for wicked and riotous living." (64)

#### II.6 Llynclys Pool near Oswestry (A Tale Told from Different Points of View, and the Issue of Celibacy within the Church)

Let us look at yet another story that tells about a sunken land, and also shows an ambiguous relationship between women and men.

The king's wife was young and beautiful, however, he was not happy. After he had lived with her for nine years he told Clerk Willin how he first met her when she was hunting 'fair Blodwell's rock among'. Their marriage was also resolved under a certain condition. "He married her on the condition that she should be allowed to leave him one night in every seven, and this she did without his once knowing whither she went on the night of her absence. Clerk Willin promised to restore peace to the king if he would resign the queen to him, and give a tithe annually of his cattle and of the wine in his cellar to him and the monks of the White Minster. The king consented, and the wily clerk hurried away with his book late at

night to the rocks by the Giant's Grave, where there was an 'ogo' [?] or cave which was supposed to lead down to Faery. While the queen was inside the cave, he began his spells and made it irrevocable that she should be his, and that his fare should be what fed on the king's meadow and what flowed in his cellar. When the clerk's potent spells forced the queen to meet him to consummate his bargain with the king, what should he behold but a grim ogress, who told him that their spells had clashed. She explained to him how she had been the king's wife for thirty years, and how the king began to be tired of her wrinkles and old age. Then, on condition of returning to the Ogo to be an ogress one night in seven, she was given youth and beauty again, with which she attracted the king anew. In fact, she had promised him happiness

'Till within his hall the flag-reeds tall  
And the long green rushes grow.'

The ogress continued in words which made the clerk see how completely he had been caught in his own net:

'Then take thy bride to thy cloistered bed,  
As by oath and spell decreed,  
And nought be thy fare but the pike and the dare,  
And the water in which they feed.'

The clerk had succeeded in restoring peace at the king's banqueting board, but it was the peace of the dead;

For down went the king, and his palace and all,

And the waters now o'er it flow,  
And already in his hall do the flag-reeds tall  
And the long green rushes grow. (65))

I would like to start the investigation of this tale with a text-immanent approach. At first a contradiction regarding the time which is inherent in this story shall be looked at. In the beginning it is stated that the king had lived with the queen for nine years. However, later on the queen tells Clerk Willin that she has been the king's wife for thirty years. One possible, but not the only answer, to this contradiction could be that it is the result of an amalgamation of two related but hitherto inde-



pendently existing stories. This, however, has to be speculative since there are no clear recognisable seams or breaks that would make it possible to identify and distinguish in the present tale two different traditions. However, there is also the possibility that the same tale was told with both time periods, since both spans of nine and thirty years make the aging plausible.

There are further inconsistencies to be found within the tale. It seems to contain different aspects. The king set Clerk Willin to spy on his wife and handing her over to him as a reward or, possibly, as a condition of casting the spell. From the king's point of view he did what he did because he could not find his peace due to the fact that his wife spent one night in seven away from him without justifying her behaviour. According to the king's version it was a condition of the marriage:

"that she should be allowed to leave him one night in every seven."

However, when the queen explains her situation to Clerk Willin she states not only that her marriage has so far lasted for thirty years, but that her spending one night in seven away from the King was a condition she had to fulfil in order to be given youth and beauty again while:

"returning to be an ogress one night in seven."

One could say that in the tale the King acts out of curiosity, breaking a given taboo, while the queen acts out of love for the King. Nevertheless, whoever tells the story puts the blame on the other person. The king's and queen's versions seem to justify their own respective behaviour.

The king asks Clerk Willin for help. He cannot be happy in spite of the queen's beauty, the reason being that she disappears one night in every seven. It is understandable that the king wants to find out the queen's whereabouts on that particular night, and he is prepared to pay a high price for this. However, a part of the bargain he agrees with Clerk Willin appears to be very strange. Clerk Willin not only requests material goods - which he is granted, but he:

"promised to restore peace to the king if he would resign the queen to him.."

This wish is granted. Thus it cannot be assumed that the king's fear of losing the queen's love and truthfulness was the motive for asking for help. The story, according to the version of John Rhys, does not make it evident whether Clerk Willin's possession of the queen would be a temporary one or one of duration. It is also not clear whether Clerk Willin belongs to the monks of the 'White Minster' to whom the wine out of the king's cellar has to be delivered. It is likely that, since Clerk Willin seems to be a learned man of some kind, he must be

in close association with the clergy, if not a member of their order. He is also knowledgeable in the art of magic. On the other hand, neither Clerk Willin nor the king seems to think much of it that the clerk would be involved with a woman, who is another man's wife.

In a way the ogress' story could be seen as another version of the Lady of the Lake's tale thirty years after the marriage had the taboo not been broken. Apparently at first the marriage left nothing to be desired. The supernatural wife seems to have surrendered in total to the conditions and laws of a mortal human. This included bearing the normal signs of aging - a process which she had to accept when she renounced her true character and accepted the realities of the mortals' realm. Her decision to leave the king for one night in seven is a reaction to the king's changing attitude towards his aging wife. This would mean that the motive for her actions was her love for the king, which presumably made her give her consent to the relationship in the first place. The king, for his part, reached out for the unreachable, only to find out, that when he finally achieved what he wanted, he could not come to terms with the new reality, which he had created himself. In this tale the female protagonist, the king's supernatural wife has two sides to her nature. She is portrayed as a magically beautiful



woman, like the fairy brides, and also as a frightening ogress who lives in a cave.

So whose actions are the ones that called for the punishment, the sinking of the palace? As a result of the events recounted, here the king's palace is submerged under water. It would be understandable and plausible to blame the queen who in reality is an ugly ogress who has, to a certain extent, deceived the king. However, the tale does not do this. It seems that the catastrophe happens more as a result of the king's wish to have peace of mind, even if this means breaking the marriage condition to which he originally agreed, and Clerk Willin's way of going about it. In a way, as the story is told, it seems to be "Clerk Willin's" 'fault', perhaps because according to the moral code of the narrator his request was an outrageous one.(66) This must have been the case from the perspective of a time when the idea of celibacy had long been introduced into the church. However, the exact time and the reasons for the introduction of celibacy into the church's clergy is a very complex subject. Since an understanding of the church's official opinion regarding abstinence from marriage can contribute considerably towards a better understanding of Clerk Willin's role it shall be looked at briefly in the following paragraphs.

### II.6.1 Celibacy within the Christian Church

According to Heussi (67) celibacy does not have its roots in the high estimation of virginity, but stems from the pagan idea, that sexual intercourse has a bad influence on cultic capabilities. Already during the third century it became the custom for bishops and deacons not to enter into marriage after they had been ordained. The next step was that married clergymen were expected to live abstinently.(68) In 530 the Roman State declared marriages that had been entered after ordination not valid: the 'Franconian synod' in Tours 567 called the combination between priesthood and marriage 'heresy'. However, the actual realisation of celibacy, the prohibition on priests to marry took place only during the 11th and 12th centuries.(69) Oriental countries deviated from these regulations. In the ninth century the eastern church still rejected the obligatory celibacy for priests.(70) Political upheavals during the Dark and early Middle Ages had their influence on the powers of the church. In the British Isles the impact of those destabilising effects were also felt, however not to the same extent as on the continent.

"Auch die angelsächsische Kultur und die Kirche gerieten im 9. Jh. infolge der Einfälle der Dänen in Verfall; aber ALFRED D. GR. (871-901) beendete die politische Krisis und stellte die angelsächsische Kultur wieder her. In der ausgehenden Karolingerzeit war die englische Kirche die einzige abendländische Kirche, die nicht in Barbarei versunken war.(71)

This will have increased the pressure the church of England could exert on the church of Wales. It also indicates the strength of the Welsh church's will to independence since it managed to offer considerable resistance to all attempts to incorporate Wales under its jurisdiction. The church kept trying to counteract any anti-church 'pagan developments'. One of the means in order to achieve this was the re-enforcement of compulsory celibacy for priests. For example Pope Gregory VII in a synod of 1074 (72) revived the old celibacy regulations and tried to force their realisation in the strongest means. Any official acts carried out by married priests were declared invalid, which was contrary to the old church laws. Lay people were encouraged to help enforce those rules by putting pressure on their clergymen. Pope Gregory VII in the:

"Fastensynode von 1074 schärfte die alten Zölibatsvorschriften von neuem ein und suchte ihre Durchführung durch die schärfsten Mittel zu erzwingen: die Amtshandlungen der verheirateten Priester wurden (im Widerspruch mit dem altkirchlichen Recht) [...] für ungültig erklärt, die Laien zur Revolte aufgereizt." (73)

Wales was also not excluded from the arguments regarding the clergy's celibacy. For example, in Bangor on 28 June 1284 Archbishop Pecham issued injunctions for the clergy of St. Asaph where:

"he placed particular emphasis upon the need for enforcing discipline in the matter of clerical dress, behaviour, and celibacy, and the observance of divine service." (74)

The controversy regarding celibacy even within the church lasted for a long time and only in the ele-



venth and twelfth century did it become a reality within the Christian church.

"Der eigentliche Zölibat, d.h. das Verbot der Priesterehe überhaupt, wurde erst im 11. und 12. Jh. verwirklicht [...]" (75)

It can be safely stated that throughout the Middle Ages until modern times celibacy was an issue within the Christian church. (76)

With regards to the Welsh tale discussed here, Clerk Willin's behaviour was clearly not acceptable to the official clergy and while it has to remain open what the general public's view on celibacy of the clergy was, Willin's demand, to possess the queen -and the fact that it is granted- is the most astonishing aspect here. It implies two things, firstly perhaps the depth of despair on the part of the king, secondly and more importantly, Clerk Willin's powerful position. He is in possession of magic and has to be seen as an antagonist to the queen/ogress.

Clerk Willin uses his magical powers against another person for his own benefit. Therefore it can be argued that it was Clerk Willin's selfish behaviour that called for punishment. He has to find out that his spell is successful in a way he has not bargained for. The final punishment - the sinking of the palace, appears somewhat like an appendix to the story, which might just as well have ended with the clerk finding out about the true nature of the

queen.

Rhys recorded a second version of this tale which seems to blame the king's sympathy towards "Pelagius Heresy", which could be his affiliation with a non-Christian wife, for the catastrophe which befell the place. (77) John Rhys states that this particular version, dating from 1573, talks about a saint "German Altisiodorensis" (St. Germanus of Auxerre) who preached against "Pelagius Heresy" (78) The king however did not listen:

"that good man: by the secret and terrible judgment of God, with his Palace, and all his household was swallowed up into the bowels of the Earth, in that place, whereas, not farre from Oswastry, is now a standyng water, of an vnknowne depth, called Lhunclys, that is to say: the deuouryng of the Palace." (79)

Rhys points out that he could not find this story in any of the Lives of St. Germanus. He supposes no connection between the two tales, and denies the existence of Christian and non-Christian ethical motifs in Clerk Willin's story. (80)

The parallels between the Llyncllys Pool story and the Lady of the Lake legends can be summarised as follows: The marriage between a mortal and a supernatural takes place under the condition, that the husband is by no means to find out about his wife's true nature. The taboo is eventually broken and leads to the woman's return to her previous realm and to a disaster for the husband and his family.

II.7 Llangorse Lake (The Church's Fight against pre-Christian Customs and Belief and the Motif of the surviving male Child)

"Llangorse Lake is said to be the site of a sunken city, the inhabitants of which were reported to be very wicked. The king of that part of Wales sent his ambassador to ascertain whether the rumour was true or not, adding that if it was well founded, he would destroy the place as an example to his other subjects. When the ambassador paid his surprise visit it was evening, and all the inhabitants were enjoying festivities and excesses. Not one of them offered the stranger any hospitality. Seeing the door of a humble cottage open, he entered, and found the place deserted, with the exception of a wailing babe in a cradle. The ambassador remained beside the babe, and accidentally dropped one of his gloves into the cradle. In the morning before dawn he took his departure, intending to convey his unpleasant confirmation of the rumours to the king. He had only just left the outskirts of the city when he heard repeated peals of terrible thunder, accompanied by groans and shrieks. Then there were sounds like the dashing of waves. It was cold towards sunrise, and he missed his glove, which was of great value, so he returned to look for it. When he reached the outskirts of the city he saw that the houses had vanished, and the whole site was covered with water. While gazing at the lamentable scene, he saw a speck in the centre of the water, and as it was wafted towards him, he recognised the cradle in which he had left his glove. He drew the cradle towards him, and brought it up to dry land, and then found the babe safe and alive. The ambassador took the baby to the king, who adopted it as the sole survivor of the lost city. (81)

In this tale the punishment of a whole city seems to be justified since all its inhabitants participate in wrong-doing. The offence committed by the people living in the city seems to be two-fold; firstly they lead an immoral, excessive lifestyle and secondly they refuse to offer a stranger the necessary



hospitality. (82)

The function of the king is worthy of attention; he seems to stand in close harmony with nature, if not equipped himself with supernatural powers, since the natural catastrophe strikes the city exactly at that moment when the kings's worst fears about the inhabitants' morals are confirmed and he decides to punish them, however, before his ambassador could give him the message.

The ambassador arrives in the evening while all the inhabitants are enjoying 'festivities and excesses'. It is not explicitly mentioned that the town itself is deserted but there is also no reference to a conversation or any kind of contact between the ambassador and the city people. However, the story tells of an empty cottage, which is entered by the ambassador and where he remains until the morning. It is emphasised that the 'stranger', who visits the village is not offered any hospitality, which would in an age when visitors were rare and travelling was a strenuous undertaking would have been the right and customary thing to do. Two explanations for the inhabitants' behaviour are possible. One could conclude, that no one noticed his presence, and one explanation why he was not offered any hospitality could have been the fact that not only one cottage but the whole village was empty while its inhabi-

tants were celebrating together. Apart from this, if it would have been possible for the city's inhabitants to identify the 'surprise visitor', of course, the city's inhabitants did not have much reason to react in a friendly manner towards a delegate of the king who was about to punish them in the severest way.

The ambassador did not come in order to try and convert the people, he came to look for confirmation of their suspected wrong-doing which would lead to the city's severe punishment. This city was not the only one which presented problems to the king since, by ordering the punishment, he wanted to set an example to his other subjects. Now why was it necessary to issue such a strong warning?

History shows that the fight against pagan religions presented a problem to the church throughout the centuries. For example, around 452 a clear warning was issued at the Second council of Arles:

"If in the territory of a bishop infidels light torches or venerate trees, fountains, or stones, and he neglects to abolish this usage, he must know that he is guilty of a sacrilege." (83)

These efforts, however, were not very successful to begin with. The church struggled for a long time to suppress ancient beliefs. Customs and rituals connected with water and wells featured very strongly here. In the 15th century Robert Mascall, Bishop of

Hereford had still reason to complain:

"...Therefore we suspend the use of the said well and stone and under pain of greater excommunication forbid our people to visit the well and stone for purpose of worship. And we depute to each and all of you and firmly enjoin by virtue of holy obedience, to proclaim publicly in your churches and parishes that they are not to visit the place for such purposes.  
(84)

A king who sends out his ambassador to a city in Wales to call its inhabitants who are apparently indulging in an un-Christian, excessive and immoral lifestyle, seems a plausible undertaking when considering what has already been stated about the status of the church in mediaeval Wales and the relationship of state and clergy to the people. Therefore the hypothesis is not without foundation that the king had probably chosen this particular city to be punished as a deterrent because its inhabitants' behaviour may have been extreme but not essentially different from the conduct of other subjects within the kingdom.

This theory finds support in the fact that in the tale the king does not express surprise or astonishment about his subjects' behaviour. He also knows exactly when to send his ambassador who, in turn, was under no illusions as to what to expect.

It is very likely that behind this tale is a record of a whole city participating in what was probably a fertility ritual thus fulfilling their duty towards



an ancient deity which was fought against by early Christian leaders. Those rituals had their fixed dates within the year's calendar which were known to followers and enemies alike. The judging of this as wicked and immoral is clearly an interpretation from a later Christian point of view. One may conclude that the true severity of this religious conflict has still left its traces in stories like the one of Llangorse Lake.

#### II.7.1 Llyn - Y - Maes

The following tale can be seen as a short version of the story discussed above. However, it expands and clarifies the excesses in which the city's inhabitants indulged.

Llyn - y Maes -, is a beautiful lake near Treflyn, in Cardiganshire. Its name means the lake of the field, which, according to tradition, covers the ancient site of Tregaron. The people of this old place were very wicked, and went to excesses in all ways. Most of their time was spent in revelry, feasting, hideous orgies, and incessant forms of every kind of pleasure known in those days. Many times had the people been warned that the place would be destroyed by fire and flood if they did not cease their wickedness, instead of which they grew worse as the years passed. One night when the revelry was at its height, lightning caused a fire to break out, and a flood followed, completely overwhelming the place. Not a person escaped, for those who were not burnt were drowned." (85)

This is a short, impersonal version of the same legend type, showing clearly the clashing of the two different religious ethical points of view, the main purpose of the tale seems to be to bring across the

superiority of the Christian system, and there is no main character in the plot, it concentrates merely on the bad deeds and behaviour of the city's inhabitants. It becomes apparent that it was no easy task to persuade them to give up their:

"revelry, feasting, hideous orgies and ... every kind of pleasure known in those days."

Consequently the punishments must be extremely hard, in order to make them effective deterrents.

Let us return to the more extensive version of Llangorse Lake.

There is evidence of a clash of ethical concepts which stems from a much later period than the one found in, for example, the tale of Clerk Willin. The theory can be posed that we have here the overlapping of similar experiences that people in Wales had during different historic periods. The first time a pre-Christian pagan system was confronted with increasingly influential Christian values while, in the second instance, thoughts coming from the Reformation clashed with traditional Christian belief.

Accounts of this clash of moral and ethical values between different Christian denominations can, for example, be traced in connections with the "Merry Nights" (Noswyliau Llawen) and Saints' Fetes.

"...It was by no means unusual for a Welsh Gwyl Fabsant to bring together to a rural neighbourhood far more people than could readily be accommodated; and in Carnarvonshire a hurriedly improvised bed is to this day called 'gwely g'l'absant', as it were 'a bed (for the time) of a saint's festival.' Rightly or wrongly the belief lingers that these merry gatherings were characterised by no little immorality, which made the better class of people set their faces against them." (86)

Fairies and fairy dances were brought into connection with these noswyliau llawen.

"The time they [the fairies] were to be seen in their greatest glee was at night when the moon was full, when they celebrated a merry night [noswaith lawen]. At midnight to the minute, they might be seen rising out of the ground in every combe and valley, then, joining hands, they would form into circles and begin to sing and dance with might and main until the cock crew, when they would vanish." (87)

And it seems as if during later historic periods people were longing for those days gone by.

"The old people of former times used to find much pleasure and amusement in this district listening every moonlight night to the charming music of the fair family, and in looking at their dancing and their mirthful sports." (88)

## **II.7.2 The Child as the only Survivor of the Catastrophe**

The child who has miraculously been saved as the sole survivor of a catastrophe, or is rescued after being left to die as a newborn and grows up with his true identity not revealed until later on in adult life, is a motif known in great religions. For example, Moses was left in a rush basket and saved by the Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 1.6-2.10) and was



thus saved from the king of Egypt's attempt to kill all newborn baby boys (Exodus 1.15-1.17). Also Jesus was saved from Herod's persecution, the massacre of all children of the age of two years or less in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood through his escape to Egypt (Matthew 2.13 - 2.18). In Babylonian mythology King Sargon I was set adrift on the Euphrates in a rush basket. A gardener found and rescued him and brought him up as his own son. Ishtar, the goddess fell in love with the young 'gardener' and eventually made him ruler of the Kingdom. Thus in the end the King received what was rightly his. (89)

Such children have in common that they have been chosen to play a very important part later on in their life in the history of their people. This, however, is only being hinted at in the legend of "Llangorse Lake". We do not know anything of the later life of the 'wicked city's' only survivor. Nevertheless there is emphasis on the strong contrast between the humble cottage from which the baby originates and the king's palace, in which he eventually will grow up as the king's adopted son.

II.8 Kenfig Pool, near Porthcawl (the Celtic Germanic Concept of the Honour-Wrong-Revenge Cycle)

"A plebeian was in love with Earl Clare's daughter: she would not have him as he was not wealthy. He took to the highway, and watched the agent of the lord of the dominion coming towards the castle from collecting his lord's money. He killed him, took the money, and produced the coin, and the lady married him. A splendid banquet was held: the best men of the country were invited, and they made as merry as possible. On the second night the marriage was consummated, and when happiest one heard a voice: all ear one listened and caught the words, 'Vengeance comes, vengeance comes, vengeance comes,' three times. One asked, 'When?' 'In the ninth generation (ach),' said the voice. 'No reason for us to fear,' said the married pair; 'we shall be under the mould long before.' They lived on, however, and a goresgynnydd, that is to say, a descendant of the sixth direct generation, was born to them, also to the murdered man a goresgynnydd, who, seeing that the time fixed was come, visited Kenfig. This was a discreet youth of gentle manners, and he looked at the city and its splendour, and noted that nobody owned a furrow or a chamber there except the offspring of the murderer: he and his wife were still living. At cockcrow he heard a cry, 'Vengeance is come, is come, is come.' It is asked, 'On whom?' and answered, 'On him who murdered my father of the ninth ach.' He rises in terror: he goes towards the city; but there is nothing to see save a large lake with three chimney tops above the surface emitting smoke that formed a stinking [edafwr?](90) On the face of the waters the gloves of the murdered man float to the young man's feet: he picks them up, and sees on them the murdered man's name and arms; and he hears at dawn of day the sound of praise to God rendered by myriads joining in heavenly music. And so the story ends".(91)

In this tale there seems to be an inconsistency with regards to the time that has to pass between the deed and the avenge. The incident leading up to the curse is described in some detail. The local chieftain is depicted as a plebeian, who is in love with a noble lady. In this tale the female protagonist

has a part to play in the events since she refuses to marry him because he is not wealthy. The couple's attitude cannot only simply be disregarded as selfish according to a modern twentieth century point of view. This behaviour which disregards family and future generations weighs particularly heavily when one takes into consideration that a person in mediaeval Wales would probably have seen him/herself in the first instance as a member of a clan or family where all loyalties would lie. (92)

#### **II.8.1 The Corporative Personality**

In the following the ideological concept that inflicted injustice needs not necessarily be avenged upon the person who caused the damage himself, but may be inflicted on future generations of his family shall be discussed in some detail.

John Rhys states that it was often the case that conflicts had arisen between fairies and mortal people and he offers four possible explanations for this: (93)

- 1) The offender escapes the fairies' vengeance because "he entreated them very hard to let him go unpunished"



2) The fairies delay the vengeance to make it even more effective in involving more members of the family which has grown in numbers since the crime against the fairies was committed.

3) The fairies are not always in the position to harm the offender, who himself may be in possession of magic powers, which he has used to harm them in the first place.

4) If fairies are immortal there is no reason for them to hurry their vengeance, "and even in case the delay meant a century or two" in the mortals' time, to the fairies it could mean a lot less, due to different flow of time in fairy country.(94)

Behind the idea that it is possible to postpone revenge until further generations is the belief that guilt is transferred from one generation to the next and is still in force when the living seem totally disconnected from the long past events.

Here we have traces of a way of thought reaching so far back in historic times that its archaic idea of personality can hardly be understood by the present day individualistic mind. This phenomenon was described by Eugen Drewermann as 'corporative personality', meaning the unity between the individual and the collective, i.e. a group, tribe or

society.(95) The identification between members of the group reaches so far that individuals are interchangeable, the identification with the group is total and complete.

"Von daher ist die 'Korporativperson', die Verschmelzung von Ich und Wir im Groß-Ich der Gruppe, von vorneherein [...] eine mystische Vorstellungsform."(96)

One of the characteristics of the corporative personality is its timelessness, the fact that it is still part of the present day human mind, where it forms part of the subconscious as "Gruppendenken" (group thinking).(97) The individual human mind, conscious of the personal individuality has to be seen as a later development, the next evolutionary step of the human mind.(98)

The development process from group consciousness to the knowledge of the individual human mind has been described in detail by Ken Wilber.(99) Wilber mentions estimations according to which this change, the development of the 'rational self-consciousness ("das rationale Selbstbewußtsein") took place in the period between 1600 to 400 b.c.(100)

"Das Ego entwickelte sich während des 'Zusammenbruchs' der Mentalität der Gruppenzugehörigkeit."(101)

This fundamental change in human history has sometimes been explained through a revolution in life styles, since it coincided with the end of the bronze age and the beginning of the iron age.(102) Human life during this period became more complex

and complicated. Fixed and ancient traditions were no longer sufficient to understand and organise social life and economic relationships. Instinctive reactions were no longer adequate to make appropriate decisions to cope with structural changes. Behaviour and decisions had increasingly to be made on an individual basis appropriate to respective situations and circumstances which led to the development of self-consciousness, every human being became aware of his own unique individuality.

"So entstand im Menschen das Bewußtsein seiner selbst. Das Individuum wurde sich seines eigenen Denkens ... seiner selbst als Person bewußt" (103)

Based on these theories it may be possible to uncover the hitherto deepest layer - from an historic-evolutionary point of view - in the interpretation of those folk tales. According to Wilber present day human consciousness still remains at the end of this 'personal level' of consciousness. (104) Drewermann points out that while the 'corporative personality' represents an evolutionary step of the human mind which lies in the past and has generally been overcome by present-day human beings, it is by no means a phenomenon only of the past, but still relevant for the present day mind.

"...ganz im Gegenteil spielt ... [die Korporativpersönlichkeit] nach wie vor in der Psyche eines jeden Einzelnen und zu allen Zeiten offenbar die größte Rolle." (105).

These archaic levels inherent in every personality can constitute a danger inasmuch as regression into



these earlier stages of development bears the possibility of "Ichverlust" (loss of identity), "Depersonalisation" (depersonalisation), "Massenwahn" (mass hysteria), and "Psychose" (psychosis). (106)

Strong links and ties to the extended family, as in the tradition of the recent past of European history of which Wales is but one example, can well be interpreted as a reminiscent of this archaic sense of belonging and feeling of responsibility that reached far beyond the individual personality. The system worked in two ways. The individual would look upon him/herself as a link in the chain of generations. Within this flow of generations each person had a particular role to play, a function to fulfil. Individuals experienced themselves firstly as a member of a clan or family. This unit counted more than a single person. This mental concept bears the danger that it may well be used by an individual to hide behind the group and thus avoid responsibility for his own actions. However, the mythological way of thinking tried to safeguard against this with the knowledge that the clan as a whole would have to suffer retaliation for unavenged misdeeds.

Returning now to John Rhys' tale of the Kenfig Pool, there is a time gap in this story, which results in the introduction of a "Goresgynnydd" as a further protagonist. The text does not clearly explain

whether there is one "Goresgynnydd" who would have to be related to both families, or whether there are in fact two.

The "Goresgynnydd" travelled to the city when the time for vengeance had come. This must surely mean that not only had the memory of the event during the ancestor's wedding been kept alive, but that the need for revenge must have been strong enough to motivate the descendant to actually travel to the city. In the meantime this city had prospered and it seems that the murderer's family had become particularly wealthy. This is expressed in the metaphor:

"He looked at the city and its splendour, and noted that nobody owned a furrow or a chamber there except the offspring of the murderer: he and his wife were still living." (107)

This is probably a later insert which was undertaken at a time when the original version that punished the descendants so cruelly for the evil deeds of the ancestors contradicted the audience's sense of justice.

"At cock crow he heard a cry, 'Vengeance is come, is come is come'. It is asked, 'on whom?' and answered, 'on him who murdered my father of the ninth ach.'" (108)

As in other similar legends, it is not explained to whom those anonymous voices belong. However John Rhys mentions fairies who were believed to announce the death of human beings. (109)

In the Kenfig Pool tale as in the previously discussed story about Llangorse Lake a glove plays an important part. In the first tale it belongs to the visitor to the city, the king's ambassador and is the means of rescuing the sole survivor. In the second tale it shows the murdered man's name and coat of arms and seems to explain and justify the submerging of the city. In both cases the glove is used as a means of identification.

The end of the legend emphasises the mystery that is contained within this story. The impersonal, apparently omniscient voices who announced the coming disaster can be heard once again.

"and he hears at dawn of day the sound of praise to God rendered by myriads joining in heavenly music." (110)

This conclusion of the story sounds rather strange. The legend of Kenfig Pool is not actually a religious tale, and the events, tragic though they might be, do not really justify such a revelation of divine omnipotence. The image of God represented here is not the one portrayed in the New Testament but one of Revenge.

Again it seems that a collision of two moral systems has been uncovered.

Perhaps a god representing the idea of revenge and



war stands more in accordance with the original moral code contained in the tale. Ross supports the theory that in the time of the Roman invasion, due to different geographic and climatic conditions, the people in the North of Britain led a different lifestyle from their Southern neighbours, who lived mainly by agriculture. Their main purpose in life was to look after flocks and herds and

"their social values would be heroic, their main pursuits raiding into rival territories and driving away the cattle and horses, and their entertainment that appropriate to a barbarian pastoral milieu." (111)

According to the old Germanic/Celtic law and code of honour, inflicted injustice or damage means, first of all, loss of honour for the person who has suffered the wrong. This honour is a man's highest value, his most important possession.

This moral and ethic concept has probably been best transmitted in the German mediaeval epic poem the 'Nibelungenlied', written at around 1200. The core of the Nibelungenlied's plot has probably been based on the fifth respectively in the early sixth century history of the "Burgunds" (112) It is a tale about personal tragedy and revenge resulting in the destruction of two whole peoples.

Brunhild, a powerful maiden warrior has sworn to marry only a man who can withstand her in a fight. Gunther wants to woo her but is unsuccessful. Through the use of magic powers Siegfried, who himself has fallen in love with Gunther's sister, Kriemhild, takes Gunther's place without Brunhild noticing it and wins her

for Gunther. However the secret is revealed in public during an argument between the two queens Kriemhild and Brunhild. As a consequence Brunhild has to revenge the insult inflicted on her by Siegfried. She incites Hagen and Gunther to murder their brother-in-law. This deed must then be followed by Kriemhild's thirst to revenge her murdered husband. For this purpose she marries Etzel, king of the Huns. Eventually after many years, when the incidents leading to Siegfried's death seem long forgotten, Kriemhild invites her brothers into her new homeland where her merciless need for revenge initiates a terrible battle during which both peoples perish.

This plot is set in the mediaeval courtly milieu, where the Christian faith is the official religion and religious ceremonies are described extensively throughout the poem, priest and members of the clergy also appear frequently. Hagen and Gunther participate in the splendid mourning ceremonies for Siegfried whom they have murdered in a cowardly manner. From the Christian ethic's point of view their conduct can only be described as mendacious in the extreme. However, in the eyes of Gunther and Hagen the only thing that counts is that they are seen in public conforming to the behaviour code of the Christian court and they show no signs of remorse.

"Sic buten vaste ir lougen." (113)

In the characterisation of Kriemhild, probably the epic's main female character, this contradiction between the Christian and pre-Christian pagan elements and ideals is particularly emphasised. She follows consciously all the formal duties of a Christian. Apart from playing the major part in her

and Siegfried's wedding and at Siegfried's funeral, she seems to be permanently occupied with activities to do with her and her royal household attending church or preparing for mass.(114) However, during all this time she follows, without mercy, the path of revenge, and causes the final tragedy, the destruction of the Burgunds as well as the Huns.(115) Immediately after Siegfried's murder Kriemild calls for god's revenge:

"Nu lâz es got errechen noch sîner vriunde hant."(116)

Her instant reaction is not one of grief and mourning, the pain she feels that can be soothed through revenge is the insult which she has been exposed to through her husband's murder.(117) From the moment the poem was discovered, it has been a point of discussion, how far those Christian elements, plentiful though they may be, contribute to the basic statements contained in the 'Nibelungenlied', or whether they have been merely placed as a thin layer on the surface, barely covering the pagan roots and not playing a real part in the sequence of events.

The discussion how the obviously non-Christian material contained in the poem should be explained and interpreted started very soon after the first manuscript of the poem was found in 1755. Through comparisons with the Iliad it had become apparent 'Nibelungenlied' had not been created by a single



author but that it contained within itself many different traditions.(118) The language in which the epic is written belongs to the early thirteenth century and some scholars believed that, apart from the language, there were no other aspects connecting the 'Nibelungenlied' to mediaeval times, during which it was supposedly not written but merely copied.(119) It was recognised that the material of the epic reached back to a time before the reign of 'Charles le Magne'.

Thanks to the positivistic movement it was recognised that, while the basic material of the 'Nibelungenlied' stemmed from ancient times, the text in its present form must have undergone serious changes when it was "rewritten around 1100", regarding form and content.(120) While acknowledging the presence of pagan, pre-Christian elements it became apparent that it was impossible to understand certain passages of the 'Nibelungenlied' without taking into consideration the Christian background of courtly culture,(121) like, for example, the passages about the adaption of the epic to the mediaeval wooing customs. It became obvious that the author of the 'Nibelungenlied' had been influenced by two very different traditions. The courtly-Christian component stood beside pre-Christian thoughts and ideas. The question was raised as to how and why those two different and very often contradicting traditions

had been combined in one work.

One of the answers offered an historic interpretation rooted in the political and religious crisis at the beginning of the thirteenth century, caused not to a small extent through the death of Heinrich VI.(122) This would mean that the 'Nibelungenlied' reflects as a work of its time the feelings of great change and insecurity prevalent in its epoch. However, the debate whether the 'Nibelungenlied' is a thoroughly Christian poem,(123) or whether the Christian elements have merely been placed on the surface of what is basically a pagan epic,(124) remains unresolved to date.

There exists a consensus with regards to the Celtic-Germanic code of honour. The loss of this honour is the worst that can happen to a heroic person. It means not only loss of his own but the whole clan's honour. To restore it is the highest duty of not only the person concerned but his whole kinship. The only way this can be achieved is by taking revenge. And if this is not possible on the offender himself, then revenge may be taken on any member of his family. According to the heroic ideology, stealing and even murdering do not affect a person's honour - as long as they remain undiscovered, and therefore unavenged. Once revenge has taken place, it will in turn be perceived by the original offen-

der as an attack on his honour which again calls for vengeance. Nothing worse could happen to a heroic protagonist than losing his 'êre' which could only be restored by revenging the inflicted 'leid'." (125) Only the Christian religion introduced the idea of forgiveness and was thus able to break the chain 'honour - wrong - revenge'. (126)

The fact that this archaic moral concept contradicted the beliefs and ideas of a Christian narrator and audience explains the later insertions into the tales discussed as, for example, the one about Kenfig Pool stating that the original wrongdoer is still alive at the time when vengeance strikes.

After this excursion the pathos at the end of the 'Kenfig Pool' story is now understandable. In the tale's present version it sounds exaggerated and out of place. But let us propound the theory that at the root of this legend was an ancient heroic saga, which told the story of a hero who had been wronged and lost his honour, which was eventually restored in the only possible manner, by taking revenge. Dealing with the highest value of the heroic ideology, deities will certainly have been involved in this saga, influencing the events in favour of their respective protégés. The original tale which lies beneath the 'Kenfig-Pool legend' has left its traces in a tale that shows irregularities on the surface



because it covers much deeper-reaching clashes of spiritual concepts.

Thus the story's pathos is well justified by the heroic saga is concealed behind it. Its old world of thought and ideas has sunk beneath the Christian ethics just as the city has submerged under the water.

The religious elements seem to be imposed because in its present form they have been forced upon the story which has been Christianised only on its surface. The pagan plot remains intact to a high degree. The contradictions which thereby necessarily arose had to be accepted. (127)

II.9 Conclusion

T.G. Jones classifies the tales discussed here in two different categories in his grouping of water legends:

"Some of them [...] are traditionally connected with fairies and exhibit features which probably connect them with lake-dwellings. Another type of legend involves simple retribution, sometimes with an ethical motive, probably a later development." (128)

A further motif which these tales have in common is that the sunken cities and dwellings always seem to be intact, waiting to be reawakened, sometimes showing traces of a previous life. (129)

At the beginning of the chapter we set out to try and establish a relationship between the 'Lady of the Lake' tales and various examples of 'Inundation Stories'. To begin with, a connection was made between the tales discussed in chapter I - fairy brides - and inundation stories. When looking at the female protagonist of the tales discussed in chapter I, it is not always possible to distinguish between mermaids, white ladies and the Lady of the Lake. In the tales about 'Grassi', one story told about the formation of 'Glasfryn' as a result of Grassi forgetting to close a well.

This chapter has looked at some further tales where forgetting to close a well caused the flooding of

the surrounding areas and the subsequent formation of a lake. It was discovered that inherent in many of those tales was a moral motive, that the lake was formed as a result of moral blunders. This 'morally false' behaviour was identified as being part of an ethic system that contradicted Christian belief. The inundation stories made a dualistic concept evident. Thereby it was often not obvious on which side of the dualism the narrator's point of view had to be placed. Evaluation of the ethical concepts inherent in those tales from the viewpoint of, for example, mediaeval narrators and audiences presented a particular problem when investigating the Lough Sheelin tale, where the guardian of the well motif and the well taboo for women were seen to be overlapping.

In the guardian of the well tales as well as the Lady of the Lake cycle the female characters were identified with the element 'water'. The complex semantic content of this symbol can perhaps be summarised by interpreting water as the primeval element, the origin of life, something mysterious and hidden, subconscious in psychological terms. The semantic content of the symbol 'water' remains even in those inundation stories which do not have a woman at their centre, like, for example in the case of 'Morgan'.



Using the Llyn Tegid story as an example, various traditions were looked at in connection to one particular lake, all of which revealed this dualistic concept whereby the water was always seen as the dark, mysterious aspect which threatened human settlements and culture.

The ambiguous relationship contained in the tales regarding values like 'good' and 'bad' was demonstrated by taking a closer look at the tale about Llyncllys Pool near Oswestry and then at the formation of Llangorse Lake tale. The figure of 'Clerk Willin' led to an historic interpretation of the tale in the course of which the church's attitude towards and realisation of the idea of celibacy was highlighted. Again it was obvious that the church's fight to enforce its idea of celibacy was paralleled by the struggle to impose its own values on a population which still leaned towards early pre-Christian ways of life and worship.

The interpretation of the Kenfig Pool story and its comparison with a Mediaeval German heroic epic allowed a deeper insight into the honour code that underlay pre-Christian pagan mythology which could be assumed to be at the roots of tales like the one about Kenfig Pool. It was seen that this archaic thought material had been directly transferred into an interpretation of the Christian god as a god who

seeks revenge for the wrong and immoral way of life of his followers. It can safely be stated that one common element in all these legend types is the underlying conflict between Christian principles and pre-Christian pagan religions. The narrator's point of view is often an ambiguous one. With regards to the arising conflict this can be interpreted not only as a historical one but also from a psychological point of view, as inherent in people living in the historic epochs during which those stories were formed. It could be established that in particular in Wales during the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages a fight had to be fought on the part of the official clergy against pagan customs in connection with water and fertility rites. Later generations might have interpreted sunken cities and the life styles they symbolised not so much from a religious point of view. The fascination that generations felt for tales about sunken cities might stem from seeing sunken cities as the embodiment of secret, mysterious and long-forgotten values. The ambiguous contemplation of the element 'water' whether in connection with a female main character or not, always becomes apparent. (130) For this, again, a historic explanation was offered.

"There is considerable additional evidence to show the importance of water in the Celtic religion, which was generally performed in an outdoor setting. The sacred groves were the temples of the Celts and the rivers, streams, pools and springs were the focus of deity worship....In Britain no remains of Celtic temples at river sources have been

found...However river names remain, which contain or were derived from Celtic deity names." (131)

Bord points out that the name 'Dee' comes from 'Deva', the goddess 'the holy one', an alternative name being 'Aerfen' 'the goddess of war'. (132)

However, pure historic interest could not sufficiently explain the centuries-long tradition of those tales. An up-to-date meaning and interest had to be assumed to maintain those tales from generation to generation. The theory that these tales might combine archaic historic experiences of the human race with hopes for a better future would be supported by the deep psychological approach as was developed by Eugen Drewermann.

"Nur was im Wesen des Menschen grundgelegt ist, läßt sich ersehen und erwarten, und die Gestalten zukünftiger Hoffnung sind [nur] die symbolischen Transformationen archetypischer Erinnerung." (133)

The question had to be posed whether those tales might be official messages, threats targeted at the people who might pursue life in the old and pagan way. An immediate problem here would be to find an answer to the question why would people keep those old traditions and tales alive for future generations if all they told was the story of their ancestor's great defeat?

Many tales seem to assume that in cities and palaces under the water life continues, this is particularly



true of the Lady of the Lake cycle. We have also seen that in order to arrive in fairy country it is necessary to cross borders which often stand in connection with water. It can also be established that life in these other realms is a good one, a life of plenty, joy and hospitable inhabitants. Let us assume that those tales were told in order to carry a comforting message, the reassurance that the inundated way of life continues to exist. At the same time, it was not possible to deny the truth, the fact that those cities with their indulging lifestyles had to give way to the pressures exerted by them and be submerged because they were no longer able to exist in the open.

The story cycle of the Lady of the Lake constitutes one account where the inhabitants of the realm under the water and above interact and have to live through the conflicts caused by their mutual attraction.

Both the inundation and the Lady of the Lake story cycles show that the life style under the water with festivities and all earthly pleasures also seems to result in larger material wealth. The connection to fairy brides guarantees richer meadows and harvests, special cows giving plenty of milk. The belief in the powers of fertility connected with water, and often with the moon, were widespread throughout

Wales and remained alive until very recent times, like for example in tales regarding "Ffynnon Loer" ('The Well of the Moon'). (134)

"...This interesting and attractive tarn lies in a vast hollow beneath the summit of Carnedd Ddafydd ... The surroundings of this lake are imposing, and its situation is such that when the moon is full it shines directly into the crater-like recess in which it rests. Years ago it was held in great veneration, and on May Day Eve - one of the three 'spirit nights' - it was customary for men and maids from the mountain farms to ascend to the lake, and at sunrise dancing took place on the shore. Doubtless this was a survival of some pagan rite connected with the moon..." (135)

There must have been a great attraction about those ancient customs, in order for them to withstand centuries-long attempts from church officials to abolish them. At first it springs to mind that all descriptions of these ancient ways dealt with in the thesis so far seem to bear witness to a very gregarious life-affirming attitude, which expresses itself in an apparently never-ending row of festivities, which were looked upon by Christendom in a negative way and denounced as immoral orgies.

The power which affirms life is at the same time the power which gives life. The suppression of this power as happens in both of the story cycles discussed here, has devastating consequences for human kind. At the same time the tales express the knowledge and the hope, that this suppression can only be successful for a period of time, after which

it will rise again. Here is where the tales differ, the inundation tales contain a warning: Forgetting to control the force of water for one moment means the release of all its strength, it turns into a destructive force, that disturbs or even destroys human civilisation. The Lady of the Lake tales tell of a gentler encounter between a member of the human kind and this hidden, subconscious realm. However in these tales too, the Lady's enriching and wealth-bringing characteristics have effect only as long as man is prepared to let it exist in its own right next to him, and while he adheres to certain rules. It was important to look at the inundation Story Cycle to understand the Lady of the Lake, who she is, from where she has her origins, why she came to live in the lake, what her re-appearance and eventual disappearance back into the lake really mean to her mortal human husband, who, in this case, represents human society dominated by forces who denied the archaic goddess and all the values and principles she stood for.



II.10     FOOTNOTES

- (1) Rhys, John, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) p.401.
- (2) See for example Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.402ff. and Jones T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom (London, 1930) pp.97ff. In his chapter "Inundations, Lakes and Wells" he comes to the conclusion:
- "Stories of the overflowing by the sea of large tracts of land of what is now the coast of Wales are known from north to south." (p.97)
- (3) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.143.
- (4) See to this ibid. chapter III "Triumphs of the Water World" and Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs the chapter "Inundations, Lakes and Wells", pp.97 - 118.
- (5) Trevelyan, Marie, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales (East Ardsley, Yorkshire, 1973) pp.10ff.
- (6) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.101f.
- (7) Markale, Jean, Women of the Celts (London, 1975) p.43.
- (8) Ibid.
- (9) Ibid. p.44.
- (10) Ibid.
- (11) See Berlitz, Charles, The Mystery of Atlantis (London, 1976) p.136.
- (12) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales pp.10f.
- (13) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.75.
- (14) Ibid. p.76.
- (15) Ibid. This story is also told about Nefyn and at Llandrillo-yn-Rhos.
- (16) Ibid. p.199. For more mermaid tales see also ibid. pp.75ff.
- (17) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.162.
- (18) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.163ff.

- (19) Ibid. p.164.  
 Remarkable is that in relation to the mermaid the plural 'sweethearts' is used. Is this a coincidence, does it refer to the whole of the mermaid's family or is it a hint towards non-monogamous relationships of mermaids?
- (20) Ibid.
- (21) Ibid. pp.165f.
- (22) Ibid. pp.162ff.
- (23) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.76.
- (24) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.117.
- (25) For a more extensive version of the tale see ibid. pp.117-124.
- (26) Ibid. p.124.
- (27) Bord, Colin and Janet, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland (London, 1985) pp.115f.
- (28) Regarding the 'Grassi' tale see also Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.108.
- (29) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.368.
- (30) Ibid. p.369.
- (31) Ibid.
- (32) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales p.12.
- (33) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.370.
- (34) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.106.
- (35) Ibid.
- (36) Ibid. p.107. In Welsh law the condemnation of a woman to be a washer woman could be a punishment and was seen as a disgrace to the kindred. (Richards, Melville, The Laws of Hywel Dda (Liverpool, 1954) p.85.
- (37) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.108. For detailed references regarding supposedly submerged land in Wales, for example around Cardigan Bay and Rhyl, see also ibid. p.109.

- (38) Ibid. p.106.
- (39) Ibid. p.108.
- (40) See Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.425-427.
- (41) Ibid. p.439.
- (42) Ibid. p.394.
- (43) Ibid. p.425.
- (44) Ibid. pp.389ff.
- (45) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.107.
- (46) Jones, Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.109ff.
- (47) Ibid. pp.110f.
- (48) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.245.
- (49) Ibid. p.394.
- (50) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.117.
- (51) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.427f.
- (52) For a comprehensive compilation of the 'Guardian of the Well' cycle see for example *ibid.* the chapter "Folklore of the Wells", pp.354-400.
- (53) Ibid. p.376.
- (54) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales p.13. Bala lake is also supposed to having its depth ascertained. It was said, that it was bottomless (*ibid.* p.13).
- (55) Jones, T.G. Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.97.
- (56) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.373.
- (57) Ibid. pp.373f.
- (58) Ibid. p.375.  
 A character called 'Morgan' stands in connection with this type of legends. There seems to be some confusion with regards to the sex of 'Morgan' with it being a Welsh, exclusively male name on one side and on the other hand the Arthurian Tradition telling about Morgain le Fay, described as a "wicked



person". It was also a lady called 'Morgan' belonging to the same "fairy kind", who took King Arthur to the Isle of Avallon. It is likely that both ladies are expressions of two tendencies of what originally must have been one single mythological figure.

In Wales the negative aspect of Morgan seems to have survived in all instances. "Morgan is thought of as a bad one." (ibid., p.372) Children were warned to take care not to be taken away by him into the lake. There is a clear parallel to the widespread belief that fairies would steal children and take them with them into their country. John Rhys supported the theory that in an earlier phase of this story's development Morgan was a feminine figure.

"I do not remember coming across a feminine Morgan in Welsh but the presumption is that it did exist." (ibid, p.373)

(59) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx, 1983, p.408.

(60) Ibid. pp.408ff.

(61) Other 'vengeance' stories where the submerging of human dwellings is caused by excessive living are for example the Llyncllys legend in Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.413 or the story of the 'wicked prince named Helig ab Glannawc or Glannog' (ibid. pp.414f). In those tales it is again a harper who solely survives the catastrophe.

(62) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.415.

(63) Ibid. p.419.

(64) Ibid. p.419.

See also to this ibid. p.376, where the name of the well whose overflowing caused the formation of Llyn Tegid is given as 'Ffynnon Gŵer', 'cower's well'.

(65) Ibid. pp.410ff.

(66) Morfydd E. Owen states that for a king the misuse of his wife was the greatest disgrace that could come to him. (Owen, Morfydd, E., "Shame and Reparation", Jenkins, Dafydd and Owen, Morfydd, E. (ed.), The Welsh Law of Women (Cardiff, 1980) p.47.

(67) Heussi, Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte (Tübingen, 1979).

(68) See ibid. p.106, regarding the synod of Elvira in southern Spain in 306 A.D.

(69) See to this ibid. p.26.

(70) Ibid. p.176.

(71) Ibid. p.177.

'The Anglo-Saxon culture and the church declined in the ninth century due to the inroad of the Danes. But Alfred the Great (871-901) put an end to the political crisis and re-established the Anglo-Saxon culture. In the late Carolingian times the English church was the only one in the west which had not sunk into barbarism.'

(72) Ibid. pp.189f.

(73) Ibid. pp.189f.

'The synod from 1074 confirmed again the old rules of celibacy and tried to force their realisation through the strongest means. The official acts of married priests were - in contradiction to the old church law - declared invalid, lay people were incited to revolt.'

(74) Williams, The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation p.41.

The clergy was also warned against

"those seekers of vain dreams of prophecies who bolstered up false pride by their pagan tales of a glorious Trojan descent of the British." (ibid. p.41)

This was apparently to give a warning to the bards.

(75) Heussi, Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte p.106.

'Real celibacy, i.e. the general prohibition for priests to marry was only achieved in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries.'

(76) For attempts to abolish celibacy even in the nineteenth century see, for example, ibid. p.439.

(77) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.412.

(78) Ibid. p.412.

(79) Ibid. p.412.

The original spelling has been kept in this quote.

(80) Ibid. p.413.

(81) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales pp.10f.



(82) Even if the moral motive is by far the strongest one in this and similar stories, lack of generosity towards hosts or lack of compassion for his poor subjects on the side of the king are also frequently mentioned as the offence resulting in the submerging of the city. See for example Bord, Sacred Waters Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.106.

(83) Bord, Sacred Waters Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.19.

(84) Ibid. p.32.

(85) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales pp.11f.

(86) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.76.

(87) Ibid. p.85.

(88) Ibid. p.86.

(89) Bayley, The lost Language of Symbolism p.179.

(90) Rhys refers to the Welsh version, however cannot give an exact meaning of this word 'edafwr', which, as he states, is unknown in Welsh. (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.404).

(91) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.403f. See also Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.98f. A version of this tale where the descendants have to pay for their ancestor's guilt can also be found in Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales p.11.

(92) See to this Owen, "Shame and Reparation: Women's Place in the Kin", Jenkins/Owen, The Welsh Law of Women, pp.40ff. For an interpretation see also Markale, Women of the Celts pp.30ff.

(93) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.423f.

(94) Ibid. pp.423f.

(95) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese (Olten, 1985) pp.271ff.

(96) Ibid. p.277.

'Thus the 'corporative personality' the amalgamation of 'I' and 'We' into the large Ego of the group is a mystical way of thought'



(97) Ibid. p.280.

(98) Ibid. p.281.

(99) Wilber, Ken, Halbzeit der Evolution. Der Mensch auf dem Weg vom animalischen zum kosmischen Bewußtsein. (Bern - München - Wien, 1984).

(100) Ibid. p.228.

(101) Ibid. p.229.

'The ego developed during the period when the mentality of belonging to the group/clan broke down.'

(102) Ibid. p.228.

(103) Ibid. p.230.

'Thus, within man the self consciousness arose. The individual became conscious of his own thoughts and of himself as a person.'

(104) Ibid. pp.24ff.

(105) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.282.

'..quite the opposite, as ever [the corporate personality] plays obviously an important part in the psyche of every single person.'

(106) Ibid. p.282.

(107) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.404.

(108) Ibid. p.404.

(109) Ibid. p.453.

There is a tale where vengeance taken out on the ancestors of the 'wrongdoer' explicitly comes from fairies, and where the original wrong was committed against fairies. This particular tale combines motifs like for example a sorcerer in a cave, and time passing differently in fairy country. For further details see *ibid.* pp.184ff.

(110) Ibid. p.404.

(111) Ross, Anne, Pagan Celtic Britain. Studies in Iconography and Tradition, (London - New York, 1967) p.355.

(112) Frenzel, H.A. and E., Daten deutscher Dichtung. Chronologischer Abriß der deutschen Literaturgeschichte. Band I Von den Anfängen bis zum

Jungen Deutschland (München, 1982) p.38.

(113) De Boor, Helmut (ed.), Das Nibelungenlied nach der Ausgabe von Karl Bartsch (Wiesbaden, 1972). Here and in the following paragraphs, when quoting De Boor, the text passages will be given in verse numbers, the traditional way of quoting the Nibelungenlied.

(114) Ibid. (1102f), (1103/3), (1218/1), (1247/1), (1249/4).

(115) Nagel, Bert, Das Nibelungenlied. Stoff - Form - Ethos (Frankfurt/Main, 1965) pp.217ff.

(116) De Boor, Das Nibelungenlied, (1046/2)

'Now let god take revenge through his friends' hands'

(117) Nagel, Bert, "Heidnisches und Christliches im Nibelungenlied", Ruperto - Carola vol.24 1958, p.76. Here we have also one of the semantic inconsistencies which helped to uncover different ethical concepts contained in the poem. Kriemhild's reaction to her husband's death does not seem to fit to the relationship described before between Siegfried and Kriemhild, who were introduced as the ideal 'Minne' couple.

(118) Falk, Walter, Das Nibelungenlied in seiner Epoche. Revision eines romantischen Mythos (Heidelberg, 1974) pp.23f.

(119) Schlegel, August Wilhelm, "Geschichte der romantischen Literatur", Lohner, Edgar (ed.), Kritische Schriften und Briefe vol.4, 1965 p.107.

(120) De Boor, Das Nibelungenlied p.VIII.

(121) Heusler, Andreas, Nibelungensage und Nibelungenlied. Die Stoffgeschichte des deutschen Heldenepos (Dortmund, 1955) pp.89f.

(122) Falk, Das Nibelungenlied in seiner Epoche pp.29f.

(123) Kuhn, Hans, "Heldensage und Christentum", Hauck, Karl (ed.), Zur germanisch-deutschen Heldensage (Darmstadt, 1961) p.419.

(124) Nagel, Das Nibelungenlied p.209.

(125) Nagel, Heidnisches und Christliches im Nibelungenlied p.76.

(126) Ibid.



(127) Regarding the 'vengeance' motive see also Jones, T.G. Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs p.980. The Welsh legal system tried to avoid the need for vengeance, by assuring that the injured party received the appropriate 'sarhaed' (reparation). The amount of this sarhaed depended on social status and gender of the victim. For a detailed explanation of the Welsh insult - blemish - revenge/reparation concept see Owen, Shame and Reparation: Women's Place in the Kin p.47:

"Insult (sarhaed) implies blemish (mefl) and sarhaed to kin as well as individual, such blemish (mefl) can only be removed by sarhaed (reparation) or otherwise vengeance (dial) will arise; once reparation is made by payment of sarhaed, shame (gwaradwydd) is removed, and the kin is shamefree (diwaradwydd)." (Ibid.)

(128) Jones, T.G. Welsh Folklore and Folk Customs pp.101f.

(129) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.416f.

(130) The healing and bewitching powers are for example particularly close in the story of "Ffynon Elian", a spring between Abergele and Llandudno.

"People came there apparently from all parts of Wales, under the pretence of drinking the healing waters. In reality, they came to obtain the waters for bewitching their enemies". (Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales p.15.)

(131) Bord, Sacred Waters Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.5.

(132) Ibid.

(133) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.249.

'Only what is already embedded within the human race's nature can be longed for and expected, and the form of hopes for the future are only symbolic transformations of archetypic memories.'

(134) This particular connection of the Lady of the Lake and the moon will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

(135) Ward, Frank, The Lakes of Wales. A Guide for Anglers and Others. The Fishing Scenery, Legends and Place Names with Some Mention of River Fishing (London, 1931) pp. 124f.



III THE LADY OF LLYN Y FAN FACH

III.1 THE STORY

This particular tale has been chosen for a detailed investigation since it is the most complete of its kind, and the one with which shorter ones can most readily be compared. The Llyn y Fan Fach story was first published in English in 1861 as the introduction to The Physicians of Myddfai, Meddygon Myddfai.(1) The tale had originally been written down by William Rees from Llanymddyfri. This transcription had been based on the oral records of three informants from Myddfai.(2) In the following the tale has been quoted in English according to John Rhys.(3). Slight alterations with regards to the punctuation have been made.(4)

1       When the eventful struggle made by the Princes of  
south Wales to preserve the independence of their  
country was drawing to its close in the twelfth  
century, there lived at Blaensawdde near Llanddeu-  
5       sant, Carmathenshire, a widowed woman, the relict  
of a farmer who had fallen in those disastrous  
troubles.

The widow had an only son to bring up, but Provi-  
dence smiled upon her, and despite her forlorn  
10       condition, her live stock had so increased in  
course of time, that she could not well depasture  
them upon her farm, so she sent a portion of her  
cattle to graze on the adjoining Black Mountain,  
and their most favourite place was near the small  
15       lake called Llyn y Fan Fach, on the north-western  
side of the Carmathenshire Fans.

The son grew up to manhood, and was generally sent  
by his mother to look after the cattle on the  
mountain. One day, in his peregrinations along  
20       the margin of the lake, to his great astonishment,  
he beheld, sitting on the unruffled surface of the  
water, a lady; one of the most beautiful creatures  
that mortal eyes ever beheld, her hair flowed

25 gracefully in ringlets over her shoulders, the  
tresses of which she arranged with a comb, whilst  
the glassy surface of her watery couch served for  
the purpose of a mirror, reflecting back her own  
image. Suddenly she beheld the young man standing  
30 on the brink of the lake, with his eyes riveted on  
her, and unconsciously offering to herself the  
provision of barley bread and cheese with which he  
had been provided when he left his home.

Bewildered by a feeling of love and admiration for  
the object before him, he continued to hold out  
35 his hand towards the lady, who imperceptibly  
glided near to him, but gently refused the offer  
of his provisions. He attempted to touch her, but  
she eluded his grasp, saying -

40 Cras dy fara;  
Nid hawdd fy mala.

Hard baked is thy bread!  
'Tis not easy to catch me;

45 and immediately dived under the water and disap-  
peared, leaving the love-stricken youth to return  
home, a prey to disappointment and regret that he  
had been unable to make further acquaintance with  
one, in comparison with whom the whole of the fair  
maidens of Llanddeusant and Myddfai whom he had  
ever seen were as nothing.

50 On his return home the young man communicated to  
his mother the extraordinary vision he had beheld.  
She advised him to take some unbaked dough or  
'toes' the next time in his pocket, as there must  
have been some spell connected with the hard-baked  
55 bread, or 'Bara cras', which prevented his catch-  
ing the lady.

60 Next morning before the sun had gilded with its  
rays the peaks of the Fans, the young man was at  
the lake, not for the purpose of looking after his  
mother's cattle, but seeking for the same enchant-  
ing vision he had witnessed the day before; but  
all in vain did he anxiously strain his eyeballs  
and glance over the surface of the lake, as only  
the ripples occasioned by a stiff breeze met his  
65 view, and a cloud hung heavily on the summit of  
the Fan, which imparted an additional gloom to his  
already distracted mind.

70 Hours passed on, the wind was hushed, and the  
clouds which had enveloped the mountain had va-  
nished into thin air before the powerful beams of  
the sun, when the youth was startled by seeing  
some of his mother's cattle on the precipitous  
side of the acclivity, nearly on the opposite side  
of the lake. His duty impelled him to attempt to



75 rescue them from their perilous position, for  
which purpose he was hastening away, when, to his  
inexpressible delight, the object of his search  
again appeared to him as before, and seemed much  
more beautiful than when he first beheld her. His  
80 hand was again held out to her, full of unbaked  
bread, which he offered with an urgent proffer of  
his heart also, and vows of eternal attachment.  
All of which were refused by her, saying -

Llaith dy fara!  
85 Ti ni fynna'

Unbaked is thy bread!  
I will not have thee.

But the smiles that played upon her features as  
the lady vanished beneath the waters raised within  
90 the young man a hope that forbade him to despair  
by her refusal of him, and the recollection of  
which cheered him on his way home. His aged  
parent was made acquainted with his ill-success,  
and she suggested that his bread should next time  
95 be but slightly baked, as most likely to please  
the mysterious being of whom he had become en-  
amoured.

Impelled by an irresistible feeling, the youth  
left his mother's house early next morning, and  
100 with rapid steps he passed over the mountain. He  
was soon near the margin of the lake, and with all  
the impatience of an ardent lover did he wait with  
a feverish anxiety for the reappearance of the  
mysterious lady.

105 The sheep and goats browsed on the precipitous  
sides of the Fan; the cattle strayed amongst the  
rocks and large stones, some of which were occa-  
sionally loosened from their beds and suddenly  
rolled down into the lake; rain and sunshine alike  
110 came and passed away; but all were unheeded by the  
youth, so wrapped up was he in looking for the  
appearance of the lady.

The freshness of the early morning had disappeared  
before the sultry rays of the noon-day sun, which  
115 in its turn was fast verging towards the west as  
the evening was dying away and making room for the  
shades of night, and hope had wellnigh abated of  
beholding once more the Lady of the Lake. The  
young man cast a sad and last farewell look over  
120 the waters, and, to his astonishment, beheld sev-  
eral cows walking along its surface. The sight of  
these animals caused hope to revive that they  
would be followed by another object far more  
pleasing; nor was he disappointed, for the maiden  
125 reappeared, and to his enraptured sight, even  
lovelier than ever. She approached the land, and



he rushed to meet her in the water. A smile encouraged him to seize her hand; neither did she refuse the moderately baked bread he offered her; 130 and after some persuasion she consented to become his bride, on condition that they should only live together until she received from him three blows without a cause,

Tri ergyd diachos.  
135 Three causeless blows.

And if he ever should happen to strike her three such blows she would leave him for ever. To such conditions he readily consented, and would have consented to any other stipulation, had it been 140 proposed, as he was only intent on then securing such a lovely creature for his wife.

Thus the Lady of the Lake engaged to become the young man's wife, and having loosed her hand for a moment she darted away and dived into the lake. 145 His chagrin and grief were such that he determined to cast himself headlong into the deepest water, so as to end his life in the element that had contained in its unfathomed depths the only one for whom he cared to live on earth. As he was on 150 the point of committing this rash act, there emerged out of the lake two most beautiful ladies, accompanied by a hoary-headed man of noble mien and extraordinary stature, but having otherwise all the force and strength of youth. This man 155 addressed the almost bewildered youth in accents calculated to soothe his troubled mind, saying that as he proposed to marry one of his daughters, he consented to the union, provided the young man could distinguish which of the two ladies before 160 him was the object of his affections. This was no easy task, as the maidens were such perfect counterparts of each other that it seemed quite impossible for him to choose his bride, and if perchance he fixed upon the wrong one all would be 165 for ever lost.

Whilst the young man narrowly scanned the two ladies, he could not perceive the least difference betwixt the two, and was almost giving up the task in despair, when one of them thrust her foot a 170 slight degree forward. The motion, simple as it was, did not escape the observation of the youth, and he discovered a trifling variation in the mode with which their sandals were tied. This at once put an end to the dilemma, for he, who had on 175 previous occasions been so taken up with the general appearance of the Lady of the Lake, had also noticed the beauty of her feet and ankles, and on now recognising the peculiarity of her shoe-tie he boldly took hold of her hand.



180 "Thou hast chosen rightly", said her father; "be  
to her a kind and faithful husband, and I will  
give her, as a dowry, as many sheep, cattle,  
goats, and horses as she can count of each without  
185 heaving or drawing in her breath. But remember,  
that if you prove unkind to her at any time, and  
strike her three times without a cause, she shall  
return to me, and shall bring all her stock back  
with her."

Such was the verbal marriage settlement, to which  
190 the young man gladly assented, and his bride was  
desired to count the number of sheep she was to  
have. She immediately adopted the mode of count-  
ing by fives, thus: -One, two, three, four five -  
One, two, three, four, five; as many times as  
195 possible in rapid succession, till her breath was  
exhausted. The same process of reckoning had to  
determine the number of goats, cattle and horses  
respectively; and in an instant the full number of  
each came out of the lake when called upon by the  
200 father.

The young couple were then married, by what cerem-  
ony was not stated, and afterwards went to reside  
at a farm called Esgair Llaethdy, somewhat more  
than a mile from the village of Myddfai, where  
205 they lived in prosperity and happiness for several  
years, and became the parents of three sons, who  
were beautiful children.

Once upon a time there was a christening to take  
place in the neighbourhood, to which the parents  
210 were specially invited. When the day arrived the  
wife appeared very reluctant to attend the christ-  
ening, alleging that the distance was too great  
for her to walk. Her husband told her to fetch  
one of the horses which were grazing in an adjoin-  
215 ing field. "I will," said she, "if you will  
bring me my gloves which I left in our house." He  
went to the house and returned with the gloves,  
and finding that she had not gone for the horse  
jocularly slapped her shoulder with one of them,  
220 saying, "go! go!" (dos, dos), when she reminded  
him of the understanding upon which she consented  
to marry him:- That he was not to strike her  
without a cause; and warned him to be more cau-  
tious for the future.

225 On another occasion, when they were together at a  
wedding, in the midst of the mirth and hilarity of  
the assembled guests, who had gathered together  
from all the surrounding country, she burst into  
tears and sobbed most piteously. Her husband  
230 touched her on her shoulder and inquired the cause  
of her weeping: she said, "Now people are entering  
into trouble, and your troubles are likely to  
commence, as you have the second time stricken me



without a cause."

235 Years passed on, and their children had grown up,  
and were particularly clever young men. In the  
midst of so many worldly blessings at home the  
husband almost forgot that there remained only one  
causeless blow to be given to destroy the whole of  
240 his prosperity. Still he was watchful lest any  
trivial occurrence should take place which his  
wife must regard as a breach of their marriage  
contract. She told him as her affection for him  
was unabated, to be careful that he would not,  
245 through some inadvertence, give the last and only  
blow, which, by an unalterable destiny, over which  
she had no control, would separate them for ever.

It, however, so happened that one day they were  
together at a funeral, where, in the midst of the  
250 mourning and grief at the house of the deceased,  
she appeared in the highest and gayest spirits,  
and indulged in immoderate fits of laughter, which  
so shocked her husband that he touched her,  
saying, "Hush! hush! don't laugh." She said that  
255 she laughed "because people when they die go out  
of trouble," and, rising up, she went out of the  
house, saying, "The last blow has been struck, our  
marriage contract is broken, and at an end! Fare-  
well!" Then she started off towards Esgair  
260 Llaethdy, where she called her cattle and other  
stock together, each by name. The cattle she  
called thus:-

Mu wlfrech, Moelfrech,  
Mu olfrech, Gwynfrech,  
265 Pedair cae tonn-frech,  
Yr hen wynebwen.  
A'r las Geigen,  
Gyda'r Tarw Gwyn  
O lys y Brenin;  
270 A'r llo du bach,  
Sydd ar y bach,  
Dere dithau, yn iach adre!

Brindled cow, white speckled,  
Spotted cow, bold freckled,  
275 The four field sward mottled,  
The old white-faced,  
And the grey Geingen,  
With the white Bull,  
From the court of the King;  
280 And the little black calf  
Tho' suspended on the hook,  
Come thou also, quite well home!

They all immediately obeyed the summons of their  
mistress. The 'little black calf', although it  
285 had been slaughtered, became alive again, and  
walked off with the rest of the stock at the



command of the lady. This happened in the spring of the year, and there were four oxen ploughing in one of the fields; to these she cried:-

290 Pedwar eidion glas  
Sydd ar y maes,  
Deuwch chwithau  
Yn iach adre! (5)

295 The four grey oxen,  
That are on the field,  
Come you also  
Quite well home!

300 Away the whole of the live stock went with the Lady across the Myddfai Mountain, towards the lake from whence they came, a distance of above six miles, where they disappeared beneath its waters, leaving no trace behind except a well-marked furrow, which was made by the plough the oxen drew after them into the lake, and which remains to 305 this day as a testimony to the truth of this story.

310 What became of the affrighted ploughman - whether he was left on the field when the oxen set off, or whether he followed them to the lake, has not been handed down to tradition; neither has the fate of the disconsolate and half-ruined husband been kept in remembrance. But of the sons it is stated that they often wandered about the lake and its vicinity, hoping that their mother might be permitted 315 to visit the face of the earth once more, as they had been apprised of her mysterious origin, her first appearance to their father, and the untoward circumstances which so unhappily deprived them of her maternal care.

320 In one of their rambles, at a place near Dol Howel, at the Mountain Gate, still called 'Llidiad y Meddygon', The Physicians's Gate, the mother appeared suddenly, and accosted her eldest son, whose name was Rhiwallon, and told him that his 325 mission on earth was to be a benefactor to mankind by relieving them from pain and misery, through healing all manner of their diseases; for which purpose she furnished him with a bag full of medical prescriptions and instructions for the 330 preservation of health. That by strict attention thereto he and his family would become for many generations the most skillful physicians in the country. Then, promising to meet him when her counsel was most needed, she vanished. But on 335 several occasions she met her sons near the banks of the lake, and once she even accompanied them on their return home as far as a place still called 'Pant-y-Meddygon', The dingle of the Physicians, where she pointed out to them the various plants

340 and herbs which grew in the dingle, and revealed  
to them their medicinal qualities or virtues; and  
the knowledge she imparted to them, together with  
their unrivalled skill, soon caused them to attain  
such celebrity that none ever possessed before  
345 them. And in order that their knowledge should  
not be lost, they wisely committed the same to  
writing, for the benefit of mankind throughout all  
ages.

### III.2 About the Structure of the Legend

The legend of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach can be clearly subdivided into three sections;

Part I tells how the lady of the lake becomes the hero's bride.

In Part II the three occasions take place during which the husband breaks the taboo, not to strike his wife without a cause.

Part III deals with the reappearance of the Lady of Llyn Y Fan Fach to her sons.

A comparison of the three sections shows that they vary considerably regarding their structure:

Parts I and II can again be subdivided each into three units.

I.a) contains the introduction which shows us part of the hero's childhood and leads to the lake, the location of the future events.

I.b) contains the courtship with the three attempts to

bring the right bread.

I.c) contains the scene in which the lady of the lake's father and sister appear.

Part II) can be divided into three symmetrical sections, each telling about one incident when the wife receives one blow from her husband.

II.a) christening,

II.b) wedding,

II.c) funeral.

Part III), the lady's return, contains only one scene.

Throughout the story the structural set-up puts a remarkable emphasis on the number 'three'. It subdivides into three major parts, two of which again contain three sections. The hero has to fulfil three tasks/conditions before he can marry the lady. 1. He has to deliver the correctly baked bread and is successful at the third attempt. 2. He mustn't strike his wife with three causeless blows, 3. He has to identify the right bride amongst the two sisters. Furthermore the pair have three sons, and the three disastrous blows occur in the course of three high occasions.

A more detailed analysis, however, shows that this triple rhythm, which runs throughout the whole plot, connects three sections of a tale, which is made up out of motifs that belong to many independent narrative



traditions. Even a superficial attempt to reconstruct these earlier narrative units brings various connections of motifs to light, which are well-known throughout European legends and fairy tales. The narrative material contained in Part I would have told the story of a young man who falls in love with the Lady of the Lake, whom he receives as his wife after fulfilling the tasks given to him. This particular section can be split once more into two narrative sequences, each of which could have been told independently. The story as it stands today raises the question why the lady, after already having agreed to the marriage, dives once more back into the lake in order to re-appear with her father and her sister, leaving the young man, who thinks that she will not come back, in despair. Then the hero is faced with yet another task which he has to fulfil in order to marry the lady. The sequence of events reminds us here of fairy-tales where the hero has to fulfil several tasks in a row, in order to claim the object of his desire, for example, a beautiful princess or/and a kingdom. Into this category fall two fairy tales of the brothers Grimm, "Das tapfere Schneiderlein" (6) and "Der Teufel mit den drei goldenen Haaren". (7) This latter tale also contains the element where the hero and future king has been set out in a box on water as a baby and is saved and grows up incognito. It is, however, unusual for the fact that a reward has already been promised to be totally ignored in the following episode, as happens in our story.

Another indication that the present Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach tale consists of several previously separate narrative traditions could be the fact that the tale mentions two sisters instead of three, which would fit better into the triple rhythm and would have no influence whatsoever on the continuation of the plot since, with regards to the story's content, only the process of identification matters, while the number of sisters is insignificant. The only explanation for the mentioning of two sisters can be that during the composition of the course of action a part of an older narrative tradition has been preserved.

Against the theory of the formerly independent narrative units one could argue that Parts I and II are too closely linked together, since the plot in II is only comprehensible if one knows about the threat, in Part I, that the marriage will only last until a third blow. However, in II.a, after the first blow has taken place, the condition is explained once more, as if it were not already known to the reader. Apart from this the crucial sentences, where the condition is announced, are placed at the end of Part I.b.:

"..and after some persuasion she consented to become his bride, on condition that they should only live together until she received from him three blows without a cause, ... And if he ever should happen to strike her three such blows she would leave him for ever." (8)

If the assumption is correct, that Part I.c, the appearance of father and sister, is a later insertion,

the problem is solved. A previous version, without this insertion, must have consisted of two plots joined together. The first episode would have been about the hero succeeding in marrying the Lady of the Lake due to the fact that the young man was able to bring the correctly baked bread. The second episode would have treated the tragic failure of this relationship. In such a version the two sentences in question would have been placed at the beginning of the second tale and thus would follow directly the end of the first unit, where they remained when the 'father and sister passage' was added to the plot. Belonging originally at the beginning of episode I.c, these sentences are the remains of a still earlier stage of development, when this section also formed an independent tale, telling the story of a young man, whose happiness in marriage is based on the condition never to strike his wife.

There are still further hints as to the previous independence of Part II. It starts in 'traditional' fairy tale manner "Once upon a time..". This formula sounds somewhat strange and displaced in its present context, in the middle of a story. It is quite possible to imagine the ending of part I as the end of a tale that would read:

"..they lived in prosperity and happiness for several years, and became the parents of three sons, who were beautiful children."

Part III treats the mother's return from the lake to her sons. This part differs from the previous ones



insofar as it cannot be subdivided easily. The investigations in chapter I have shown, that in most versions, the lady's return is either dealt with very briefly or is missing. However, for the "Llyn Y Fan Fach" legend, this paragraph is of great importance. It establishes the connection with the historical "Physicians of Myddfai", whose extraordinary skills thus receive a supernatural explanation.

The beginning and the end of the tale show striking similarities. At the same place where once the hero was looking for the lady of the lake, the sons are now walking in search of their mother. And just as the hero formerly asked his mother's advice, now the Lady of the Lake is giving advice to her sons.

Even though the legend of "Llyn Y Fan Fach" consists of many different parts, which originally might have had independent narrative traditions, in its present form it is a well rounded whole. Robin Gwyndaf sees two traditions amalgamated into the present tale.

"The first is an early lake legend based on the central motif of the fairy water-maiden marrying a mortal man. The second is a much later local onomastic tale relating to place-names with medical associations and centred around the Physicians of Myddfai." (9)

It may be possible to still recognise the seams where the original tales have been joined together; however the present story shows a strong structure with a clear

construction, partly achieved through the introduction of a triple rhythm pervading the plot.(10) At the end of the legend, the formal construction, as well as the scenic arrangement, point to the story's beginning. Starting point and destination fall together, they are the lake and the encounter with the Lady of the Lake at different levels, with representatives from different generations. Let us assume that the theory is correct that the legend of the "Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach" consists of formerly independent narrative traditions. Then the question has to be posed what was the common denominator which those traditions had in common and which were so forceful and important that in the course of many generations they have been amalgamated to the form known to us as the "Legend of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach"?

III.3 The Structure of the Legend according to Stith Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk Literature

The motifs have been listed in the order of their appearance in the tale. Motifs have been underlined the first time they occur in the tale.

Part I.a

Lines 1 - 7;

Historical and geographical arrangement of the legend

Lines 5 - 7;

L 11.3/widow's son as hero

Lines 8 - 16;

introduction to the story (increase of widow's cattle)

and further geographical information regarding the Black Mountain F 145/Mountain at borders of other world, D 1293.4/black as magic colour

Part I.b.1

Lines 17 - 19;  
introduction to I.b.1.

Lines 19 - 28;  
description of the Lady of the Lake. Here the following motives are relevant; A 125.4/beautiful goddess, A 420.1/water goddess and B 81/mermaid, B 81.0.2/woman from water world, F 212.0.1/water fairies as well as F 234.2.5/fairy as beautiful woman. D 1293.3/white as magic colour.

Lines 23 - 25;  
F 555.3/long hair, (F 555.1.1.1 golden hair), F 232.4/fairies' long hair

Lines 28 - 49;  
first scene containing the offering of bread by the hero.

Lines 50 - 56;  
2nd "bread scene";  
C 211.3.2/fairies must not eat mortal food

Lines 47 - 49;  
shows further short geographical integration of the legend "the fair maidens of Llanddeusant and Myddfai".

Lines 50 - 56;  
F 343.19/fairies give mortals fairy bread (the other way round), N 828/wise woman as helper,  
C 211.3.2/fairies must not eat mortal food.  
(F 271.10/fairies bake bread).

Part I.b.2

Lines 57 - 74;  
period of waiting, passing of time. (F 377/supernatural lapse of time in fairy land)

Lines 74 - 97;  
C.211.3.2/fairies must not eat mortal food,  
F 343.19/fairies give mortals fairy bread (the other way round), N 828/wise woman as helper.

Part I.b.3

Lines 98 - 112;  
period of waiting, passing of time. (F 377/supernatural lapse of time in fairyland)



Lines 113 - 126;

B 184.2.2.2/magic cow from water world, B 159.13/cow follows saint, F 241/fairy cattle, F 241.2.3/fairies' cattle under a lake, (F 356/fairy cattle), F 234.1.1/fairy in form of a cow, ( F 234.1.8/fairy as a horse)

Lines 126 - 129;

D 551.4/transformation by eating bread, D 1419.4/magic food brings eater into sender's power, (D 1031/magic pastry (bread, cake etc.)

Lines 130 - 141;

C 932/loss of wife for breaking taboo, C 31.8/not to strike supernatural wife, C 762/taboo: doing thing too often, (related: M 166.1/vow not to give more than one blow.

Part I.c

Lines 142 - 149;

N 343/suicide in belief loved one dead, F 93.2/lake entrance to lower world (F 92.4/entrance to lower world through mountain), F 141.0.1/other world under and beyond water, F 153/other world reached by diving into water of well or lake.

Lines 149 - 165;

F 239.2/fairy women identical, A 116.2/twin goddesses, T 131.1.2/father's consent to marriage necessary, A 421/sea god,

Lines 166 - 179;

H 335.0.1/bride helps suitor perform his task, H 36.1.1/recognition by shoes (related: K 1911.3.31/false bride's mutilated feet ),

Lines 180 - 184;

F 343.9/fairy gives man horses, cattle etc., F 348.6/counting or measuring fairy gift taboo (the other way round), T 52.4/dowry given at marriage.

Lines 184 - 188;

C 31.8/not to strike supernatural wife, C 932/loss of wife for breaking taboo, C 762/taboo: doing things too often, M 166.1/vow not to give more than (one) blow.

Lines 189 - 200;

F 343.9/fairy gives man horses, cattle etc., F 348.6/counting or measuring fairy gift taboo, T 52.4/dowry given at marriage.

Lines 201 - 207;

F 302.2/man marries fairy and takes her to his home, B 81.2/mermaid married to man, B 81.2.1/mermaid has

son by human father, F 300/marriage with fairy.

Part II.a

Lines 208 - 216;

P 617/weeping at child's birth, singing at burial,  
H 114/identification by glove

Lines 216 - 224;

repeat of motives regarding taboo not to strike wife.

Lines 225 - 234;

P 617/weeping at child's birth singing at burial,  
repeat of motives regarding taboo not to strike wife.

Part II.b

Lines 235 - 247;

passage leading to the accumulating third blow

Lines 248 - 259;

P 617/weeping at child's birth, singing at burial.

Lines 257 - 306;

C 31.8/not to strike supernatural wife, C 926/woman  
vanishing on breaking of taboo, F 302.6/man left by  
fairy mistress when breaking taboo, T 11.01/disappear-  
ance of supernatural wife.

Lines 259 - 306;

C 930/loss of fortune for breaking taboo,  
F 348.0.1/disappearance of fairy gift when taboo bro-  
ken, C 932/loss of wife for breaking taboo.

Lines 261 - 306;

F 989.13/animal disappearing into lake.

Lines 270 - 287;

E 168 cooked animal comes to life.

Lines 298 - 306;

again connection to geographical characteristics of Myddfai.

Part III

Lines 307 - 319;

transition to part III.

Lines 320 - 338;

E 323/dead mother's friendly return, F 305.1.1/fairy  
mother gives son magic powers, P 424.4/fairy as physi-  
cian, F 274/fairy physician.

Lines 323 - 348;

F 688.0.1/skillful physician, M 321.1/blessing to

descend from generation to generation

Lines 291- 305;  
Appendix

III.4 Explanation of the Interpretation Approach

The following investigation will, in the main, follow the tale's motif sequence according to Stith Thompson's classification. It will however not concern itself with the question about the geographical origin of the individual motifs but will rather deal with their underlying possible meaning.

Such a procedure presumes several theories as being proven. Firstly, it has to be accepted that the motifs contained in the tale have an inherent meaning which must have been significant enough to motivate their oral transmission throughout the centuries and thus guarantee their survival.

A detailed discussion of all the various theories which state that the similarities of the motifs are based on the structural identity of the human spirit, would go beyond the framework of this thesis. A brief summary of the consensus that can be agreed between most scholars whose ideas build the foundation of the following approach shall suffice.(11)

Fairy tales and myths are written in a symbolic language. The symbols of those tales convey a meaning. An integrated interpretation approach which consists of



the historic-critical as well as the psychological method attempts to translate the meaning of the motifs into everyday language. This is not an easy task and can probably never be accomplished completely since those pictures are also images of spiritual structures which lie in the subconscious of the human mind. Those forces underlying the images have been called "Archetypes".(12) Archetypes are subconscious categories of the human mind which express themselves, in the first instance, in pictures and can be expressed or translated into spoken language only to a certain extent. Therefore, it has to be accepted that even after careful analysis of the motifs and consideration of all their historic and psychological and sociological aspects one can only hope to come close to an understanding of the message(s) and statements contained in an archetypal tale. This means that parallel to the surface plot, woven into all individual motifs which form the plot, runs a basic message, the true statement which can be seen as the true motor to generate the story's transmission.

Such a message can be a very simple or a very complex one. It is part of a symbol's nature that it is just not possible to deliver direct translations into everyday language based on 'logical thoughts'. Even if a symbol's extracted message can be quite concise and straightforward, it will always remain only one facet of the whole symbol's complex content. The symbolic content of a motif always includes different spheres.

Interpretations are possible on a historic as well as a psychological level, and very often both will be dealt with jointly, and will contribute in their combination to a better understanding of the motifs. Legends hand down the realities of the past in a symbolic fashion, they transcend reality and become an expression of people's ideals.(13)

Mythological pictures are individual appearances of the underlying archetypes. Those archetypes can never be comprehended as such. In order to come closer to understanding them, we have to rely on the countless individual forms in which they appear and which form an immeasurable abundance of variable possibilities and combinations into different pictures and plots.

The following interpretation also proceeds from the hypothesis that the way to come closer to a fairy tale's meaning is similar to the approach chosen when interpreting dreams.

"Der Weg, dem Sinn eines Märchens näher zu kommen, ist ein ähnlicher wie der einer Traumdeutung."(14)

That means that no attempt will be made to substitute individual pictures/motifs with unambiguous rational statements. In order to approach the 'symbolic formula' which might explain the basic statements inherent in the tale, it is necessary that the interpretation of the individual motifs can be carried out consistently. If it is possible to detect in the interpretation of the individual pictures and the sequence of the plot coherent and meaningful statements, it may be assumed

that the essential issues have been dealt with.(15)  
Thus a comprehensive approach and detailed investigation create a control mechanism to ensure the validity of a tale's exegesis.

In a tale, its structure - that is, the sequence of its motifs - as well as each individual symbol carry this message. This suggests a methodological procedure that investigates a tale according to the chronological sequence of its motifs which are all treated as being of equal status without distinguishing, in the first instance, between major and minor motifs. Such an approach legitimates a methodological procedure that investigates a tale according to the chronological sequence of its motifs within the plot.



III.5 Detailed Motif Investigation

III.5.1 A WIDOW'S SON AS HERO

The tale's interpretation will start by looking at the main male figure, the youth who is introduced at the beginning of the tale as the only son of a widow.

The story of the Lady of Llyn Y Fan Fach has two characters who can be classified as the tale's main protagonists, the Lady of the Lake and the youth, even though in the course of the plot the emphasis is increasingly placed on the lady. This near equality of the male and the female protagonist is a particular characteristic of the Lady of the Lake story cycle. (16)

In order to understand the hero's part better the fact that he is a widow's son needs to be looked at. Von Beit states that in mythology a widow's son is to an exceptional degree determined by and tied to the mother image. (17)

In order to cast more light on the main male figure in the tale a short excursion to another version of the Llyn y Fan legend shall take place. The full meaning of the male protagonist can only be comprehended, if in addition to the Rhys version, the tale as recorded by Gwyn Jones is examined. (18)

In Gwyn Jones' recording of the tale we are introduced to the rest of the youth's family:

"Once upon a time in the days gone by, a man and his wife lived at the farm in Blaensawdde in the

shire of Carmarthen in South Wales. It was not by farming, however, that the husband maintained himself, but by combat and wars; and as often happens to those who follow the wars, he was killed, and three of his four sons with him. A fourth son of his was too young to carry arms, and when news of her affliction reached his mother, 'War shall not take away my fourth', she vowed, and she kept the boy close to her skirts and set him to learn only those arts which a farmer should know." (19)

Even though Rhys does not mention other brothers he knows that the father was killed in a war. In the Llyn y Fan story, according to Gwyn Jones, the 'hero' belongs initially to a group of four persons - the four sons -, of whom he is the youngest. He will also turn out to be the only one, who, exclusively educated by his mother, does not learn the masculine art of fighting and handling weapons. In the end, however, it is exactly this circumstance, the fact that his business is looking after his mother's herd, that will lead him to the Lady of the Lake. Von Beit states that this constellation of four at a tale's onset is of particular importance. It points to a totality, a whole unity, that cannot and need not be completed further. This system has been compared with a reticule with a centre that points to North, South, East and West, the four directions of the universe.(20). In a symbolic tale when the hero is being looked at as part of a system of four he becomes a part of a 'higher psychological whole', he stands as a symbol for a particular function within the full and complete system.(21) The hero becomes part of this system of four which can only be comprehended when the particular function the hero

maintains is understood as well as his connection with other figures of the tale.

Using the reticule as a system of division leads to the meeting points of the four directions, the inner centre of a personality, pointing/leading to the centre of the subconscious. (22)

The Llyn y Fan Fach tale according to the Gwyn Jones version contains the four constellation in form of the four brothers of whom the youngest is the only survivor. This four constellation at the beginning of a tale can also appear in form of either a father or a mother with three sons or daughters. See, for example, the Grimm's fairy tales Aschenputtel, Der arme Müllersbursch und das Kätzchen, and Die drei Brüder. (23)

The 'Four' or the 'quaternity', as a system to divide and classify reality has been recognised as an archetype. Like the four seasons of the year and the four directions North, East, South and West, the four elements form a quaternary system of orientation which always expresses a wholeness. It has been stated that the orientation system of the consciousness has four aspects, which correspond to four empirical functions, which are, the sensory perception (Empfinden), the thoughts, the feelings and the intuition (Ahnungsvermögen). (24)

Why, then, does Rhys' version not mention this symbolically very significant element of the tale. In a



sense, even though Gwyn Jones mentions the completeness of the constellation at the story's onset, it does not exist as such. With the death of the three brothers the wholeness has been destroyed. Bettelheim works on the assumption that this would identify the youth in the Llyn y Fan tale as someone who has lost certain important aspects of his inner substance. In order to become a complete personality he therefore needs to find a suitable counterpart. (25)

His success in doing so does not seem to be a matter of course at first. On the contrary, the youth shows the traits and features of an anti-hero. Carrying out the profession of farming, being influenced or even dominated by his mother who kept him 'close to her skirts', he compares rather unfavourably with his elder brothers. However, the youth has from the onset the one distinct and simple advantage over the other male members of his family in that he is alive, while they are dead. The story does not really clarify whether it sees the father and the three sons as war heroes or rather as war victims. In addition to this, the youth learns his craft very well and the description of his features and character soon resemble the portrait that would be expected of a hero. He grows up to be

"a man in feature, form, and favour and as handsome a youth as mortal ever saw." (26)

In Gwyn Jones's tale the youth's encounter with the lady is not quite as sudden and unprepared compared to the 'Rhys version'.

"'Mother', he said one day, 'is it not time for me to take a wife?' 'What wife shall that be?' she asked him. 'That', he confessed, 'is what I do not know'". (27)

It almost sounds as if ensuing the encounter with the lady stands in connection with this conversation. So the youngest and apparently the minor son turns out to be the most successful one, blessed by good fortune. There are many stories where the youngest son thrives rather than his elder brothers. The before mentioned tales "Der arme Müllersbursch und das Kätzchen" and "Die drei Brüder" belong to this group. The preferential treatment of the youngest son can also be looked at from a historic point of view. There are records of societies organised according to the matrilinear lineage, where not the eldest, but the youngest son would be the heir. (28)

### III.5.2 A Mountain at the Border to and the Location of the Other world - Black and White as Magic Colours

Let us now continue to look at the John Rhys' version of the Llyn y Fan Fach tale. The mentioning of the black mountain is apparently only a geographical description, setting the tale in the mountainous area of Wales. However, mountains in myths and fairy tales are always used in a very symbolic way and, as will be shown, the Llyn y Fan tale is no exception.

"Das Bergmotiv ist repräsentativ für transzendente Höhe" (29)

The reason which makes the youth eventually go to the

mountain is a remarkable one:

"Her [the widow's] live stock had so increased in course of time, that he could not well depasture them upon her farm, so she sent a portion of her cattle to graze on the adjoining Black Mountain, and their most favourite place was near the small lake called Llyn Y Fan Fach on the north-western side of Carmathenshire Fans." (30)

The fact that a widow's herd had increased during wartime needs to be considered as something extraordinary and unexpected. The remark that the youth 'generally' looked after the cattle on the mountain strengthens the connection between the male protagonist and the mountain symbol. One could say that, in a similar way, as the lady is connected to the element and symbol 'water', the youth can be connected to the mountain, even if the latter link does not seem to be quite as indissoluble as the identification between the Lady of the Lake and the symbol of water.

Mountains in fairy tales are believed to be the residence of many supernatural beings, for example the hill of the elves, and in mythology mountains often form the domicile of the gods. It is also here that a hieros gammos, a sacred marriage between a mortal and a deity can take place. (31)

Eugen Drewermann sees the mountain as a pendant to heaven, the residence of the gods as, for example, in Greek Mount Olympus. The idea of a mountain as the place where god is, is also traceable to the bible. It is here where Moses received the ten commandments from God. (32) Jerusalem and the mountain Zion (33) also



belongs to this idea. (34)

"Fair and lofty, the joy of the whole earth  
is Zion's hill, like the farthest reaches of the  
north,  
the hill of the great King's city." (35)

And even if the mountain is not the permanent home of a mythological or fairy tale character the fact that one lives close to it or is in any other way associated with it usually demonstrates an inner closeness and relationship with the spiritual values and spheres which are symbolised by the mountain. (36)

Hedwig von Beit sees the mountain, which may contain treasures or which is difficult of access, as a symbol for the inner spiritual life and, also, the subconscious sphere. (37) See for example Alibaba und die vierzig Räuber (38), or in Sneewittchen (Snow White), where the dwarfs are mining. (39)

Having thus identified the youth as also having an affinity to the supra-natural sphere, the mountain seems to reveal a contradiction to the previous line of interpretation which saw the man as representative of the human reality as against the Lady of the Lake symbolising the 'Other World'. We have here a softening of the strict dualism which can be followed through the tale. However, it needs to be stressed, that the youth's connection to the 'magic mountain' has only been hinted at. Within the frame of this tale it would be too far to interpret the male hero of the LLyn y fan Fach legend, in its present form, as a direct descendant of a previous mountain deity, even if

such a connection can be strongly suspected. The idea of a male god of the mountain as a symbol of the male principle is a well known concept in mythology. There is, for example, 'Pan', "President of the Mountain".(40) As God of the mountain he was known in many cultures throughout the world, and in many languages his name has become a general term for hills and mountains.(41) In Egypt Pan was known as MIN.

"Min ... was the male principle; and it is probable that Min is the same as man, in contradistinction to woman."(42)

In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale the connection between the youth and the mountain is hinted at perhaps as an explanation of why he finds a great attraction to the Lady of the Lake. Perhaps somewhere in his past he feels an affinity and closeness her world and values. Beyond this the Llyn y Fan tale leaves no doubt that the Lady of the Lake and her suitor have to be seen as a pair of contrasts where she comes from the supernatural water world while he is a representative of the mortal human world. The tale demonstrates clearly that the world from which the two protagonists stem are very different and contain, in many instances, opposite values. It is also due to these sharp contrasts that an underlying tension between two systems and their representatives - the lady and her suitor - runs throughout the plot. This particular relationship between the Lady of the Lake and her suitor is again reflected in the symbolic colour used in the tale. It has been shown that the magical colour "white" is an

attribute which is strongly connected to the Lady of the Lake.

In order to understand the symbol 'black mountain' better in the following the lady's connection to 'white' as a magic colour shall be briefly looked at.

This corresponds to D1293.31, white as a magic colour, a frequent attribute of the Ladies of the Lake and other related figures (white ladies, ladies of the lake mistaken for swans, white geese etc). Here we have compressed in a single colour symbol the contradictions that exist within the story's main characters by showing, at the same time, identical features in connection with insuperable contrasts.(43)

Independent from whether she is seen in a positive or negative light, the lady is often attributed with the colour 'white'. This may happen by mentioning the white bull who often accompanies her, or by commenting on the colour of her clothes. In those examples she reminds us very strongly of the 'White Lady', who also can have good and bad connotations.

There was a religious dispute between St. Patrick and another saint. "Several Welsh people overheard the religious quarrel, and expressed surprise and annoyance. St. Patrick in spite turned them into fishes. One of the party was a woman, who was transformed into a white lady. She was often seen accompanied by flashes of light. On account of this insult to St. Patrick the sun never shines upon the lake but during one week of the year." (44)

We have here a clear connection between the white lady, the water world and the evil, that is, non-Christian



element.

Sometimes her connection to the colour 'white' is expressed in statements like that she was mistaken for a swan or a white bird. (45)

The youth descended from the black mountain and met the Lady of the Lake who had close connotations to the white ladies. Here the tale uses colours symbolically to express the contradictions that exist in the story's main characters. Like the Lady of the Lake and her suitor the two colours 'black' and 'white' belong together while forming a contrast at the same time.

Apparently the locality does not suggest that the male protagonist originates from beyond the profane reality. Moreover we have seen that, to quite a large extent, the tale's interpretation was based on the contradiction between the lady's and the youth's world and the mutual attraction of these opposites. The results of this investigation have to be combined with the fact that in mythology the mountain - from where the youth descended - and the lake - the place of the lady's origin - are also compatible with regards to their symbolic content.

**III.5.3 The Lady of the Lake as Beautiful Goddess -  
Water Goddess - Mermaid/Woman from the Water World -  
Water Fairies - Fairy as Beautiful Woman**

A brief look at the tales related to the Llyn y Fan story have clearly shown the relevance of the above motifs following Stith Thompson's index. Before looking at the above categories in some detail we might remind ourselves that it could be established in the previous chapters that there are no strict demarcation lines between different characters and that in order to understand the symbolic meaning and true character of the Lady of the Lake it is not necessary to define a female character of the tale cycle as a goddess or fairy bride.

"Genres, after all, exist mainly in the folklorist's mind. The informant is not interested in classification but communication." (46)

**III.5.3a. The Lady of the Lake as Beautiful Ancient Goddess**

According to Ken Wilber the beginnings of the belief in a female mother deity in human history occurred at about 9.500 - 4.500 B.C. Wilber calls it the mythological time or the age of group belonging "Gruppenzugehörigkeit. (47) . Ken Wilber writes:

"Die überragende Gestalt in den Religionen der Kulturen mythischer Gruppenzugehörigkeit ist zweifellos die Große Mutter."

...

"Wir kennen sie als Göttin in Kuhgestalt namens Hathor im Relief von Narmer". (48)

There is a further connection to cattle when she is associated with her companion, the sacred bull. Wilber differentiates between the biological close-to-nature aspects of the "Great Mother" and the transcendent, mystical elements of the "Great Goddess" (49), whereby the latter is seen as an expression of a higher level of consciousness. He differentiates between the simple idea of the mythical mother or Mother Earth who developed into a more complex religious system that worshipped the Great Goddess. According to Wilber, during the mythological period of "group belonging" the majority of people believed in and was influenced by the mythical mother. She was seen as the destroyer of the conscious, the large, all devouring Mother Earth who causes the Ego to regress into the body, back to the instincts to the dark inner side of the earth, thus preventing further evolution of the human mind from the unconscious earth to the supra conscious heavens. (50)

"...so differenzieren wir jetzt zwischen dem einfachen Vorstellungsbild der mythischen Mutter und der Großen Göttin. Und wir stellen fest, daß die große Mehrheit der Gruppenmitglied-Ich von der Großen Mutter beherrscht wurde. Für diese Mehrheit agierte die mythische Mutter als chthonische Zerstörerin des Bewußtseins, die große und verschlingende Mutter Erde, die das Ich in den Körper zurückzerreißte, zurück zu den Instinkten, zurück ins dunkle Erdinnere, wodurch sie die weitere Evolution der unbewußten Erde zum überbewußten Himmel verhinderte." (51)

This explains the apparent contradiction which has been seen as inherent in the image of the great female deity. A darker threatening aspect as described above can be set against the spiritual, transcendent aspect, containing the mysteries of life. This is the aspect



which is still relevant to the present day searching for the meaning of life.

There is the widely supported theory that the myths lying behind such tales like the legend of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach were about ancient deities. It is possible to make a connection to Rhiannon, a character out of the Mabinogion. The core of the sovereignty theme in Pwyll is the figure of Rhiannon. Her name has been analysed as "Rigantona" or 'great divine queen', and as such she can be identified with the goddess of sovereignty, the goddess whose hand must be won by any aspirant to kingship.(52) Further evidence for the identification of Rhiannon with the goddess of sovereignty lies in her equine associations. For example, the birth of Rhiannon's son is closely connected to the birth of a foal, and when she was accused of murdering her son, her punishment was to carry guests to the court on her back. Those features link her to the Gaulish goddess Epona and to other Celtic equine divinities as, for example, the Irish Macha and to the equine aspects of some Celtic and other Indo-European rites of inauguration to kingship. In addition, Rhiannon behaves in her manifestation of supernatural power, her independent strong-mindedness in choosing a husband and her superior wisdom.(53) In the tale of Pwyll the aspiring rightful king claims his kingship by union with the goddess of sovereignty.

"A symbolic mating destined to bring fertility to man and beast in his reign, was an essential

feature of early Irish inauguration rites." (54)

A second pertinent feature of Celtic sovereignty tales according to Mc Kenna's analysis is that the goddess not only marries the rightful king but is the mother of such a king and the ancestress of a royal line. (55)

A third common feature of sovereignty tales is the theme of the goddess' changing her form or condition when without her proper spouse and king. This theme, which is in origin closely related to a belief that the fertility and prosperity of the land depend upon true and rightful kingship, takes various forms in Celtic tradition. Sovereignty may appear as an aged hag who is transformed into a beautiful young woman upon sexual acceptance by the rightful king, (56) as a mad woman whom he restores to sanity by sexual intercourse or as a princess reared amongst peasants and restored to her proper dignity through a royal marriage. The connection between the Llyn y Fan Fach tale and the element of sovereignty, represented by the equine element is not as obvious at first sight.

According to T. Llew Jones folk tradition from the former Yugoslavia knew of tales about beautiful girls in white dresses who were in reality "Vila-Horses" or "Kelpies". (57) T. Llew Jones poses the theory that the equine element has been eliminated during early Christian times because it may have been unacceptable as an element of the legend because of its connotations with paganism. Thus direct references may have been



purposely avoided. (58) A further hint towards the connection between the Lady of the Lake and horses can be found in the initially discussed Latin version of Walter Map where the lady married Gwestin under the condition that he would never strike her with a bridle. Within the Llyn y Fan Fach story one incident where the blow happens involves horses at least indirectly, as she was asked by her husband to go and fetch a horse. (59)

### III.5.3b Water Goddess

Most of what has been stated under the previous heading applies here. One important addition, however, has to be made; water deities in mythology can have another, darker side, they can be dangerous and fearsome. These are reminiscences of mythological figures like, for example, the sirens in the Odyssey, and mermaids who also can possess unpleasant characteristics.

Ken Wilber describes water as the association which is most often connected to the Great Mother. In connection with this the association between moon-cycle and menstruation cycle is initially a strict and simple biological one. (60)

However, in folk tales and fairy tales the symbol 'water' has generally been used to explain in the main its more positive aspects.

"It is evident that water whether in the form of



sea, river, fountain, well, rain, or dew has universally been employed as a symbol of the cleansing, refreshing, and invigorating qualities of spirit." (61)

### III.5.3c Mermaids

Here the prevailing belief is that the love relationship between a mermaid and a mortal human being leads to a tragic end. This is a result of the fact that, in spite of the great affection and passion which exists between the two protagonists, their worlds are too different to allow a long happy and harmonious life together.

It is also important to emphasise that the Lady of the Lake has a very human side to her. She feels a strong affiliation with the human world, and one may assume that the longing for the world above the surface was the motive for her rising to the surface in order to meet the youth. This connection to the mortal world would bring about the common ground necessary for the youth to relate to her while at the same time being attracted by her supernatural beauty.

### III.5.3d Water Fairies - Fairy as Beautiful Woman

In its present form the legend serves to explain the immense knowledge and fame of the Physicians of Myddfai, by claiming their partly supernatural origin. The claim that in some way special human beings were partly

descendants from fairies was not uncommon in Wales.

"Several instances occur in Welsh folklore of families which claimed to be descendent from a fairy ancestor, but in Welsh 'Heroic' legend examples are very rare, see for example Ceridwen, the presumed mother of Taliesin."

...

Now although we find human beings credited with one fairy parent, we do not normally find fairies with human parents." (62)

Whenever fairies appear in a tale, they have distinct human characteristics. The outward manifestation (appearance) of fairy brides is always a human one, and their outstanding beauty is emphasised. Investigations so far have indicated that fairy brides and the country they come from stand a) for something ancient, or in psychological terms the subconscious and b) for the "other", an opposite to the human mind. Even though their outward manifestation is mostly a human one, they may temporarily adopt the shape of an animal.

We have briefly looked at an historic approach by incorporating a prehistoric dimension that would extend to the times when those ancient prehistoric peoples would have inhabited the British Isles.

"The Reverend Elias Owen suggested that the great number of Welsh fairy tales associated with lakes may possibly indicate a memory of our lake dwelling prehistoric ancestors." (63)

Within the frame of this work the discussion whether fairy stories can be traced back to historic or prehistoric roots cannot be carried out. All that can be stated is that if there is a historic core to the tales discussed here, they were, in the course of their oral

transmission, equipped with additional (magic) elements that increased in importance while any historic background would have increasingly lost its relevance for subsequent generations. As has been stated, there is no need to categorise the female main character in our tale as belonging to one group or the other.

"Some degree of overlap between the different types of lake-dwelling maidens is suggested, because the Welsh fairy maiden habit of emerging from the water and combing their hair is exactly the behaviour one expects from a mermaid." (64)

What matters is that the figure of the Lady of the Lake combines various elements from many different groups. The real question to be posed is not whether she should be regarded as being related to a mermaid or a fairy, but what a search for the elements that underlay and run through all those mythological and fairy tale figures might bring to light.

In the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach the fairy bride must be seen as the human male protagonist's counterpart from an other world. Ken Wilber writes:

"Wo ein Anderes ist, da ist auch Angst - und das erste Andere ist die Große Mutter." (65)

This explains the individual experience of a person who sees two sides of his/her own mother, as well as the experience of the whole human race during the awakening of the conscious mind. With the mother there is both comfort and threat. We have here the coming together of history, evolution and individual experience, an issue which is relevant now and which even goes beyond the present by anticipating possible further steps of



human development, beyond the present-day individualistic experience. According to Wilber's definition, the Lady of the Lake or the fairy bride is a true symbol since it contains the transcendent aspect of the Great Goddess as well as the lower aspects in form of the image of Mother Earth:

"Symbole stellen etwas vor oder schaffen etwas (konstituieren eine höhere Ebene der Wirklichkeit an sich, reflektieren und repräsentieren aber auch (sind imstande), niedere Ebenen der Wirklichkeit begrifflich darzustellen oder zu reflektiere." (66)

The great goddess or the Great Mother who after disappearing and being officially replaced by paternalistic religion continued to exist 'secretly' in various images as Lady of the Lake, Fairy bride, Mermaid etc. Sometimes desperate attempts made to keep hanging on to reminiscences to keep the memories alive of old religions and customs, were traceable throughout mediaeval Wales at a time when official female deities had long been forgotten. Indeed, as will be shown in one of the following paragraphs, this might have continued to exist even within the church the in form of the worship of the virgin Mary.

The symbol points to inner need, revival, refreshment, love and comfort, which are by no means outdated values. They must represent a whole ideological concept that at one stage must have been of global importance. (67)

III.5.4 Long Hair - Golden Hair - Fairies' Long Hair

Long (golden) hair belongs, so to speak, to the description of the 'prototype mermaid'. That a mermaid's hair is golden is taken for granted to such an extent that it will be thought to have this colour even if the text of a particular story does not mention it like, for example, Rhys' Llyn y Fan Fach tale. Omissions of this kind may be interpreted as being an inadvertence.

An investigation of the symbolic content of this yellow golden hair, however, proves to be quite complex. There is the obvious explanation of the long hair as an example of the lady's great beauty. This, however, does not explain the almost exclusive use of the colour 'blonde'. In mythology the symbolic meaning of yellow/golden is equivalent to the one for the colour 'red'. Both have to be seen to represent fire and the sun.

We have arrived at yet another contrast within the tale. Fire and water are seen to be proverbial contrasts which, however, are named in the same breath and belong together. Equally, sun and water gods are frequently presented as opposed deities who form an inseparable couple, standing as symbols for feminine, masculine, they provide an inseparable connection and dependence on one another while forming a contrast. The coming together of contrasts is necessary to make a

whole unit.

A certain connection between our story cycle and the Isis and Osiris cult has been established. For example, in the depicting of Osiris as a shepherd and Isis as a well. (68) Also in the worship of Isis a priestess would impersonate the moon-goddess and a priest would act as her bridegroom, the sun-god Osiris. (69)

Bayley also finds reference in the 'Song of Songs' to a sun or moon mystery play, and looking at the following passages he must certainly be considered right in this matter.

"Bride:

I will sing the song of all songs to Solomon  
that he may smother me with kisses. (1.1-1.2)

...

I am dark but lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, (1.5)

...

Do not look down on me; a little dark I may be  
because I am scorched by the sun.

My mother's sons were displeased with me  
they sent me to watch over the vineyards;  
so I did not watch over my own vineyard.

Tell me, my true love,  
where you mind your flocks  
where you rest them at mid-day  
that I may not be left picking lice  
as I sit among your companions' herd. (1.6)

Bridegroom:

If you yourself do not know,  
O fairest of women,  
go, follow the tracks of the sheep  
and mind your kids by the shepherd's huts. (1.8)  
I would compare you, my dearest,  
to Pharaoh's chariot-horses. (1.9)

...

I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem  
by the spirits and the goddesses of the field.  
Do not rouse her, do not disturb my love until she  
is ready." (2.7)

A comparison between the song of Solomon with the Llyn



y Fan Fach tale shows considerable similarities, even though both pieces originate from different parts of the world, were formulated at different times and belong to different literary genres. The 'Song of Songs' consists of a dialogue between two lovers. Even though at first sight the woman in the 'Song of Songs' is not explicitly of a super-natural origin, there is a reference to female deities in 2.7 "by the spirits and the goddesses of the field." Apart from this she is fair, though there are also references to her being dark, this could refer to her skin. Like in the Llyn y Fan Fach tale, in the 'Song of Songs' the initial meeting of the lovers is connected to the minding of animals (sheep in the case of the 'Song of Songs'). The song also has connotations to the equine element. The bridegroom compares his love to "Pharaoh's chariot-horses."

The refrain:

"I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem  
by the spirits and the goddesses of the field.  
Do not rouse her, do not disturb my love until she  
is ready." (2.7)

appears three times within the psalm, (2.7, 3.5, 8.4), the third time, however, it is not repeated completely. There are also alternative readings: 'by the spirit and the goddesses' or 'by the gazelles and the hinds', 'until she is ready' or 'while she is resting'.

"Bride:

Hark! My beloved! Here he comes bounding over the mountains, leaping over the hills. (2.8)

...

My beloved answered, he said to me:  
Rise up, my darling;  
my fairest, come away.  
For now the winter is past,  
the rains are over and gone;  
the flowers appear in the country-side;  
the time is coming when the birds will sing  
and the turtle-dove's cooing will be heard in our  
land;  
when the green figs will ripen on the fig-trees  
and the vines [blossoms] give forth their fra-  
grance. (2.10-13)

This seems to be a clear reference to fertility rites or seeing the bride as representative of spring, and the growing season. After having stated that the bridegroom and the bride meet while they are engaged in grazing their animals it is now mentioned that the bridegroom comes - like the youth in the Llyn y Fan Fach legend - over a mountain.

"Bridegroom:  
but there is one alone, my dove, my perfect one,  
her mother's only child,  
devoted to the mother who bore her;  
young girls see her and call her happy,  
princesses and concubines praise her. (6.9)  
Who is this that looks out like the dawn,  
beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,  
majestic as the starry heavens? (6.10.

...

How you love to gaze on the Shulamitt maiden,  
as she moves between the lines of dancers! (6.13)  
How beautiful are your sandalled feet, O prince's  
daughter. (7.1)

The rest of the 'Song of Songs' describes the couple's beauty and their mutual attraction. The paragraphs quoted here allow some conclusions with regards to the nature and the origin of the bride. It was already mentioned before that her brothers were displeased with her, the explanation given for this was, that she did not, as she had been told, watch over the vineyards.

But then the bridegroom mentions "spirits and goddesses of the field". Here it has to be taken into consideration that the God of the Old Testament is a thoroughly patriarchal god, which makes the mentioning of goddesses in the 'Song of Songs' particular remarkable. The female aspect is further strengthened in 6.9, where the bridegroom defines his bride's origin through her mother. Interpreting the line

"devoted to the mother who bore her;"

in the way that the bride in some way is associated with a culture that has a female deity at its centre point and is organised according to the matriarchal principle could explain why other young women irre-spectable of their social status - "princesses and concubines" - call her happy.

A relationship between the 'Song of Songs' and the main protagonists of the Llyn y Fan Fach Cycle can be established due to the above quoted motifs which also can be traced in the Llyn y Fan Fach tale: The male protagonist comes from the mountain, the encounter between man and woman takes place while looking after animals. The female protagonist can be connected to a female deity. The Llyn y Fan tale, like the 'Song of Songs' contain the motif of two representatives from two opposite worlds being attracted to each other, and the woman combines within herself the contrasting sun and moon/water motif.



According to Bayley these common elements do not have to surprise us since

"Variants of these solar stories ...form the foundation of nearly half the world's fairy tales." (70)

The close connection of the sun and moon symbols contained in those tales can also be seen in the fact that the before mentioned god 'Pan' was not only a god of the mountain but also a sun god and would be related to a bull god. (71) When looking at the relationship between the water and the fire symbol also the image springs to mind where the sun god rises out of the water in the morning in order to complete his journey during the day along the horizon and return in the evening back to the water. Behind this idea one can suspect the sensual experience of the sun's daily rebirth out of the water.

The hair of the Lady of the Lake stands as a symbol for the lady's association to both, the water and the sun motif. It has the colour of the sun and the form of water, when combed it falls down in long waves. (72) It remains to incorporate the brittle contrast between the two underlying principles of sun and water into the tale's overall statement as far as it has been established. Here it needs to be mentioned that even though most Indo European languages look upon the sun as being masculine while assigning the feminine gender to the moon, this is not without exceptions. (73) It cannot be clarified without doubt whether those exceptions from

an otherwise universal rule resulted out of a linguistic misunderstanding.

Drewermann supposes at the root of the connection between the sun and the moon mythology the observation of cyclic behaviour, the rebirth within the day and the year cycle.(74) In order to understand this concept better we have to return to the idea of association between the Great Mother and the moon and water. The moon is, like the water, a symbol of the female element, the great goddess. The mother goddess could be depicted with a bull as her companion whose horns were shaped in form of a half moon. Thus, the moon and the bull can be an attribute of the great goddess and at the same time her companion.(75)

What can be safely stated is that the Lady of the Lake, who is seen as the ultimate embodiment of the water world - including its values and characteristics - carries an attribute which symbolises its opposites: fire and sun.

### III.5.5 Fairies Must not Eat Mortal Food - Fairies Give Mortals Fairy Bread - Fairies Bake Bread - Transformation by Eating Bread - Magic Food Brings Eater into Sender's Power - Magic Pastry (Bread, Cake)

The small gesture where the hero offers bread to the Lady of the Lake turns out to be very meaningful with regards to the overall statement of the tale. It is of

prime importance that the hero offers the lady the correctly baked bread - the success of his courtship depends on it. However, within a logical framework it is very difficult to understand why a decision as important to the Lady of the Lake (that is, to follow her suitor into his world) should depend on whether the bread he took with him for his lunch has the right texture.

The obvious discrepancy between this motif's importance for the whole of the plot, on one side, and the apparent insignificance of the actual events taking place on the other, points to the hypothesis that the true answer lies again in this motif's symbolic meaning. Bread is seen as symbolic for food in general and thus represents a society's highest value as it is an essential part of life. By offering bread to the lady the youth offers to his beloved one of the most valuable things from his world. The gesture reminds one also of scenes described by Bord, when bread was thrown into water as a sacrifice to a water deity:

"The custom of throwing objects into lakes also survived into the nineteenth century in Scotland when people were still throwing offerings of food." (76)

In order to be accepted by the deity a sacrifice had to contain objects of real, the highest value. To see food as the highest possible value would only apply where a society was in the main dependent on an agricultural life style, where customs, rituals and ideas would be determined by the essential crops. It is,



however, possible that this symbol's meaning was then transcended into the psychological sphere. According to von Beit:

"Brot ernährt und erhält den Körper und ein Brotlaib kann als ein Symbol des menschlichen Körpers und des Körperbewußtsein aufgefaßt werden. Letzteres trägt erheblich zum Lebensgefühl des Menschen und zum Bewußtsein seiner Persönlichkeit bei...." (77)

An isolated interpretation of the scene from this point of view would mean that the youth carries out a sacrifice in honour of a water deity, who only accepts it when he brings a sacrifice of the right nature (in the right frame of mind).

At another level this scene can be looked on as the moment where a mortal human being hands his bread to an inhabitant of the fairy land. It will be acceptable to look upon bread as representative of food in general. In the tale quoted from Rhys the bread and cheese which the youth offers the lady is the ration he had originally taken for his own consumption.

In one version of this tale cycle, in the story about a lake near Llanberis, the young man offers the Lady of the Lake an apple. Here the food offering motif has also been used in the opposite way. She "begged" him to throw her one of his apples. (78) Narváez gives a possible explanation to this with his theory that fairies need human food "milk, cheese or grain". (79) The act of giving offering bread represents the breaking of a taboo. For fairies to eat mortal food and vice versa, can be very dangerous since it can release

great supernatural powers. (80)

Throughout the whole story cycle great emphasis is placed on the statement that the relationship ends through the breaking of a taboo - the condition not to strike the wife (with iron, a bridle, three times, without a cause, etc...).

Thus, while it is obvious that the marriage ends because of a broken taboo, a closer look at the 'bread scene' brings to light that already, at the beginning of the connection between the Lady of the Lake and the youth, the story contains indirectly the breaking of a taboo as a necessary condition for the start of the alliance.

A taboo has to be seen as the strongest possible form of a prohibition, and inherent there is always a threat of something terrible that is going to happen if the taboo is broken. During the history and tradition of a people this threat could be so horrific that it became dangerous and forbidden to even speak about it. This eventually could lead to the taboo being forgotten.

The threat behind a taboo for humans not to eat fairy bread can also be interpreted

"that one must not eat the food from the other world because otherwise one must remain there." (81)

If this applies one way, then it can apply the other way round; one could say that in order for the Lady to enter her suitor's world she first had to eat from his



food. Because whoever eats from the food of another world will take in its spiritualised nourishment and values and will be bound up with it for ever with all the consequences that this may bring. Behind the taboo not to eat mortal/fairy bread lies basically the deep fear of coming too close to a strange world. Bolstad Skjelbred, Ann Helene in "Rites of Passage as Meeting Place" points to the dualism that is expressed regarding the Christian faith and fairy beliefs and mentions bread as a means of protection:

"It was believed that the fairies wanted to harm or to take the woman in the same way they wanted to take the newborn baby. The means of protection could be bread, light, fire, silver, steel, the Bible, a page from the hymn-book, the sign of the cross and the permanent presence of an adult and confirmed woman." (82)

With reference to our tale, the bread scenes carry the message that a union between the Lady of the Lake and the suitor can only take place if respective values are recognised and accepted. In order to enable this to happen the hero has to present his world and its highest values in the right way/texture.

"The motif of appropriate gift plays a part in inducing the fairy bride to enter into marriage. The partly baked bread is an apt symbol for the marriage between two people, one from the human and one from the supernatural world." (83)

The bread-offering scene is repeated three times in the story. This underlines the previous paragraph, the secret importance of this motif for the whole of the plot. A closer investigation shows that the use of the motive 'bread' in the tale strengthens the links between the lady and the fairy people. Robin Gwyndaf



mentions the theory that a pre-historic people inhabiting the British island before the Celtic invasion, who might be regarded as being at the root of the belief in fairy people, did not have ovens which could explain the different texture of their bread.(84) Also Rhys knows of images of an ancient mother goddess who was also sometimes depicted with bread in her threefold appearance.(85) In the Rhys version the bread is offered with cheese. At a well in Minchmoor (Peebles) called 'the cheese well' bits of cheese were dropped into the water for the fairies living there.(86)

Transformation by eating bread is a symbol that has even found its way into the Christian religion. In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale it is the lady who changes/transforms her life and adapts from the underwater realm to the human world in order to live with her future husband, and it has also become apparent that through this act she makes herself dependent upon her husband. In a sense the fact that 'magic food brings the eater into a sender's power' can be interpreted as the consequence which results out of breaking the first taboo, not to eat from the magic food.

Eating from magic food can also mean an inner transformation in the sense that it equips a human with spiritual vision and strengthens him to face and survive a radical confrontation with the truth, for example, recognising the true essence of the divine.(87)

### III.5.6 Wise Woman as Helper

The motif of the 'wise woman as helper' has been incorporated into the story in the form of the hero's mother. According to von Beit the father and mother model - either individually or both together - are the two archetypes that appear directly or indirectly in almost every fairy tale.

"Die zwei Urbilder, welche in fast jedem Märchen erscheinen - sei es eines allein oder beide zusammen - sind die des Vaters und der Mutter". (88)

The parent image does not carry human and personal characteristics, but has always been equipped with divine attributes. As a consequence the parent figure has to be omniscient and quite familiar with the magical sphere. (89)

"Die Eltern - Imagines tragen nicht menschlich - persönliche Züge, sondern sind von jeher mit göttlichen Attributen geschaut worden." (90)

With regards to the Llyn y Fan Fach tale, the situation is even more complex. A close look at the reaction of the hero's mother when she learns about her son's encounter with the lady poses a few questions. Firstly, it is astonishing that she does not seem to be particularly surprised, though here one could argue that the acceptance of the world of magic is a general feature of the genre 'fairy tales', rather than this feature being a specific characteristic of this tale. Secondly, of course, the fact that the mother knows how the lady can be persuaded to leave her element, the water, calls for an explanation. It has been established through the youth's connection to the mountain,



that even though in the tale he is the representative of the human world, reminiscences could be traced to the association between him and the world of magic, and perhaps even to an ancient mountain deity.

Here the theory shall be posed that this connection is rooted in his descent, in his mother. The behaviour of the suitor's mother as well as her knowledge seem to indicate a familiarity with the Lady of the Lake's realm. A possible reaction to the youth telling his mother of his encounter with a Lady of the Lake could have been fear and refusal. We fear what we don't know or what is strange. Is it possible to draw the opposite conclusion that, since the youth's mother shows no fear she must know the Lady of the Lake? The mother also knows about the fact that the offering of the right bread will make the Lady of the Lake susceptible to the youth's advances. On the other hand, she is strongly connected with the human realm and needs three attempts at baking the right bread to finally get the right 'moderately baked' bread. At the beginning of the tale's interpretation we have seen that in wartime and without help of a husband the widow's farming methods were successful and that her herd grew in numbers. This reminds of the fairy cattle which always brings plenty and fertility.

It is possible to trace a connection between the hero's mother and the fairy realm. Even though on their own these arguments don't seem to be overwhelming, a combi-



nation of all the evidence - the rich cattle, her knowledge and familiarity with the correct way in which her son could be successful in his wooing the fairy as well as her approval of this relationship - justifies the theory that the youth stands through his mother in connection with the world of the Lady of the Lake. Thus the deep affinity between the two main protagonists can be explained.

### III.5.7 Supernatural Lapse of Time in Fairy Land

One may need to justify why the above motif has been identified as being contained in this tale. During the whole story there is no actual mention of the other-world. However in an indirect way it is continuously present as the land under the water from where the lady emerges, where she supposedly has lived until now, together with her family, and where she will return with her cattle, after the taboo has been broken.

In addition to this there is the close relationship between this tale and a different cycle, where a man actually does spend time in the otherworld where he follows a beautiful maiden and/or participates in the fairies' life style. (91)

One of the main features of the (Celtic) otherworld is that time flows differently from the way it does in the

human world.

"...for he had got into a country where there was no reckoning of time" (92)

And it is at this point that the Llyn y Fan story contains hidden but nevertheless concrete hints of the presence of the otherworld, since in certain passages there seems to be a discrepancy between the actual time that has passed and the way in which the youth experiences this. Let us look again, in more detail, at the passage when the youth is waiting by the lake for the re-appearance of the lady.

"... but seeking for the same enchanting vision he had witnessed the day before; but all in vain did he anxiously strain his eyeballs and glance over the surface of the lake, as only the ripples occasioned by a stiff breeze met his view, and a cloud hung heavily on the summit of the Fan, which imparted an additional gloom to his already distracted mind.

...

"Hours passed on, the wind was hushed, and the clouds which had enveloped the mountain had vanished onto thin air before the powerful beams of the sun ..." (93)

...

"Impelled by an irresistible feeling, the youth left his mother's house early next morning, and with rapid steps he passed over the mountain. He was soon near the margin of the lake ....

The sheep and goats browsed on the precipitous sides of the Fan, the cattle strayed amongst the rocks and large stones, some of which were occasionally loosened from their beds and suddenly rolled down into the lake; rain and sunshine alike came and passed away; but all were unheeded by the youth, so wrapped up was he in looking for the appearance of the lady." (94)



The next paragraph states that the youth only waits one day for the lady:

"The freshness of the early morning had disappeared before the sultry rays of the noon-day sun, which in its turn was fast verging towards the west as the evening was dying away and making room for the shades of night, ..." (95)

The difference between actual time lapse and psychological experience, particularly for a person in love, is commonly known; waiting impatiently for a loved one can seem to 'last ages'. In Gwyn Jones' version of the tale the suitor tells the lady;

"Lady ... a minute to you was an hour to me." (96)

The Llyn y Fan Fach tale expresses the youth's wait by describing forces of nature in terms that resemble the rotation of seasons. At the same time, particularly with the view to the Welsh changeable and unsettled climate, the description of the weather that displays rain, clouds, and sunshine during one day sounds plausible and realistic. So, while on the surface the plot delivers perfectly acceptable explanations for the described phenomena and while the youth does not actually enter the fairy realm with a different experience of time, it can be stated that after coming over the top of the mountain and sitting by the lake he is certainly not aware of the flow of time in his own world.

In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale the hero does not make the final step into the otherworld, but he surely spends considerable time on its borders. It is almost as if



this waiting and only succeeding at the exact moment when he is about to give up represents an additional test he has to pass in order to gain the lady,

"...and hope had wellnigh abated of beholding once more the Lady of the Lake. The young man cast a sad and last farewell look over the waters, and to his astonishment beheld several cows walking along its surface." (97)

These are, as expected followed by the lady.

### III.5.8 Magic Cow from the Water World

The cattle who follow the lady stem, like her, from the water world and belong, like their mistress, to the magic sphere. The description of the cattle has been compared with accounts of cattle that were raised in Great Britain during the iron age. (98) The relationship between a mythological figure and his/her attributes can be so close that it almost results in an identification between the two, that one can be mistaken for the other.

The important part the cattle play in the tale also supports again the theory that the Lady of the Lake is closely related to the fairy people. In most of the versions of the story cycle discussed here cattle play an important role and are always a symbol of wealth and fertility and, when given to a mortal human being, represent a truly sumptuous gift. Robin Gwyndaf summarises:

"The most valuable possessions of the fairies were their animals: dogs, horses, sheep, goats and

cattle ... The wonderful fairy cattle, associated with a number of mountain lakes in Wales were a remarkable source of wealth to any farmer who owned one of them. Such a cow would give a never ending supply of rich, creamy milk and its offspring would be the wonder of the whole locality. But woe to the farmer who ill-treated a fairy cow..." (99)

Ill treatment also meant the intention to slaughter a fairy cow. "Fairy cattle must not be killed".(100)

Also Rhys refers to the mystic cow, coming out of the lake and bringing plenty and wealth, one that must not be slaughtered.(101) In one tale the slaughter of cattle is prevented by a lady in green who takes the animals back into Llyn Barfog.(102)

Cattle can also appear without their mistress, as in the story of "The Shepherd of Hafod y Garreg".(103) Here a young calf found by the lake is taken home by a farmer who rears it to be a bull. His offspring become the finest cattle in the area until one day the whole herd is called into the lake by

"... a little fat old man playing on a pipe."(104)

The cow is an ancient symbol known throughout the world, and this circumstance points to the fact that stories about (magic) cows must be reminiscent of very old and very high ranking and important traditions. Germanic peoples knew of a taboo to eat magic sacred animals, for example, horses and a magic bull.(105) Von Beit talks about the nourishing magic cow, which is also called the 'green cow'. According to von Beit the green cow means, firstly, a living force, an embodiment

of the principles of life and nourishment and a highest value, a symbol for the fertile motherly providing nature and is thus a symbol of the earth and mother goddess itself.(106) It is probably through the cow as the lady's attribute that the true and full meaning of the Lady of the Lake can be clarified - at least as far as her positive aspects are concerned. In Egypt, Hathor, the Mother Goddess was worshipped in form of a cow, in Indian mythology there is the miraculous cow 'Indras'.(107)

According to Roberts, for what it is worth, the Druid religion also knew of sacred cows.(108) In any case cattle were of high value still in mediaeval Wales, when they could be used as a form of payment.(109) For example, cattle formed part of the payments members of the king's household would receive for their services.(110) It was part of the compensation that had to be paid to the king if his wife happened to be the victim of a crime:

"This is how compensation is made to him [the king] for his wife: a gold plate for him, as broad as his face and as thick as the nail of a ploughman who has been a ploughman nine years; and a gold rod as long as himself and as thick as his little finger, and a hundred cows for every cantred that he has, with a white bull with red ears for every hundred cows among them; and if they are coloured cows, a coloured bull for every hundred cows among them..."(111)

Markale interprets the importance of cattle for Celtic people in the following way:

"As with the Germanic people and the Latins, the oldest money was cattle, and hence considered the only basic wealth."(112)



Even when in the course of history and of Christianisation the full spiritual and material value of cattle was moved into the background, the cow as a symbol for wealth and happiness survived for centuries in mythology. Markale states that the Celtic feudal system was based on cattle. Even the connection between cattle and the female element stayed in existence for a long time and found their expression in the jurisdiction. Cows were one of the objects that could be owned and inherited by women. (113)

### **III.5.9 Not to Strike Supernatural Wife - Loss of Wife for Breaking Taboo**

The previous comparison in Chapter I between stories related to the Llyn y Fan tale has pointed out that the prohibition to strike the wife is sometimes connected with the condition not to know her real name. Markale looks upon this latter taboo as the original one which is reminiscent of a myth where it was essential for the Lady of the Lake's name to remain unknown. (114)

The process of giving names to a person has often been connected to characteristics wished for the child. Also, at a later stage in life, a name may be given to a youth for characteristics that have already been recognised in him. To find out a person's name can be seen as being synonymous with finding out a person's

true character.

Markale sees behind the prohibition not to touch the lady without reason more than three times the belief that this act could mean the equivalent of perfect vision and recognition. (115) Behind this idea lies the concept that knowledge is not only gained by means of using the eyes and ears but also by touching. Therefore touching or striking the wife has to be seen as a core motif, to which - later on - further details were added like, for example, not to strike the wife without a cause, not three times etc., in order to comply with contemporary moral taste and in order to make the events more comprehensible to the audience.

John Rhys gives an example in Welsh folklore where the iron taboo has been used in the opposite way. This tale is located

"near the Source of Afon fach Blaen y Cae, a tributary of the Dwyfach." (116)

In this particular tale a shepherd marries a fairy, and it is the husband who is not allowed to touch iron. When this eventually happens his wife, who belongs to the fairy people, and their children disappear. Rhys states that this is the only tale with this turn around of motifs and he concludes:

"I can only treat it as a blurred version of a story of the more usual type..." (117)

The iron taboo has been set in connection to the Iron Age. Diarmuid O' Giollain, in "The Fairy Belief and

Official Religion in Ireland", makes a connection between Iron Age and Fairy People. He points out that Iron Age ring forts in Ireland are called "fairy forts".(118) For further hints that might point to roots of the legend in the Iron Age see Gwyndaf, "An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai". He also mentions the theory that the fairy people might have originated from pre-historic cave dwellers and lake dwellers who lived in the British Islands before the Celts, who were in possession of iron weapons, invaded the country.(119)

Ken Wilber believes that the period when rational self consciousness developed in the human race fell together with the end of the Bronze Age and the start of the Iron Age (1600 - 400).(120)

In pre-historic time a taboo would have been based on a totem animal which would have been protected through the taboo. The people belonging to a tribe and the totem animal were seen as being identical in essence (participation mystique). Consequently the killing of a representative of the totem species was judged as the murder of a tribe person and ultimately as the worst possible offence against the totem ancestor and the deity itself.(121)

It is evident that the ideology on which the Llyn y Fan tale is based has already moved a long way from



these archaic considerations. However, they cast new light on the close relationship that exists between the Lady of the Lake and the animals who function as her attributes/totem. (122)

Since a taboo is concerned with the most sacred and most important values, breaking it must carry the worst consequences. This is expressed in the tale by stating in all its related versions that the leaving of the wife also meant the disappearance of all the family's wealth and happiness.

Wood offers a more up-to-date interpretation of the iron taboo. She sees marriage as a "stressful rite de passage"

"On the level of human relations the young man's courtship and the bride's conditions can function as a dramatic metaphor for the required adjustments of marriage." (123)

This interpretation falls in line with what has been said so far, only that adjustment in a historic sense meant adjustment to a different culture, customs and, probably, religion.

One has to pose the question: why did the husband not take more care to comply with the set conditions, which, taking into consideration what was at stake, should not have been too difficult? This could be explained through the hypothesis that

"by breaking the taboo, he unconsciously wanted to be rid of her, possibly because he regretted having given himself body and soul to a mysterious

woman of unknown origin." (124)

This theory of Markale contradicts the general tendency of the interpretation so far as it has gone, and it does not explain the husband's reaction to his loss and his attempt to win her back - unless that he did not realise, until after the fatal blow, the full extent his loss would take.

### III.5.10 Suicide in Belief Loved One Dead

In the Llyn y Fan tale the husband mourns the loss of his wife, but he does not commit suicide nor does he show suicidal tendencies in any of the recorded versions. The mentioning of the motif N343 finds its justification earlier on in the plot. The youth interprets the lady's diving away as if she would have disappeared and would have been lost to him. In the wrong - belief that he had lost his beloved for ever he is prepared to commit suicide.

The youth's determination

"to end his life in the element that had contained in its unfathomed depth the only one for whom he cared to live on earth," (125)

can also be looked at from yet another angle. If the lady was the only one for whom he "cared to live on earth", this could imply that he was prepared to give up his own, old life and enter the sphere of his loved

one in order to share her life in the otherworld. It is very dangerous to make this step over the border to the otherworld and is more often than not, life-threatening for humans. See, for example, Rhys' reference to the fairies' noswaith lawen when the fairies were singing and dancing.

"Many used to go to look at them on those nights, but it was dangerous to go too near them, lest they should lure the spectator into their circle; ... and he would be detained by the fairies as long as he lived." (126)

Sometimes the human man is only released after, in 'real life', generations have passed, as happens in a tale from Dyfed. (127)

In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale the hero does not need to finally stand this test, his readiness to do so is sufficient and

"as he was on the point of committing this rash act, there emerged out of the lake two most beautiful ladies..." (128)

Therefore it can be summarised that in our tale the hero can only get together with the lady after he shows that he would be prepared to sacrifice his own life in order to be with her, even if this finally is not required of him.

### III.5.11 Lake Entrance to the Lower World

The perception of a water surface as an entrance to the lower or otherworld is a universal symbol. In Frau



Holle, a fairy tale of the brothers Grimm a good sister Goldmarie and her bad sister Pechmarie jump down a fountain to reach the home of Frau Holle which, strangely, seems to be situated in heaven, since shaking out her beds and letting the feathers fly makes it snow on earth.(129) Also one of the dramas discussed in the following chapter, Gerhart Hauptmann's Versunkene Glocke, will show a fountain as the entrance to another world. The river Styx at the border between the land of the living and the land of the dead has already been mentioned. Fairies were often seen close to water as, for example, the fairies dancing by Llyn Ogwen.(130) They lived underground in caves and were connected with the river Artro "up in the Nancol valley".(131) Robin Gwyndaf also recorded a tale where the magic fairy cow, after bringing plenty to a previous poor farmer couple is in danger of being slaughtered and is called by a mysterious voice back in the lake.(132) The entrance to the otherworld can be located near lakes, rivers and wells.

"The Celts made offerings in pools and lakes. It is clear that the early Celtic peoples regarded all such places as entrances to the otherworld."(133)

According to Diarmaid O Giollain

"there are an estimated three thousand holy wells which were formerly resorted to, though few of which still are, most of these are dedicated to Christian saints, representing thus in Christianised form one of the most ancient of cults."(134)

Even in concepts that do not locate the otherworld under water, a lake or a river may well be seen as borders between this world and the next.(135) The

bible mentions waters above the heavens.(136) This perception of water as a sacred element did withstand changes in history and religion, it persisted throughout the Roman occupation and found a place in Christian beliefs.(137)

So far the terms other- or lower world have been used without differentiation. It has been shown that there are many parallels in the symbolic meaning of the mountain world and the under-water world. Both are magic locations where the hero in a tale has reached the borders of his own world and encounters a supernatural realm. Nevertheless, mountains and under water world cannot always be seen as identical. Within the sphere of the supernatural, the mountain represents rather the spiritual and intellectual aspect, while the water world can be seen as the source for life as such, and as the base of consciousness. These general tendencies have been widely accepted and adapted, for example, in dream interpretation, where water is seen as a symbol for the subconscious and primeval. Also the concept of seeing water as the first, primeval element corresponds to the actual biological beginning of life on this planet.

One of the essential characteristics of the Celtic otherworld is that it is principally inhabited by its own non-human creatures. It is not so much the realm where humans will go after their death. It exists simultaneously with this world, only at another level,

so to speak. The Celtic otherworld does not have to obey the laws of nature, particularly with regards to space and time. The borders between the two realms are transparent under certain conditions and for certain people at certain times. This is exactly the theme that lies at the bottom of many fairy tales and myths. Overstepping the border is always connected to great danger and, one way or another, a price has to be paid for doing this. Here the different flow of time often plays a part.

Mortals feel great affinity with the otherworld, which they mostly experience in its positive aspects. There are forced and coincidental transmigrations, but the longing for the different life there, or affection felt for one of its inhabitants is very often the motive for humans or inhabitants of the otherworld to disregard all threatening dangers and follow a beloved into his or her realm.

In the course of Romanisation and Christianisation it was inevitable that dualistic ideas were confused, mixed up, amalgamated and penetrated by concepts with a different dualistic world philosophy that distinguished between the 'present world' for all living human beings and the realm after death. For example, the fairies were generally seen as immortal or, due to the different lapse of time in fairyland, equipped with such a long life span that it seemed to humans as never-end-



ing. Even though there is no suggestion in Welsh folklore that the fairyland also was the realm of the dead, the grave was sometimes called 'gwlad y tylwyth teg' (the land of the fairies).(138)

### III.5.12 Fairy Women Identical, Twin Goddesses

So far, the detailed investigation of this tale has concentrated on the apparent contradictions as, for example, the male human protagonist and the female supernatural wife, or the mountain world and against the realm under the water. It could be established that, when looked at more closely, those "pairs of contradictions" revealed an underlying affinity and similarity. The youth could be shown as having a close relationship - perhaps subconsciously - with the Lady of the Lake's world and the mountain and the under-water world could be interpreted as symbols with, in many ways, an identical meaning.

When the man chooses between the Lady and her identical twin sister it is a matter of discovering the difference between apparent identity. Robin Gwyndaf calls it the "law of similarity" or the "law of twins",

"with the introduction of the recognition motif - the two sisters who are almost identical."(139)

He makes the connection to the "law of contradiction" (or the 'Law of Contrast').(140)

The hero is given the task of identifying his bride as one of two identical looking sisters. It must seem strange that the hero, after falling in love with a beautiful lady instantly on sight, is given the promise to obtain her if he can identify her amongst identical sisters. Contradictory to what one might expect from a lover, he finds this task very difficult to fulfil. The tale uses here the method of depicting an inner experience or a mental condition by describing external happenings within the plot. See, for example, those stories where an insignificant disguise, like a change of clothes, the darkening the face with mud etc. (as in the Grimm fairy tale Allerleihrauh (141)) stop a person from being recognised. Therefore the motive of choosing the right bride amongst her sisters can again be translated as the task of recognising a person's true personality, an inner essence/value. (142)

On a very superficial, nevertheless valid level, these scenes tell the simple truth that one should not be blinded by a beautiful appearance but that a successful relationship can only be built after the true character of the loved person has been recognised and accepted.

In the Llyn y Fan tale the recognition of the Lady happens by looking at the way the Lady's sandals were tied. We can here identify the shoe motif as it is probably best known in the Cinderella or Aschenputtel story cycle. In those tales the prince can only find

the right bride by finding the girl whose feet are small enough to fit in a shoe. The shoe motif, in particular, if it is connected with blood as, for example, in Aschenputtel, where the bad sisters cut off pieces of their feet in the attempt to make the shoe fit, has been seen as a sexual symbol and a symbol of defloration. (143) Bettelheim's interpretation of the German tale Aschenputtel also resulted in the theory that by recognising Aschenputtel as the right bride, he acknowledges her inner values. (144) Related to the motif 'recognition of the true bride by her shoes' stands the motif 'false bride's mutilated feet' (Cinderella/Aschenputtel) which embodies a symbol of defloration, and perhaps violence. As has been shown the shoe motif can be traced back as far as the Old Testament in the Song of Songs.

In the context of these investigations Bayley's observations regarding the fairy godmother is of interest

"Cinderella's fairy godmother or real mother is variously described as an aged woman, a beautiful queen with a star upon her brow, a cow with golden horns, a water nymph, a mermaid living in a grotto of pearl and coral and a sea-serpent named Labismina." (145)

What could those inner values be that made the youth recognise and acknowledge the lady as her bride? An explanation can be found if the interpretation of shoes as a symbol for sexuality is taken on board. What distinguishes the lady from her sisters is the way in which her sandals are tied. This can be interpreted in the way that the inner quality which made the youth



prefer the Lady of the Lake to her sister could have been her restraint<sup>r</sup> in the area of sexuality. Previous chapters have established that a sexual free life style was one of the major characteristics of the old society of which the lady has been identified as a representative. When compared with her fellow sisters, one of the Lady of the Lake's qualities - in the youth's eye - could have been that she was more inclined to adapt to the rather rigid codes of sexual morality that would have been demanded by a thoroughly Christianised society, of which the youth was a member.

The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach distinguishes herself from her sister in the way that she has tied (confined/restricted) her feet/sexuality, which makes her more suitable to the youth's world that is determined by Christian norms and values. Here lies also an explanation why it had to be just this lady from the underwater people who undertakes the journey to the human world. Therefore one may assume that, from the beginning, the lady already had the appropriate predisposition to come into the human world.

Ultimately this is the point where the hero fails. He does not accept the female principle in its complexity but chooses only one of the sisters. Later investigations will show that his refusal to accept part of her nature will cause the failure of the marriage.

III.5.13 Bride Helps Suitor Perform his Task

It has already been mentioned that from the onset the lady's attitude towards her suitor is an ambiguous one.

Right at the start she takes the initiative - even if this is not obvious straightaway - since it is she who comes to the border between her world and the mortals' realm and thus makes the young man aware of her existence. She vanishes twice before she finally agrees to marry him, but in the tale of Llyn Y Fan Fach the lady shows more affection towards her suitor than, for example, in those versions where the man has to capture the lady by force out of the fairy dance cycle.(146) Also she expresses sorrow when receiving the blows that will eventually lead to her disappearance.

All in all Llyn y Fan Fach tale goes to some lengths to depict the relationship between the lady and the youth as positively as possible. Since the tale, in its present form, has a strictly composed form, this must have been a gradual tendency that was adopted in the course of its oral tradition in order to comply with changing ideas in society.

Nevertheless, the lady's conflicting attitude cannot be totally covered up. She makes it clear that, in order to gain her, the youth has to catch her; and when she finally abandons the relationship, there is little

regret in her words;

"...and rising up, she went out of the house saying, 'The last blow has been struck, our marriage contract is broken, and at an end! Farewell!'" (147)

And without doubt the fate that awaits her is not looked upon as condemnation - the lake, her destination, is referred to as her and the animals' home.

### III.5.14 Father's Consent to Marriage Necessary - Sea God

The Lady of the Lake's father is the second parent figure who appears in the tale and, as such, can be seen as a counterpart to the youth's mother. (148)

The lady of the lake's father is obviously a personification/variation of the sea god who, in spite of the fact that he is living in the female element water, is the master over all its creatures. He is a thoroughly patriarchal figure, a representative of the father right. He is equipped with all classic divine attributes, strength, authority and power. From the beginning he is very taken with the youth's intention.

His consent is necessary even a after the lady has already agreed to marry the youth. It is also the father who demands that the young man chooses the right lady. Afterwards he expressively sanctions the youth's decision:

↳  
"Thou has chosen rightly".



It is the father's task to hand over the dowry. Then the emphasis switches again to the daughter; the father might give the dowry but its size depends on the lady's ability to count. At the end, the father confirms and supports the lady's condition that the husband is not to strike her three times without a cause or she will return back to him into the lake with her stock. (149) The parallel and combined existence of matrilinear and patriarchal tendencies lead to the conclusion that this tale deals with a phase in history when society experienced a great deal of upheaval due to a change in the roles of men and women and the right which fathers had over their daughters and which husbands exercised over their wives. It seems only logical that mythology deals with the conflicts that necessarily had to arise out of this situation and probably tries to find solutions to such conflicts. In a sense the father's statement can be read as an attempt to find a workable compromise between two very different ways of life that contradict each other in many aspects.

At the beginning in this tale the father appears in his light aspect but, as a comparison with parallel stories has already proven, there is also another side to him. He is often depicted as the demonic father of a magical bride who comes out of the depths of the water.

"The father figure as an archetype has been expressed in many symbols that demonstrate his many different characteristics. In general the father figure stands for the creative, spiritual and

stimulating element." (150)

This archetypal figure of a father deity who has been worshipped in all his aspects plays an important part in European fairy tales since these motives stem, to a large extent, from a pre-Christian epoch.

Why does the father suddenly appear as the master of what has, up to then, always been referred to as a female element? This question falls together with the issue why matrilinear societies changed over to patrilinear societies.

Wilber (151) supports the theory that this change coincided with the period during which the 'hero myths' the great epics like, for example, the Iliad and Odyssey were formed, portraying the newly developing EGO equipped with a personal free will. This brought with it a shift from the impersonal 'group loyalty' to the personal and is compatible with:

"einer evolutionären psychologischen Mutation" (152)

After identification with the group and the feeling of belonging to and dependence on the Great Mother Goddess, emancipation from this old concept now meant the EGO setting itself apart, opposite and eventually against the Mother. The emancipated Ego denied all the feminine aspects because they reminded of the Great Mother, who had just recently been overcome, and identified with the masculine aspects. Wilber sets this heroic epoch sometimes between the second and the first

millennium B.C. (153)

### III.5.15 Fairy Gives Man Horses, Cattle etc.

The relationship between fairies and humans is not always a harmonious one; sometimes considerable tension can exist between the groups. Fairies can cause great damage to mortals. Often this damage takes place as an act of revenge for some harm that was done to one of them by a representative of the human race.

Bearing in mind that both worlds are so principally alien to each other, it is understandable that the otherworld can mean great danger for a human being. Thus one could pose the hypothesis that the damage that is done to members of one group by representatives of the other is not so much due to personal reasons but due to the different laws of nature that prevail in the two realms. Also the different lapse of time can play a part in this. Injustice done to the fairy people by an ancestor, which is avenged on a member of the same family generations after the incident took place, seems very cruel and terrible, from the human point of view. The period of time gone by may be insignificant to a member of the fairy people and the feelings of hurt can still be as strong as the need for revenge.

This explains the apparent discrepancy that exists between those stories which tell about passionate love



or mutual support between members of both groups on the one hand, and deep animosity on the other.

In the previous sections the great importance and the high material value that cattle obtained in Celtic societies has been discussed. This means that the gesture to give mortals fairy cattle cannot be over-estimated in terms of its generosity.

A historic approach to this motive's interpretation could again lead to some information about the social and legal regulations of a society that might have formed the base for the later fairy stories. There is, of course, the fact that cattle could be owned by women. It could be used by husband and wife to make payments to each other in case one of them had broken the marriage contract.

"If a woman utter a shameful word to her husband, let her pay to the husband three cows as 'camlwrw', for he is her lord, or let him strike her three blows with a rod of his cubit length on any part he may will, excepting her head. If a man beat his wife without cause, let him pay her 'sarhad' to her according to her privilege. If a woman desert her husband's bed without cause, let her pay him three cows as 'camlwrw' before he takes her back. ... If a woman is found to be a false virgin without denial, her shift is to be cut before and behind, and then her husband is to give her a steer with its tail greased, and if she be able to hold it by its tail, let her take it as her 'agweddi'." (154)

A cow was part of the payment a father had to pay for the upbringing of his child in case he separated from the child's mother. (155) We have seen that the Celtic sense of ownership within the marital union, like the

Celtic concept of marriage was quite different from later Romano-Christian ideas. As has been stated the legal system allowed for various categories of wife a girl could become. Dependent on how long the marriage had lasted, whether the union had been created with or without the consent of the lady's and her family's consent, as well as the reason for the breaking of the marriage was the amount of goods the woman could take with her after the separation. Livestock formed part of the chattels which were split between husband and wife, land, it seems, never. (156) The Llyn y Fan Fach tale is not specific regarding the marriage ceremony that took place between the youth and the Lady of the Lake but the story implies that there were more than one possibilities. The common denominator of all those possibilities seems to have been the fact that the union between a husband and a wife was in the first instance a contract covering the regulations regarding the ownership of the common property. (157)

Also, in the event of the wife's death the husband would not inherit everything. He only kept the profits made by the couple during their marriage, the rest goes back to her family. Markale explains this phenomenon in the following way:

"The woman could not confer to her husband any more rights over her goods than she had herself.." (158)

In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale the father and the sister represent - apart from their individual symbolic mean-

ing - the whole family/clan. The versions which also mention the lady's mother are in accordance with this. The whole community would be involved in drawing up the marriage contract which was thus not so much a private matter but rather a way of regulating and strengthening an economy based, as we have seen, to a great extent on cattle.

### III.5.16 Counting or Measuring Fairy Gift Taboo

A gift from the fairy country cannot be measured by earthly standards. In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale it is not the human who counts the dowry but the Lady of the Lake. Rhys sees in the way she counts a further proof that she is closely related to the fairy people and concludes.

"At any rate our stories seem to suggest that fairy counting did not go beyond the fingers of one hand. The only Welsh fairy represented counting is made to do it all by fives: she counts, un, dau, tri, pedwar, pump, (...) as hard as her tongue can go. For on the number of un she can repeat the five numerals at a single breath depends the number of the live stock of each kind, which are to form her dowry." (159)

Rhys seems to have based the above observation regarding a particular way of counting only in one tale, the legend of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach; there is one further reference which points to the fact that fairies might have used a special system of numeration. Peter Roberts mentions a curious system of numeration used by the fairies, however,



"of its use I must confess I am ignorant,..".(160)  
Roberts thinks that it was a numerical system used for secret writing. The book from which it is taken was written in about the middle of the 15th century, when the Arabic numerals were well known.(161)

**III.5.17 Man Marries Fairy and Takes her to his Home -  
Mermaid Married to Man - Mermaid has Son by Human  
Father - Marriage with Fairy**

Some of the issues relevant to this section have already been discussed in the previous chapter when the question was raised whether the lady should be considered as a mortal's mistress or wife. It seems that we can certainly find traces in this story cycle of a period in history when beliefs and ways of living that deviated from the Christian church's opinion could still exist parallel to those of Christianised communities.

The story tells of the irresistible attraction that can exist between representatives of the natural and the supernatural realms and, as has been stated, both spheres can be interpreted from a historic as well as a psychological point of view. The psychological approach works on the assumption that the dualism contained in the tale and, in the main, represented by the Lady of the Lake and the youth, symbolises respectively

the personal accountable aspect and the impersonal collective subconscious. Both aspects are part of a personality. The following comments are in the main based on C.G. Jung's Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten. (162)

C.G.Jung identifies mythology as an expression of the collective psyche as against the individual psyche. He works on the assumption that the 'naive human mind' did not distinguish between individual consciousness and collective psyche. This might be compatible with Wilber's epoch of 'group belonging'. According to Jung, the age of the "naiven Menschen" saw its deities and demons as realities which existed outside and completely independent of their own psyche. Only during the epoch of enlightenment, according to Jung's theory, was it recognised that deities were not a reality but merely a projection, contained and only existent in the subconscious. This recognition resulted in the 'de-thronement' of the deities, while their psychological functions did not disappear, but sunk into the subconscious. (163) In order to maintain and create a healthy stable personality it is necessary to combine/marry both sides of the personality, conscious rational and subconscious mythological. Failure to do so is the cause, according to Jung, for the present day dilemma of the human race.

"Aber die ihnen [den Göttern] entsprechende psychische Funktion war keineswegs erledigt, sondern verfiel dem Unbewußten, wodurch die Menschen selber vergiftet wurden durch einen Überschuß an



Libido, der vorher im Kult des Götterbildes angelegt war." (164)

We have seen that it seems to have been the excessive, full way of life and worship of the old customs which kept their attraction. According to Jung, it is a surplus on "Libido" which, with the disappearance of old cults and beliefs, had no more channels to escape. Jung identified Libido with psychological energy, which results out of the intensity of the whole psychological content of a personality.

"Libido heißt für mich psychische Energie, welche gleichbedeutend ist mit der Intensitätsladung psychischer Inhalte." (165)

Therefore, the irrational has to be accepted as a necessary and always-present psychological function. The irrational, mythological content of folk tales, myths and dreams has to be seen not as a concrete reality but as a psychological reality, since they do have real effects on present day humans and human life.

The collective subconscious is a mirror image of the world that has been developed through times by means of experiences which man has gathered through history. In the course of time, some of those pictures and images were repeated and strengthened and eventually formed the "Archetype".

"Es gibt überhaupt keine Möglichkeit als daß man das Irrationale als eine notwendige weil immer vorhandene psychische Funktion anerkennt und ihre Inhalte nicht als konkrete (das wäre ein Rückschritt!), sondern als psychische Realitäten hin-nimmt - Realitäten, weil es wirksame Dinge, d.h. Wirklichkeiten sind." (166)

This is why Archetypes, images written in symbolic



language carry messages from the past and contain experiences which we can apply and learn from for the future.

In the tale of Llyn y Fan Fach, in the end we are left with the incompatibility of the two worlds represented by the fairy bride and a mortal man, and the fact that ultimately one person cannot understand the other's world and cannot live in it.

In a way the agreement between the couple seems to be quite one-sided, since for the Lady of the Lake to come out of the water, transmigrate to the mortals' realm, marry and have children means not only the loss of her independence but also the giving up of her magical powers. Von Beit states that in a mythological sense virginity in the fairy realm has not so much a moral as a spiritual meaning, expressing a non-connection to this world.(167) As a consequence of the psychological approach the union of the lady and the youth means the re-uniting of two spheres whereby the subconscious emerges again as a deliberate part of the personality.

III.5.18 Weeping at Child's Birth - Singing at Burial

While in the Llyn y Fan Fach tale the actions of the lady slightly differ from the above quoted motif, its meaning remains the same. Instead of weeping at a child's birth, the lady is reluctant to attend a christening. The tale mentions that this is a special christening, without specifying what kind the special relationship might be between the child and the couple. Other versions state that the crucial incident - the lady's inappropriate behaviour - took place during a christening of one of her own children, as in the story of Llyn Elferch.(168) The Llyn y Fan Fach story moves the events, so to speak, further away from the protagonists. This may be evaluated as an attempt to make her behaviour seem less heartless and inappropriate. In a way the lady's behaviour would be more comprehensible if it was assumed that she wept at a christening of one of her own children. This would indicate that, while some ways of finding compromises between the couple's different beliefs might have been possible, this attempt failed when their own offspring was concerned. The tale also states that, out of this conflict, the father's side emerged as the stronger one:

"When the day arrived the wife appeared very reluctant to attend the christening,"(169)

This is a very delicate formulation inasmuch as the reason for the lady's reluctance, that the distance is too far for her to walk, could also be meant in a

figurative sense. It could also mean that the mental difference between the lady's beliefs and her husband's religion was too big to be bridged in order to enable the lady to participate in Christian ceremonies.

On this level of interpretation the lady's alien behaviour finds a plausible explanation, whereas the plot on the surface offers some inconsistencies. The husband tells his wife to fetch a horse, allegedly as an answer to her problem - since she is not able to walk the distance. If this is the case, however, one must pose the question how would the lady be able to carry out the physically more demanding task of catching a horse? In other versions the reason why the lady goes to catch the horse is given that he was swifter of foot than her husband.

"One day they went to catch a pony, 'the fairy wife, being so much nimbler than her husband, ran before him and had her hand in the pony's mane in no time..' (170)

or in the story of the Lady of Pen y Bonc:

"She was swifter on foot than him and got hold of the colt by the mane..." (171)

The introduction of the lady's gloves is also very sudden and seems to have no obvious function. According to traditional etiquette it would have seemed more logical for the man to go and catch the horse and for the lady to get her own gloves. Now, gloves are very often used in fairy tales and mythology in connection



with the identification of a person or the recognition of a person's true nature, as for example in the previously discussed tales, Kenfig Pool (172) and Llangorse Lake (173).

Thus the semantic content could be summarised as follows: after the couple had lived together for many years, in a crucial moment the lady was no longer able to conform with the regulations and norms of her husband's society and could no longer deny her own true nature. Perhaps this happened at a moment when decisions about the way in which her children were to be brought up had to be made.

Nevertheless, for a time they are able to achieve a compromise. The wife agrees to attend the ceremony, as long as the husband is clear in his mind about her real beliefs. He goes and gets the gloves and lets her live her own life to a certain extent, she goes and catches the horse which - as has been seen - can be interpreted as one of her totem animals.

Christening and burial form the two poles in the life of a Christian. Their incorporation into the Llyn y Fan tale shows the scale of the problem between the two conflicting ethical systems. Also christenings and burials have been administered by the Christian church long before matrimony was considered to be of equal importance. The second event when the lady received a

blow, took place when she cried during a wedding. In one of the recorded versions of the story the informant seemed to be aware of three incidents but did not seem to be able to recall the wedding. Also in the Llyn y Fan tale it is mentioned explicitly that when the couple got married "by what ceremony was not stated". In her justification why she burst into tears during a wedding she possibly makes a statement about her own marriage. During the time when this text was first committed to writing a church marriage ceremony did not yet exist, there was only a subsequent church blessing. The church marriage ceremony developed in the fourteenth century and was made compulsory in the sixteenth century. (174)

Therefore, the wedding, the incident when the second blow happened, may be classified as a later edition in order to form the threefold rhythm. While depicting the ongoing crucial stages of a human life, it is stressed again that the underlying conflict is a religious and a very elementary one. Drewermann discussed in detail this phenomenon where a mythological tale repeats certain motifs within the plot, and where this formal repetition is accompanied by demonstrating the main conflict contained in a tale with increasing intensity. This revision in structure and climax in content is described by Drewermann in form of a helix. (175)

"Eine genauere Betrachtung lehrt nun, daß die Bilderfolgen nicht beliebig angeordnet sind, sondern spiralenförmig um einen spezifischen Problemkern kreisen und in variierenden Symbolen auf einer jeweils neuen Stufe denselben psychischen Gegensatz bzw. Konfliktfall zu artikulieren suchen." (176)

The third scene - singing at a burial - confirms in a strange sense one aspect of the Christian religion, even though this is by no means acknowledged in the tale. It represents the perception of earth as a vale of tears from which death means redemption that should give cause for joy rather than mourning.

Perhaps the main statement, however, from this passage is that the conflict between the Lady of the Lake and her husband is of a religious nature and a very deep one. Even though serious attempts at reconciliation are made on both sides, it cannot be overcome. (177)



III.5.19 Woman Vanishing on Breaking Taboo

From the onset, the relationship between the two protagonists was doomed to failure. For the Lady it was not so much a question of whether, but when the end of the marriage would come.

From an historic point of view the lady's disappearance can easily be read as the separation of a relationship and the returning of the woman to her former family. It has been shown that, according to Celtic law, there was ample provision for the case of divorce, which was regulated exactly, and that the fact that the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach took her livestock with her, corresponds to these regulations. Taking the findings of the previous chapters into consideration, this must lead to the conclusion that this was not a solely Christian marriage. (178)

In all the versions her disappearance follows instantly after the taboo has been broken. There is never any doubt that the couple's fate is irrevocable and, on the part of the lady, there isn't any resistance. It is her husband who suffers.

"Your troubles are likely to commence, as you have the second time stricken me without a cause."

He is left disconsolate and half ruined. Losing his wife also means losing his herd, that is, most of his wealth. A slight differentiation has to be made here.

Firstly, there is the obvious loss of the animals which follow the lady into the lake. Then there is the disappearance of all his luck and prosperity which are connected with the lady in a magical way. Thus, for the first time, she appears here in her divine function as the giver of wealth and fertility. The disappearance of the lady means not only the loss of a wife and her dowry but also, on a spiritual level, the retreat of a female deity including the values she represented and the good fortune she used to bring.

Let us look at the Lady of the Lake's return into the lake, from a psychological as well as an historic point of view. In order to do this we need to start at an early period of time in the development of the human mind, the time before the separation between human consciousness and 'Mother Earth'. From an historic point of view Wilbert sees a time in human development before the "Great Goddess" was worshipped by peoples around the world. (179) Before the period of group belonging, people did not understand the concept of an omnipotent source or an archetypal deity, which is at the base of all manifestations of reality. During these early stages in the human mind's development there were many different simple magic deities, animistic nature spirits etc. There was a god of fire, a goddess of the winds, a god of volcanoes etc. Ken Wilber thinks that 'god' and 'goddesses' are perhaps too suggestive terms in this case, since these deities

were rather personifications of natural forces.

"Vor der Periode der Gruppenzugehörigkeit haben die Menschen nicht verstanden, daß es einen Urgrund oder eine archetypische Gottheit gibt, die allen Manifestationen zugrunde liegt. Es gab die verschiedensten einfachen, magischen, der Natur und den Elementen zugehörigen Gottgestalten, animistische Naturgeister und so weiter. Da gab es einen Gott des Feuers, eine Göttin der Winde, einen Gott der Vulkane, eine Gegengöttin. 'Gott' und 'Göttin' sind in diesem Zusammenhang vielleicht zu suggestive Begriffe, es handelt sich eher um Personifizierungen von Naturkräften." (180)

While the majority of people were still worshipping various deities, a few advanced esoterics already believed that behind all manifestations, all creatures and things on earth was one god/goddess.

"...Die Masse der Menschen verehrte zwar noch verschiedene Götter und Göttinnen. Einige wenige Esoteriker jedoch verstanden bereits, daß hinter allem Sein der Eine und Lebendige Gott (Göttin) des subtilen Bereiches steht..." (181)

Eventually the Ego managed to free itself from the dependence on and the subservience to the Great Mother. Mankind established its own independent self-consciousness equipped with a free will. This process has been described in the heroic epics. But in his urge for independence, the Ego not only emancipated itself from the Great Mother - a process to be regarded as positive - but it suppressed her, which would turn out to be disastrous. The Ego not only demonstrated its newly-awakened self confidence but, also its blind arrogance.

"Das Ego hatte eine große Leistung vollbracht, als es sich von seiner Bindung und Unterwürfigkeit gegenüber der großen Mutter losriß und sein eigenes unabhängiges, mit eigenem Willen ausgestattetes Bewußtseinszentrum etablierte. Das kommt in den Heldenmythen zum Ausdruck. In seinem Drang jedoch, seine Unabhängigkeit zu sichern, hat das Ego die Große Mutter nicht nur transzendiert, was durchaus wünschenswert war, sondern verdrängt, was



sich als verheerend erwies. Dabei hat das Ego ... nicht nur seine erwachte Selbstsicherheit, sondern blinde Arroganz demonstriert." (182)

The maxim was no longer to live in harmony with the heaven but the conquest of the space. There was no longer respect for nature, but a technical attack on nature. In order to rise arrogantly above creation, the Ego had to suppress and deny the Great Mother from a mythological, psychological and sociological aspect.

"Nicht mehr Harmonie mit dem 'Himmel' sondern 'Eroberung des Weltraums', keine Achtung mehr vor der Natur, sondern technologischer Angriff auf die Natur - das wurde die Devise... Um sich arrogant über die Schöpfung erheben zu können, mußten die Ego-Strukturen die Große Mutter mythologisch, psychologisch und soziologisch unterdrücken und verdrängen." (183)

...

"Für den Augenblick wollen wir nur festhalten, daß die Große Mutter, nachdem sie durch den Heldenmythos transzendiert war, nicht in die nachfolgende Mythologie integriert wurde, wie es idealerweise hätte geschehen sollen. Vielmehr wurden Themen, Stimmungen und Strukturen des gesamten Komplexes der Großen Mutter in der nachfolgenden Mythology einfach ausgelassen, und zwar so strikt, daß es des Genius eines Bachofen bedurfte, in verhältnismäßig jüngerer Zeit die Existenz dieser älteren Mutter-Mythologie zu entdecken". (184)

The Great Mother was not integrated into the new mythology, after being surpassed by the heroes' epics. Such a process of transcending the old beliefs into the new Ego-development would have been ideal. But now themes, moods and structures of the whole concept of the Great Mother were simply eliminated and excluded from the newly developing mythology; the Great Goddess vanished completely until it was rediscovered by Bachofen, who wrote in the introduction to Das Mutterrecht:

"Die vorliegende Abhandlung bespricht eine ges-

chichtliche Erscheinung, welche von wenigen beachtet, von niemand nach ihrem ganzen Umfange untersucht worden ist. Die bisherige Altertumswissenschaft kennt das Mutterrecht nicht. (185)

### III.5.20 Animal Disappearing into the Lake - Cooked Animal Comes to Life

The Llyn y Fan Fach tale sees the cows, in the first instance, as being owned by the lady. However, their relationship seems to be a very affectionate one, one of companionship rather than of ownership and it in no way resembles the attitude a farmer's wife would have towards her animals which are bred for human use and consumption. The Lady of the Lake calls all her animals individually, mentioning the "white Bull from the court of the King". This gives a hint, that like their mistress, these animals are from a supernatural, noble origin.

Gwynn Jones' version of the tale needs special attention; not only does it include horses - the lady's second attribute or totem animal - but also other beasts like sheep and goats. They serve as representatives of the whole animal kingdom going in a procession back to the lake. Jones also describes their loving and caring relationship in a very pictorial manner.

"They went, we are told, not in silence, but with the voices of joy proper to their kind. At their head walked the black bull of Esgair Llaethdy with weaving horns and nostrils red and steamy, and behind them three white stallions with whistling manes whose sandals clashed and thudded. And leading the bull was the woman of Llyn y Fan, with the little black calf beside her, quiet now and



sucking at her thumb." (186)

The revival of the slaughtered calf is of the highest significance and can be interpreted in two ways. It can be a demonstration of her true power that extends to the ability to rule over life and death. On a somewhat more modest and symbolic level this gesture can demonstrate a fundamentally different approach to the animal kingdom. This way of thinking does not look upon animals as having fewer rights than humans, and does not look upon animals as gaining their value only through their usefulness to the human race, and not having an independent worth. There are references to the fact that the fairy diet does not include meat. The fairy diet is described by Peter Roberts:

"They neither ate flesh nor fish, but lived on milk-diet, made up into messes with saffron." (187)

T.G. Jones also refers to the non-meat-eating way of life of the fairies. (188) Even the poem in Rhys' version may have a tendency towards a more general, more universal statement. The four grey oxen who follow the procession into the water do not belong to the lady's stock. Here the tale's inherent thoughts reach out beyond the plot in order to make the statement that the lake is the true home of all animals, they may return there safely.



**III.5.21 Dead Mother's Friendly Return - Fairy Mother Gives Son Magic Powers - Fairy as Physician**

The tale's appendix stands out against the rest of the plot insofar as it lifts the whole story into another category. It is this last part that can justify a classification of the whole tale as a legend. The underlying myth is here closer to the surface than in the mere fairy tale-like beginning.

The meetings between the Lady of the Lake and her sons do not, as one might expect, take place at the banks of the lake, but characteristicly "at a place near Dol Howell, at the Mountain Gate". The mother's role and function within the story have changed. She is no longer the lover who is dependent on and participates in the rules and customs of the mortal world. She in herself has changed, she is no longer the creature of the water world, but has become part of the supernatural spiritual sphere. The tale identifies her clearly as a deity, who possesses power over the life and the deeds of her worldly children.

The message she gives to the eldest son is so mighty, that it seems to exceed, with its universal impact, the frame of the previous more 'local' events -

"...and told him that his mission on earth was to be a benefactor to mankind by relieving them from pain and misery" (189)

This can really only be claimed by a saviour, that is, a deity with universal powers. As if the narrator would feel the need to soften the impact of those grandiose statements, they are followed by a more qualifying, more practical statement which puts the previous claims in perspective.

"... through healing all manner of their diseases; for which purpose she furnished him with a bag full of medical prescriptions and instructions for the preservation of health." (190)

With this last passage a shift of emphasis takes place with regards to the main character. The purpose of this scene is to emphasise and claim the Physicians of Myddfai's supernatural source for medical knowledge rather than to show how the lady passes on her great knowledge which, incidentally, up until then has not been mentioned at all in the tale. The fact that this great ability of the lady was not previously mentioned supports strongly any theory that claims the appendix to be originally independent from the rest of the tale. At some stage the tale has been deliberately and consciously composed in its present form, and the story concludes by portraying the Lady of the Lake as a deity who presents herself with full authority and distributes to her children the gift of healing.

The theory shall be posed that from the beginning to the end of the tale the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach undergoes an inner, spiritual transformation.

## The Lady of Llyn Y Fan Fach

To begin with, she is a creature from the water world, a representative of not only a pre-Christian way of life but, from a psychological evolutionary point of view, a state of mind which has been characterised by the idea of 'communal psyche' and 'group belonging.'

We have seen that already, at the tale's beginning, the fact that she goes to the water surface, the border of her world, points to the Lady of the Lake being ready and longing for contact with the human world, represented by the youth who has been seen as symbolising the newly-developed individualistic Ego, which emerged at the end of the mythological epoch. The story tells how the Lady of the Lake could not live in the human world, since she could not totally subdue herself to its restricting rules. However, after a simple return into her own world she would not have been in a position to communicate and help human kind. In order to do this, she first had to undergo a transformation within the supernatural sphere from the subconscious state of mind which experiences unity with the rest of the world because it is not (yet) aware of its own distinctness to the spiritual level which has regained the knowledge that in the end the Ego and the rest of the universe are one.

The Lady of the Lake used her newly-gained power for the benefit of mankind. Her impact reaches beyond the present generation and further than her own personal



level. As a goddess she is no longer only concerned for her natural children but, as other mother goddesses she looks upon all human beings as her children. From this point of view she transforms herself throughout the plot, and the whole tale can be looked upon as a development process, the first transformation being the one from mermaid to human being.

"And the woman instead of being merely a manifestation of nature, a mermaid, is reborn as a human being with a human spirit." (191)

The second stage in her transformation is the transcendental move from an individual human being towards being a goddess with a caring attitude toward the whole of mankind.

The gift of healing was also believed to be a characteristic of the fairies.

"Frequent mention is made in fairy-lore of a secret fairy book that contains the cures of all human disease." (192)

According to Gwyndaf even though the Physicians of Myddfai were famous from the fourteenth century onwards

"there is no recorded tradition connecting them with Fairy descent prior to the written version published by Ab Ithel in 1861." (193)

Apart from this the description of the lady shows reminiscences of the Christian faith, where the virgin Mary is connected to many holy healing wells and water in general. Janet and Colin Bord go so far as to say:

"The Marian cult was and remains widespread, and here Christianity and Paganism are closely and curiously interwoven. Our Lady ... supplanted the pagan water goddesses (but perhaps in name only)." (194)

It is possible that the last part of the story was formulated during Christian times, and modelled upon Christian legends. However, the same process could have happened the other way round - as Christian saints replaced pre-Christian deities while keeping all their attributes and characteristics. This procedure was supported by the church, since it enabled Christianisation without having to break the people's resistance - they wanted to keep their religious customs. Also the possibility of secretly continuing to worship their own deities under a different name, so to speak, might have been welcomed by the followers of the old religion(s). Without question the people had set its heart on the saints. During the thirteenth century their number increased to about 1500.(195)

According to Bayley the similarities between Mary and the Lady of the Lake go even further:

"The knowledge that Mary the Virgin was symbolised by Mare, the Sea, seems to have been intentionally recognised. ... The excessive grace of the lines of her undulating figure recalls the wonderful curves of rolling waves."(196)

In 1649 the Art Censor of the Holy Inquisition ruled that Mary was to be portrayed in a scarf or mantle of blue, her robe was to be of spotless white and her hair had to be blonde.(197)

Bayley evaluates this connection of Mary to pre-Christian deities as positive:

"It is probable that the worship of the Virgin Mary did more to temper the unlovely ferocities of

the dark ages than any other feature of the Catholic faith. The wildest swashbuckler thought it no slur upon his manhood to drop the knee before her wayside shrine, and the miserablest peasant derived some comfort from an 'Ave Maria'." (198)

### III.6 Summary

In its present form the main function of the Llyn y Fan tale is meant to increase, support and justify the reputation and success of the Physicians of Myddfai. The tale was used to give this historically-confirmed family a supernatural/ divine origin which would explain their extraordinary skills. (199)

It could be established that behind this superficial purpose and underneath the firmly-structured tale in its final, present state, lies more than the experiences and ambitions of one particular family. Like the tales discussed in previous chapters the Legend of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach seems to bear witness to drastic religious changes which took place in Wales during the Dark and Middle Ages, changes which had great sociological impact. The effects of these changes must be considered at least as drastic and radical as other religious conflicts that appeared and were recorded in later centuries between different Christian denominations.

"Die Märchen mancher Völker spiegeln eine seelische Situation wieder, in der das Christentum noch nicht aufgesogen, sondern seine differenzierte Lehre nur erst einigermaßen verständlich



erfaßt worden war, während heidnische Vorstellungen eigentlich noch die Glaubenswelt erfüllen." (200)

We have seen that when putting the present version of a tale in relation to the historic epoch during which it developed ample traces of a pre-Christian way of life and thinking can be found. Even though most stories out of the Llyn y Fan cycle make the fairy woman/The Lady of the Lake the mortal's wife, there are strong underlying hints about an earlier stage of the tradition when the concept of 'concubinage' would not have been morally condemned and was even regulated in official Celtic legislation.

This tale's interpretation leads back not only into the mythological age, the age of the Great Goddess, but even into an epoch before this when animism and totemism must have been the way in which mankind expressed religious feelings. All the text passages which point to an identification (secret identity) between the lady and her animal attributes fall into this area. There were the cattle who precede and follow her, also her connection to horses and, in a more subtle not always obvious way, the white birds/swans, for which she could be mistaken.

These ancient elements, however, have sunken very deep into the tale's motif composition. More recent religious and social conflicts lie closer to the surface, setting Roman-Christian ways against the old Celtic

culture.

"Now, it is not always true that the tale shows a 'desacralization' of the mythical world. It would be more correct to speak of a camouflage of mythical motives and characters, instead of "desacralization", it would be better to say "rank-loss of the sacred." (201)

The theory can be safely posed that the whole oral tradition of the Llyn y Fan story and related tales in the crucial forming stages took place in parallel with the church's struggle to gain the upper hand in Europe.

The Lady of the Lake is the personification of a concept and an image strong enough to survive opposition and suppression for centuries. It has already become apparent that the female protagonist of the Llyn Y Fan tale is, in the first instance, a representative of the Great Goddess who was portrayed in many appearances and was given individual attributes as, for example, bread. (202) But all images lead eventually to the image of the Earth or Mother goddess, patron of growth and fertility. We have also touched on her second, darker aspect, where she is the bringer of death and as such was feared by people.

The idea of the female deity has proven so strong that, in order to justify its survival into present times, there must be more to it than a purely historic dimension.

It is evident that a tale like the story of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach bears little resemblance to the world



in which we find ourselves today. Neither did it reflect the living circumstances of many previous generations who, nevertheless, took care to secure its survival in the oral tradition. Therefore, the hypothesis is proposed that it is not so much the historic aspect that kept the people's interest in these tales alive, but the psychological or inner aspect. An understanding of a tale at this level can be, to a great extent, a subconscious process of timeless validity.

We have seen that motifs like 'not to touch the wife' can be interpreted as the prohibition not to recognise her in her true essence.(203) The quite obvious outer conflicts contained in the tale, dealing with social and religious problems of a particular historic period, can be transferred to an inner sphere, where they would reflect one person's struggle and striving for identity, inner harmony and wholeness. The theory that the story of Llyn y Fan Fach describes really the process of self recognition is backed by the many instances where we have traced a secret identity between apparently conflicting motifs, and vice-versa, where it was essential to see differences in an apparent identity when, for example, looking at the lady's identical twin sister. Another very strong argument in favour of this theory is the scene where the lady appears for the very first time, where she sits on the surface of the lake, and while combing her hair, uses the water surface as a



mirror. Thus on the onset of the tale the symbols and motifs formulate a theme: in order to recognise one's true self it is essential to see one's own personality as a mirror image emerging from the subconscious sphere:

The tale's relevance for each individual will have to be proven by means of an approach strongly based on Drewermann.

"Unter der Voraussetzung der subjektiven Deutung nämlich, daß alle auftretenden Personen, Gegenstände und Umstände als Facetten und Aspekte ein und derselben Psyche zu verstehen sind, kann die Herausbildung der psychischen Ganzheit in den Mythen, Märchen und Träumen auch als Prozeß der Selbstfindung, bzw. Selbstwerdung bezeichneten." (204)

It will be one of the tasks of the next chapter of this thesis to try and prove the survival of some version of the Lady of the Lake throughout the ages into modern times by means of selected examples.

III.7 Footnotes

- (1) Williams, John, (Ab Ithel), ed., The Physicians of Myddfai, Meddygon Myddfai. English Translation by John Pughe (Llandoverly, 1961). Juliette Wood proposes that the present tale and its English translation could be based on two manuscripts, a 'genuine' mediaeval manuscript and the 'Iolo Manuscript' which she suspects to be not of original mediaeval origin. (Wood, Juliette, "The Fairy Bride in Wales", Folklore vol.103 1992, p.65).
- (2) See also Gwyndaf, Robin, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai (Cardiff, 1991) p.4.
- (3) Rhys, John, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) pp.2ff.
- (4) For further publications and folk tale collections containing the Llyn y Fan Fach tale see Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend p.4. Also T. Gwynn Jones has included a shortened version of the tale which he took from Rhys' collection. See Jones, T. Gwynn, Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom (Cambridge - Suffolk - New Jersey, 1979) pp.61ff.
- (5) If the dialect pronunciation is used 'glas' and 'maes' form a rhyme.
- (6) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen gesammelt durch die Brüder Grimm (Frankfurt, 1979) vol.I, pp.143ff.
- (7) Ibid. pp.187ff.
- (8) This theory depends on the exact wording of this particular text passage.
- (9) Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.6. See also here for a 'Mygratory legend' motif classification.
- (10) For a discussion of the use of the number 'three' within the Llyn y Fan Fach tale see also ibid. p.5.
- (11) See in particular the works of Drewermann, Eugen, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese (Olten, 1985); Fromm, Erich, Märchen, Mythen, Träume (Hamburg, 1981); Jung, C.G., Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten (Frankfurt, 1980); Von Beit, Hedwig, Symbolik des Märchens, (Bern, 1986).
- (12) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.14.
- (13) Ibid. p.17.
- (14) Ibid. p.15.

'The way in which one can come closer to a fairy tale's meaning is similar to the method of dream interpretation.'

It has become apparent that the story contains elements of the species fairy tales, myths and legends regardless of a particular pattern of classification, and in the following there will be made no strict differentiation between those terms.

(15) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.15.

(16) Thus in this particular aspect they have to be seen in contrast to those tales where the hero also finds his luck and happiness by suddenly beholding a beautiful lady, where however the hero keeps the active role, while the lady/princess remains passive with the only task to be conquered or rescued. See for example Grimm, Die drei Federn vol.II, pp.18ff.)

(17) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.155.

(18) Jones, Gwyn, Welsh Legends and Folk Tales (London, 1955) pp.182ff.

(19) Ibid. p.182f.

(20) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.338.

(21) Ibid.

(22) Ibid.

(23) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I, pp.153ff, vol.II, pp.211ff, vol.II, pp.302ff.

(24) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.339.

(25) Bettelheim, Bruno, Kinder brauchen Märchen (München, 1980) p.98.

(26) Jones, Gwyn, Welsh Legends and Folk Tales p.183.

(27) Ibid.

(28) Scruton, Robert, The Other Atlantis (London, 1977) p.72.

(29) Wilber, Ken, Halbzeit der Evolution (Bern - München - Wien, 1984) p.282.

'The mountain motif is representative for the transcendental height.'

(30) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.3.

(31) For a detailed description and explanation of the motif 'mountain as the site of a hieros gammos' see



Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.403f.

(32) Exodus 19 - 20.

(33) Psalm 48,2.

(34) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.404.

(35) Psalm 48,2.

(36) Von Beit sees the fact that a character lives in close proximity to a (magic) mountain as indication that he is inclined to dedicate himself to inner sight/vision. (Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.109)

(37) Ibid. pp.47f.

(38) See to this Die schönsten Märchen aus tausendundeiner Nacht (Stuttgart, 1969) pp.167ff.

(39) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I, pp.300ff.

(40) Bayley, Harold, The Lost Language of Symbolism (London, 1951) p.334.

(41) Chinese - pan, Phoenician - pennah, Cornish ben, Scotch - ben. The root pen or ben entered into mountain names like for example the Apennines, Pennine Range, Crecian Pindus, Peruvian Pindra. (See to this Bayley, The Lost Language of Symbolism p.334.)

(42) Ibid.

(43) In the mythology of the Atzteks this contradicting identity has been even more condensed by naming a legendary mountain 'the white lady' (Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.48.

(44) Trevelyan, Marie, Folk Lore and Folk Stories of Wales (East Ardsley - Yorkshire, 1973) p.10.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Gwyndaf, Robin, Fairylore, Memorates and Legends from Welsh Oral Tradition (New York - London, 1991) p.157.

(47) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution pp.137ff.

(48) Ibid. p.142.

'The dominating figure in the religions of cultures that are in the development stage of the mythological group belonging, is, without doubt the Great Mother.

...

We know her as a goddess in the shape of a cow with the name "Hathor" in the relief of Narmer.'

(49) Ibid. p.143.

(50) Ibid. p.176.

(51) Ibid.

'We differentiate between the simple idea of the mythical mother and the Great Goddess. We realise that the great majority of group-member-Egos was ruled by the Great Mother. For this majority the mythical mother acted as chthonian destroyer of the conscious, the mighty and devouring Mother Earth, who pulled the Ego back into the body, back to the instincts, back to the dark inner side of the earth, whereby she prevented the further evolution of the unconscious earth to the super-conscious heavens.'

(52) Mc. Kenna, Catherine, "The Theme of Sovereignty in Pwyll", The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies vol. XXIX No.1 November 1980, p.46.

(53) Ibid.

(54) Ibid. p.47.

(55) Ibid.

(56) See the in chapter II discussed tale where Clerk Willin witnessed the queen turning (back) into an ogress.

(57) Jones, T. Llew, "Y Gaseg Dduwies o'r Llyn", Llafar Gwlad No.17, p.8.

(58) Ibid.

(59) In Ireland, Macha, who, though about to give birth, has to participate in a horse race which she wins, but which, after giving birth, causes her death.

(60) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.149.

(61) Bayley, The Lost Language of Symbolism p.243.

(62) Bartrum, P.C., "Fairymothers", The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies, vol. XIX 1962, pp.6ff.

(63) Bord, Colin and Janet, Earth Rites (St.Albans - Granada, 1982) p.115.

(64) Ibid.

(65) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.254.

'Where there is The Other, there is fear. And the first other being we experience is the Great

Mother'

(66) Ibid. p.118.

'Symbols display or create something which belongs to both - a higher level of reality, that is the Lady's transcendent aspect - and they reflect and represent at the same time lower aspects of reality.'

(67) In China, for example, the mother goddess appears as Queen mother from the Kunlun Mountain. She leads off the round dance of the fairies and rules over change and growth in the world. (Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.166)

(68) Bayley, The Lost Language of Symbolism, 1951, p.173.

(69) Ibid. p.169.

(70) Ibid. p.179.

(71) Ibid.

(72) Everyday language recognises this relationship between the movement of water and the act of combing the hair (for example, a ship combing through the waves/hair falling over the shoulder in waves). In German, a perm is called 'Dauerwelle'.

(73) See for example in German; der Mond (masc.) - die Sonne (fem.)

(74) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.503.

(75) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.149.

(76) Bord, Colin and Janet, Sacred Waters Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland (London, 1985) p.4.

(77) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.152.

'Bread nourishes and maintains the body, and a loaf of bread can be comprehended as a symbol of the human body and human consciousness. The latter one contributes substantially to human awareness of life and to the development of his personality.'

This development can involve a process that takes place subconsciously and indeed the tale seems to indicate that whatever attitude the youth has to demonstrate in order to gain the lady, it is not a conscious one..

"...and unconsciously offering to herself the



provision of barely bread and cheese with which he had been provided when he left home."

- (78) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.127.
- (79) Narváez, Peter, The Good People. New Fairylore Essays (New York - London, 1991) p.492.
- (80) Wood, Juliette, "The Fairy Bride in Wales", Folklore vol.103 1992, p.65.
- (81) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.50.
- (82) Bolstad Skjelbred, Ann Helene, "Rites of Passage as Meeting place", Narváez, The Good People pp.217f.
- (83) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.65.
- (84) Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.6.
- (85) Ross, Anne, Pagan Celtic Britain (London -New York, 1967) p.206.
- (86) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.112.
- (87) Perhaps the custom of throwing bread into water in order to find out the truth stands in connection with this, for example, at two wells in Llandbedrog (Caernarfon) a thief's victim would discover who was the thief by dropping pieces of bread into the water while speaking the names of the suspects. The bread sank when the thief was named. (Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.67.)
- (88) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.98.
- 'The two basic images which appear in almost every fairy tale - may it be one on its own or both together - are the ones of the father and the mother.'
- (89) Ibid. p.97.
- (90) Ibid.
- 'The parent images do not carry human - personal characteristics but have always been looked upon as having divine attributes.'
- (91) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.85, pp.111f., pp.199f., pp.152ff.
- (92) Ibid. p.113.
- (93) Ibid. pp.4f.

- (94) Ibid. pp.5f.
- (95) Ibid. p.6
- (96) Jones, Gwyn, Welsh Legends and Folk Tales p.15.
- (97) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.6.
- (98) For further possible historical references that might support this theory see for example Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.7, and Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.61.
- (99) Gwyndaf, "Fairyllore", Narváez The good People p.163.
- (100) Ibid. pp.189f.
- (101) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.144f.
- (102) Ibid.
- (103) Ibid. p.149.
- (104) Ibid.
- (105) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.147.
- (106) Ibid. pp.169f.
- (107) Ibid. p.159.
- (108) Roberts, Peter, Popular Antiquities of Wales (London, 1815) p.31.
- (109) Jenkins, Dafydd, The Law of Hywel Dda (Llandysul - Dyfed, 1986) p.134. See also ibid for the statement that  
"all payments were formerly made in cattle"
- For a detailed explanation of the value of cattle see ibid. pp.175.
- (110) Ibid. pp.20ff.
- (111) Ibid. p.154.
- (112) Markale, Jean, Women of the Celts (London, 1975) pp.31f.
- (113) Charles-Edwards, T.M., "Nau Kynywedi Teithiauc", Jenkins, Dafydd and Owen, Morfydd, E., The Welsh Law of Women (Cardiff, 1980) p.30. See to this also Jenkins, Dafydd, Jenkins, "Property Interests in the Classical Welsh Law of Women", Jenkins and Owen, The Welsh Law of Women, pp.69ff; as well as Richards, Melville, The Laws of Hywel Dda (Liverpool, 1954), pp.67ff. See

however *ibid.* p.70, the list of items to be shared between husband and wife in the case of a separation does not include cattle. An explanation for this could be that at an early stage of development in the Welsh legal system cattle belonged in the first instance to the kindred and thus a separating couple could not share what did not belong to them in the first place. (Jenkins, Property Interests in the Classical Welsh Law of Women p.84). .

(114) Markale, Women of the Celts p.123.

(115) *Ibid.*

(116) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.108.

(117) *Ibid.*

(118) O Giollain, Diarmuid, "The Fairy Belief and Official Religion in Ireland", Narváez, The Good People p.199.

(119) Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.6.

(120) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.228.

(121) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.102.

(122) The investigations have shown that the lady is also equally strongly connected to horses. However, here it has to be said that taboos in connection to horses can be rather found in the Germanic culture where it was forbidden to eat horses who were regarded as being magical and divine and thus untouchable. (*Ibid.* p.147)

(123) Wood, The Fairy Bride in Wales p.60.

(124) Markale, Women of the Celts p.62.

(125) Rhys, Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx p.7.

(126) *Ibid.* p.85.

(127) *Ibid.* pp.152ff. See also *ibid.*, p.155, the tale about the "Maiden Castle."

(128) *Ibid.* p.7.

(129) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I, pp.168ff.

(130) Gwyndaf, Fairylore, Memorates and Legends from Welsh Oral Tradition p.174.

(131) *Ibid.* p.181.

(132) *Ibid.* pp.189f.



- (133) Ross, Anne, Pagan Celtic Britain (London - New York, 1967) p.24. See also the description of the pre-Celtic pit in Swanwish, Hampshire (ibid. p.27).
- (134) O Giollain, The Fairy Belief and Official Religion in Ireland pp.199f.
- (135) See for example the concept of the river Styx which has to be crossed in order to reach the Hades.
- (136) 1 Mose 1,6-8.
- (137) "The Roman cult of water deities and of springs was [then] highly developed and it provided one sphere in which the two traditions Roman and native could most easily become combined." (Ross, Pagan Celtic Britain p.33).
- (138) Jones, T.G., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom (London, 1930) p.54.
- (139) Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.4.
- (140) Ibid.
- (141) Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.II, p.28.
- (142) The motif can also be identified in Irish mythology. See "Celtic Mythology", Library of the World's Myths and Legends Proinsias Mac Cana 1983, p.90.
- (143) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen pp.293ff.
- (144) See for example Bettelheim's exegesis of the fairy tale Aschenputtel. (Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen pp.308ff.)
- (145) Bayley, The Lost Language of Symbolism p.197.
- (146) See the 'Walter Map' version and related tales in chapter I.
- (147) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.10.
- (148) Von Beit calls it the 'half dark - half light' father figure, who personifies the spirit concealed in nature. (Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.335).
- (149) As has been shown, the possibility for a woman to break off a marriage under certain conditions and return back to her family was given in Celtic legislation.
- (150) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.97.
- (151) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution pp.218f.

(152) Ibid. p.219.

'an evolutionary psychological mutation.'

(153) Ibid.

(154) Melville, Richards, The Laws of Hywel Dda pp.67f.

(155) Ibid. For a reference that a woman's 'agweddi' could also consist of twelve milk cows see Charles-Edwards, Nau Kynywedi Teithiauc p.30.

(156) For further details see McAll, Christopher, "The Normal Paradigms of a Woman's Life in the Irish and Welsh Texts", Jenkins, Morfydd, The Welsh Law of Women pp.7ff; as well as Jenkins, "Property Interests in the Classical Welsh Law of Women", Ibid. pp.69ff.

(157) Jenkins, Property Interests in the Classical Welsh Law of Women p.86.

(158) Markale, Women of the Celts pp.33f.

(159) Rhys, Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx p.418.

(160) Roberts, Popular Antiquities of Wales p.231.

(161) For further details see ibid. p.231.

(162) Jung, Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten pp.94ff.

(163) Ibid. pp.94f.

(164) Ibid.

'But the psychologic function that corresponded to them [the gods] were by no means redundant, but fell into the subconscious, which lead to the human being poisoned through a superfluous of libido which was hitherto expressed in the cult of their deity'

(165) Ibid. p.55.

'For me 'Libido' is psychological energy which is synonymous with the intensity and energy of the psychologic contents [of the human mind]'

(166) Ibid. p.95.

'There is no other possibility than to acknowledge the irrational as a necessary - for always present - psychological function and to accept its content not as a concrete reality (which would be a step backwards) but as a psychological reality, reality because we are dealing with effective phenomena,

i.e. realities.'

(167) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens pp.283f.

(168) See for example chapter I, Rhys 6, (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.27ff.

(169) Ibid. pp.8f.

(170) See chapter I, Rhys 14, Belene (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.67).

(171) Chapter I, Rhys 15, The Lady of Pen y Bonc (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p,61).

(172) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.403f.

(173) Trevelyan, Folklore and Folk Stories of Wales pp.10f.

(174) Heussi, Karl, Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte (Tübingen, 1979) p.224.

(175) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.187.

(176) Ibid. p.188.

'A closer look reveals that the sequence of pictures have not been arranged at random, but circulate in form of a helix around the core of a specific problem. They try to articulate in varying symbols on an always new level the same psychological contradiction, respectively conflict.'

(177) The story puts great emphasis on describing the blows not as a deliberate violent action but as incidental events.

(178) For the development of Celtic legislation regarding marriage and divorce see also Davies, R.R. "The Status of Women and the Practice of Marriage in late-mediaeval Wales", Jenkins, Owen, The Welsh Law of Women p.104.

(179) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.167.

(180) Ibid.

'Before the period of 'group-belonging' humans did not understand, that there is one origin or one archetypal deity which is at the base of all manifestations. There were many different, simple, magical deities, animistic nature spirits, etc., belonging to nature and the elements. there was a god of fire, a goddess of the wind, a god of volcanoes, a goddess opposed to him. The terms 'god' and 'goddesses' are in this context perhaps



too suggestive, we are here rather dealing with the personification of natural forces.'

(181) Ibid. p.168.

'... However, the majority of people were still worshipping various gods and goddesses. Nevertheless a few esoterics already understood that behind everything that exists is the one and the living god (goddess) of the subtile sphere...'

(182) Ibid. p.220.

'The Ego had achieved a great performance, when it freed itself from its connection and its subservience towards the Great Mother and established its own independent centre of consciousness, equipped with an own will. This is expressed in the hero epics. However, in its urge to secure its independence, the Ego had not only transcended the Great Mother, which would have been thoroughly desirable, but which suppressed turned out to be disastrous. Thereby the Ego has not only demonstrated its awakened self confidence but blind arrogance.'

(183) Ibid. p.220.

'No longer harmony with the 'heavens' but 'conquest' of the space', no more respect for nature, but technological attack of nature became the maxim ... In order to be able to elevate oneself above the creation, the Ego-structures had to suppress the Great Mother mythological, psychological and sociologically.'

(184) Ibid. p.222.

For the moment let us just establish that the Great Mother, after having been transcended through the hero epic, was not integrated into the subsequent mythology, which ideally should have happened. Rather themes, moods and structures of the whole complex of the Great Mother were simply eliminated in the following mythology, and this happened so strictly, that it took Bachofen's genius to discover in relatively recent times the existence of this older mother mythology.'

(185) Bachofen, Johan, Jakob, Das Mutterrecht (Frankfurt/Main, 1980) p.1.

'The dissertation here presented discusses a historic phenomenon, which has been noticed by only a few people, and has been investigated by nobody to its whole extent. The past classical science does not know the mother right.'

(186) Jones, Gwyn, Welsh Legends and Folk Tales p.193. With regards to the description of the bulls in different versions there seems again to be a particular

closeness between the symbolic content of black and white which, even though being contrasting colours, seem to carry the same semantic message. See for example the "white bull" in the Rhys version.

- (187) Roberts, Popular Antiquities of Wales p.193.
- (188) Jones, TG., Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom p.55
- (189) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx p.11.
- (190) Ibid.
- (191) Harding, Esther, Woman's Mysteries (London, 1971) p.152.
- (192) Narváez, The Good People p.489.
- (193) Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.5.
- (194) Bord, Sacred Waters, Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland p.23.
- (195) Heussi, Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte p.225.
- (196) Bayley, The Lost Language of Symbolism p.236.
- (197) Ibid.
- (198) Ibid. p.232.
- (199) For a detailed discussion of the tradition about the Physicians of Myddfai traceable until the eighteenth century, and the status of physicians in Mediaeval Wales in general see Gwyndaf, An Early Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai p.8.
- (200) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.181.

'The fairy tales of some peoples depict an inner situation where the Christianity had not yet been absorbed, but when its complicated doctrine had only just been comprehended while pagan ideas still formed the true base of people's beliefs.'

- (201) Eliade, Mircea, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries (London - Glasgow, 1968) p.200. This opinion has not been without opposition. Walter thought that

'When the Romans left the province, there were surely no heathens left.' (Walter, Das alte Wales. Ein Beitrag zur Völker-Rechts- und Kirchengeschichte (Bonn, 1859) p.217.

- (202) Ross, Pagan Celtic Britain p.206. The goddess could also be depicted with fruit or with babies.

(203) Rhys also mentions a tale giving an apparent historic background to the 'touching with iron taboo' (Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.105f. Here apparently a folk tale was used to explain the real disappearance of a human girl. That this was apparently possible and acceptable could be an indication with regards to the strength of the belief in fairy stories.

(204) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese p.191.

'Under the precondition of the subjective interpretation, i.e. that all appearing persons, objects and circumstances must be understood as facets and aspects of one and the same psyche, one can name the evolving of the psychological wholeness in myths, fairy tales and dreams also as a process of self-recognition respectively self-development.'



IV GERHART HAUPTMANN'S FAIRY TALE DRAMAS "DIE  
VERSUNKENE GLOCKE" AND "UND PIPPA TANZT"

It was the objective of the previous chapters to demonstrate the Lady of the Lake's survival throughout the centuries into modern times by means of certain chosen examples. The following chapter is dedicated to the present 'modern' age. One always regards one's own historic period as special and, to a certain extent, fundamentally different from previous epochs, even if such a view can only be partly justified. It is naturally the "now" we are concerned with when posing the question what relevance these motives have.

Let us examine two examples taken from German literature of the turn of the century to demonstrate how these motives found their manifestation in the stage works of one particular author. The two 'fairy tale dramas' Die Versunkene Glocke and Und Pippa Tanzt now belong to the lesser-known works of Gerhart Hauptmann.

IV.1 Hauptmann's Symbolism

Hauptmann combines in his works a strong contemporary naturalistic tendency with the romantic tradition. His inclination towards the mythical elements can be traced

back to his biographical background. This circumstance will be of interest during the following investigations insofar as it shows how universal symbols can be manipulated in order to carry a work's or author's individual message.

Literary scholars have always had considerable difficulties when attempting to explain the 'irrational element' in Hauptmann's works, which were otherwise perceived to be of a naturalistic nature. Contemporary critics have rarely been successful in doing justice to Hauptmann's complete works. They either saw him as a naturalistic poet or as

"einen von bürgerlicher Sentimentalität zum Verzicht auf aufrichtige Enthüllung sozialer Mißstände in der Kunst verführten Schriftsteller"(1)

They judged his work from their respective viewpoint. Sigmund Bytkowski, for example, stated that Gerhart Hauptmann used the naturalistic style of writing in the most consequent way when compared with contemporary authors.(2) However, with this statement Bytkowski ignored all the non-naturalistic pieces of the author which, in 1908, had already been published.(3)

Hauptmann displayed early on in his life a tendency towards the mystic. This may partly be explained by the fact that his mother was a deeply religious woman who inclined towards pietistic and world-rejecting pioussness.(4) Hauptmann wrote:

"Ich hatte die über uns waltenden Mächte in ihrer unberührten Furchtbarkeit oder furchtbaren Unbe-

rührtheit kennengelernt. (5)

Fisher stated that the materialism and the rationalism of those years provoked a yearning for the metaphysics.

"Der Materialismus und der Rationalismus dieser Jahre fordern den Willen zur Metaphysik heraus." (6)

When comparing the dramas with the Lady of the Lake cycle it needs to be borne in mind that a differentiation has to be made between the occurrence of mythological symbols in traditional folklore and their use in a particular pieces written by one author. All authors who, for example, wrote romantic fairy tales made use of the symbolic expressions of the folk tale, however an interpretation of this symbolism necessarily discloses the tendency towards subjectivity in a writer. (7)

#### IV.2 The Sunken Bell

To begin with The Sunken Bell was a very successful piece. It had its premiere on 12 December 1896 at the 'Deutschen Theater' in Berlin. One year after it was first published, the 34th edition of the drama appeared. (8). However in Paris the staging of La Cloche Engloutie was a complete failure. (9) In America the piece was given greater attention. The Sunken Bell was shown during the seasons 1899/1900 in Boston, Chicago, St. Louis and other towns, and also during the winter of 1906/1907. (10) Only one year after its



initial publication the drama was translated into English. (11) However the piece soon disappeared from the theatre programmes, as in Germany, for example.

The following investigations will focus on the characters and motives of the dramas that have parallels in the folk tale cycles already discussed. The two female protagonists of the two dramas show a relationship to other characters in Hauptmann's works. It will emerge that they can also be interpreted as personifications, however peculiar, of the Lady of the Lake. Text passages are either quoted from Hans-Egon Hass' edition of Hauptmann's complete works (12) or in the English version (13). Where the German version is chosen, because it was deemed necessary to underline statements made in the original text, my own translation can be found in the footnotes.

#### IV.2.1 Summary of the Plot

##### Dramatis Personae:

Heinrich - a bell founder  
 Magda - his wife  
 their children, two sons aged five and nine  
 a (female) neighbour  
 the vicar  
 the village teacher  
 the barber  
 the old Wittichen, a mythological figure  
 Rautendelein - an elflike being  
 Nickelmann - an 'elementary spirit'  
 a Waldschrat - a spirit of the forest  
 elves  
 little woodmen and woodwomen  
 six dwarfs

The locations are the mountains and a village situated at the bottom of the mountains

The Sunken Bell tells the tragic story of Heinrich a bell-founder. He has made a new beautiful bell which is about to be inaugurated in a church up in the mountains. On its way there the bell loses its balance and falls off the cart that was being pulled by oxen and falls into a lake.

The real reason why the bell fell into the lake is that the inhabitants of the mountain world - a mixture of forest spirits, elves and other mythological creatures - do not want the bell, which symbolises the advent of Christianity, intruding into their realm. The sinking of the bell was 'Waldschrat's, a wood spirit's, deliberate doing.

In some mystical way Heinrich finds his way up into the mountain world where he meets Rautendelein, a beautiful elf-like being. They fall in love. Heinrich turns his back on the human world and his family, he wants to stay up in the mountain with Rautendelein and create a divine work of art, a new glockenspiel, far superior to the old bell. Eventually, however, he has to realise that his attempt is doomed to failure, because what he tried to do is not possible for a mortal human being. In the end he fails not only himself, but also brings desperation and death to his family and also to Rautendelein who remains tied to her old world, the magical realm. She will live as the wife of Nickelmann, the king of the under-water world.

In the first instance, a chronological approach has been used in the following analysis of this fairy-tale tragedy Die Versunkene Glocke. This will aid a better understanding of the character interpretations which follow for those readers not familiar with the drama. It will also offer an opportunity to incorporate passages and motifs that are relevant to the investigations of the past chapters, motifs which will not be explicitly mentioned again in the following description and interpretation of the piece's main characters.

## IV.2.2 First Act

The first Act takes place on a mountain meadow. On the meadows is a little hut, the Wittichen's home, as well as a fountain.

The first person to appear is Rautendelein, described as an elf-like being, half child, half woman, combing her thick red-golden hair.

Immediately it becomes obvious that religious conflict plays a part in the play. Rautendelein demonstrates her closeness to nature and the animal kingdom by talking to a bee. She says that the "Buschgroßmutter" (14) hates bees because they deliver wax for church candles.

"..in Ungnad bist du.  
Die Buschgroßmutter wirft 'nen Haß auf dich,  
weil du mit Wachs der Kirche Opferkerzen ver-  
sorgst." (15)

We also find out that Rautendelein's conception of herself has connotations with pre-Christian customs and concepts. She calls herself a

"schönes, goldhaariges Waldfräulein", (16)

and talks about her "Zwillingsbrüstlein" (17) and then compares herself to a Germanic goddess

"bin ich nicht schön wie Freia?" (18)

John Walz denies a connection with pagan religions. His opinion needs to be taken seriously since the forest spirits and non-Christian deities mentioned in the play have no direct influence on the plot even



though they are mentioned frequently:

"It will be seen on closer inspection that the Germanic gods do not enter into the play very seriously. They are mentioned here and there, but they exert no influence directly or indirectly." (19)

In the first Act we are also introduced to two further inhabitants of the mountain world who will play a larger role during the coming events. First, there is Nickelmann, the old water spirit. He is deeply in love with Rautendelein and suffers greatly when he has to realise that she only has eyes for Heinrich. Nickelmann can also be seen as having connotations with the father of the Lady of the Lake: both are kings of the underwater world, but while the Lady of the Lake is the king's daughter, Rautendelein eventually will end up as Nickelmann's bride.

In the figure of the Waldschrat we have a personification of the traditional image of the devil:

"ein bocksbeiniger, ziegenbärtiger, gehörnter Waldgeist, kommt in drolligen Sätzen auf die Wiese gesprungen" (20)

Apart from this the Waldschrat also reminds of "Rübezahl" a well known German mythological figure. (21)

The first Act is very much concerned with the exposé of the characters, that is the description and the introduction of the two different worlds they represent, the Christian and the non-Christian world and the relationship between those two worlds and their representatives. There is a great mutual hostility between the

inhabitants of the mountain world and those of the valley. Humans and mountain world creatures live in fear of one another and are well aware of their different life styles, in major issues as well as in minor details. One way of distinguishing the Christians' way of life from the mountain world's way of life is, according to Nickelmann, the different way in which the people of the mountain make their bread:

"Und wenn sie das Brot vermengen mit Kümmel" (22)

The main reason for offence in the eyes of the Wittichen, Waldschrat and Nickelmann are, however, the Christian churches and chapels and their bells.

"... das verfluchte Glockengebimmel" (23)

It is this new bell, made by Heinrich, which is at the drama's centre. As far as the other works discussed in this thesis are concerned this motif is unique to this drama. (24) However, the symbolism that is contained in the Act of submerging the bell into the lake is, as will be demonstrated, compatible with interpretations offered so far when looking at other lake tales in the previous chapters.

The human community situated in the valley is in the process of transporting a new bell, manufactured by Heinrich, to a church in the mountains. Being very heavy it is pulled by oxen on a cart. The Waldschrat is annoyed by this intrusion into his world and has tampered with the cart wheels. The bell loses its balance and plunges into a lake. (25)

Even though the Wittichen has been frequently mentioned by the other characters she only appears in person after the other mountain inhabitants and Heinrich have been introduced. The Wittichen is described in the following way at her first appearance:

"Die alte Wittichen, den Tragkorb auf dem Rücken, kommt aus dem Walde gehumpelt; ihr Haar is schlohweiß und offen. Ihr Gesicht gleicht mehr dem eines Mannes als dem eines Weibes. Bartflaum"(26)

This description is similar to the traditional fairy tale witch or her positive counterpart, the wise old woman. See, for example, the Grimms' fairy tales Hänsel und Gretel, (27) where she is a bad witch and Frau Holle, (28) who is a mythological figure standing for justice, rewarding the good and punishing the bad, heartless and lazy.

After the 'accident' with the bell Heinrich has somehow found his way to the mountain meadow where he collapses in front of Wittichen's house. When discovering Heinrich the Wittichen's first reaction is fear of being blamed by the establishment for the terrible state Heinrich is in. As the following events show these fears are thoroughly justified. (29)

Heinrich has himself no idea how he got there. When he and Rautendelein meet for the first time it is love at first sight, the attraction is mutual. (30) Heinrich identifies Rautendelein with light and life. Rautendelein, in an attempt to prevent the valley people from taking Heinrich with them draws a magic circle around



him. (31)

Apart from being a place where non-human creatures live, creatures who are in possession of magic powers, there are also indications that laws of nature do not necessarily have to apply in the realm of the Wittichen, Waldschrat and Nickelmann. For example, the physical law of gravity does not apply. Heinrich apparently entered into the mountain world after falling with the bell towards the lake into an abyss. At first he thinks that he has arrived in the land of the dead, (32) and thus comes to the conclusion:

"Ich weiß, ich weiß. Ich wußt es früher nicht:  
daß Leben Tod, der Tod das Leben ist. -" (33)

Rautendelein is non-human. One of her otherworld characteristics is the fact that she does not know what tears are. In the course of the play she undergoes an inner transformation and development. This is symbolised by the fact that she learns to shed tears. Also this capability of expressing human feelings underlines that she is different from the rest of the elves who live in the mountain world.

In the first Act also representatives from the human world appear a vicar, a teacher and a barber. When they arrive at the Wittichen's house it turns out that the Wittichen's fear about the valley people's attitude towards her and her world were justified. The teacher, barber and vicar have to be seen as representatives of the establishment of human Christian society. They

confirm that Heinrich fell on the mountain and it frightens them that apparently strange things are happening in the mountains.(34) They look upon the Wittichen as a witch (35) are frightened of her and threaten to burn her house down.(36) They call her names "verdammtes Wetteras" and "Hexenvettel" and blame her for bringing 'pestilence into the stables'.(37) Eventually they make the Wittichen undo the magic circle which Rautendelein drew, so they can take Heinrich back with them.

Towards the end of the first Act we see elfs performing a round dance, in which Rautendelein joins in. The Waldschrat arrives and fetches one of the elfs out of the circle, runs into the woods with her, the other elfs disappear. In the end Rautendelein stands on her own by the fountain where Nickelmann engages her in conversation. It becomes apparent how very different she is from the other mountain inhabitants. She does not want to be the queen of Nickelmann's under-water world,(38) but desperately wants to leave the forest. She has discovered her own free will and longs for the human world, in particular for one of its representatives, Heinrich, whom she sees as the embodiment of everything good and light.

## IV.2.3 Second Act

The second Act takes place in Heinrich's house. It is morning. Present in the house are Heinrich's family, his wife Magda and his two sons, aged five and nine. They have not yet learned the fate of their father and his bell and are dressed in their best clothes, full of anticipation, waiting to join the celebrations of Heinrich's triumph and the inaugural ceremony of the new bell.

This Act very much concentrates on Heinrich's relationship with the world and his work as an artist in particular. Perhaps here we can assume Hauptmann's way of dealing with his environment, his identification with Heinrich the artist who thrives in his work for perfection but has to realise that this cannot be reached within the human realm and the boundaries of the mortal world. The dualistic concept regarding the Christian religion and pagan customs moves somewhat into the background during the second Act.

At the beginning, Heinrich's family set out to celebrate his triumph and the bell's consecration. There is a reference to the way to the church being far and steep.(39) In a conversation between Heinrich's wife Magda and a neighbour the deep superstitions that prevail in the Christian community become apparent.(40) Bad signs have been witnessed. A farmer saw a naked



woman riding on a boar through a corn field.(41) Talk goes that the bad spirits in the mountains are angry about the new bell. Eventually the rumour that a misfortune has happened turns out to be true - Heinrich is carried into the house on a stretcher. Still, it is not quite clear what exactly is the matter with him. There is talk about his having fallen into the abyss together with the bell, which certainly would explain the seriousness of his condition, but still leaves open the question how he could end up on top of the mountain. His wife Magda seems to recognise that his sickness is an inner one.

"Er ist so ganz im Innersten erkrankt.  
Ein unbegreiflich Leid zermürbt ihn so.  
Ich weiß nicht, was ich fürchten soll und  
hoffen." (42)

Heinrich seems to know and accepts that he is going to die. He made an attempt to create a work worthy of heaven and failed - if not in the eyes of the world, than according to his own standard.

"Im Tale klingt sie, in den Bergen nicht" (43)

He failed according to his own standard to create a work worthy of God. Heinrich's interpretation of the events is that the reason why the bell plunged into the depth is that it was not good enough to sing God's praise.

While Heinrich lies ill on his bed a priest talks about a healing woman who lives beyond the borders in the pine forest. In conversation with Magda there arises some confusion whether this person might in fact be the

Wittichen. The vicar denies this emphatically and says that the person he referred to was "Frau Findeklee" (44), a shepherd's widow. Before the matter can be clarified Rautendelein appears in disguise. The priest apparently knows her and introduces her as Anna. He asks her to help looking after Heinrich. Rautendelein, when left alone with Heinrich, uses some of her magic and helps him to recover. During this process Heinrich does not recognise her; he thinks she is a result of his imagination, a

"Geburt der eigenen Seele" (45).

The Act finishes with Magda returning home and finding, to her great pleasure and astonishment, that her husband has apparently recovered and will live.

#### IV.2.4 Third Act

The third Act takes place in an abandoned glassworks in the mountain. It starts with a conversation between the Waldschrat and Nickelmann. Nickelmann is upset that Rautendelein likes Heinrich but not him. He asks why the Waldschrat did not kill Heinrich and throw him into the lake together with the bell. It also becomes apparent that in any attempt to destroy the union between Heinrich and Rautendelein they cannot count on the Wittichen's help, since she is on Heinrich's side. (46)

The analysis of the relationship between Heinrich and the vicar's world can be interpreted as the main theme of this Act. The location of the glassworks seems to lie between this world and the next, a place where the representatives of both realms can meet and recognise each other. The Waldschrat complains about the humans, calls them

"Ein verwünscht Geschlecht" (47)

and wants to burn their village. (48) Waldschrat and Nickelmann are jealous of Heinrich, the "Menschlein", (little person) who is preferred by Rautendelein.

The vicar climbs up to the hut to rescue Heinrich from the mountain world and to bring him back to the Christian world, his community and family. In contrast to the previous Act the vicar now recognises Rautendelein, and calls her a she-devil, there is open hostility between them. (49)

At first Heinrich makes the cleric believe that he has not only recovered but has turned his mind back to the right belief until the vicar has to realise that Heinrich's religion, his belief in the "Sonnenmutter" (mother sun) has got nothing to do with Christianity. The vicar also has to find out that the new work of art Heinrich is about to create is by no means dedicated to the church. As far as the priest is concerned Heinrich suffers from megalomania and a lack of humility because



he puts his new glockenspiel, his new work of art, above the church and does not seek its approval. The admittance that nobody pays for it means that nobody has ordered and thus approved of it. (50)

The third Act finishes with the retreat of the vicar when he has to realise that Heinrich will not come with him. He threatens Heinrich with the prophecy that his old life and belief symbolised through the bell in the lake, will catch up with him again one day. In his attempt to make Heinrich feel guilty the priest is partly successful when he reminds him of his family. Here it could be suspected that the motif 'different lapse of time in the otherworld' is being touched on. Apparently months have passed since he has been home last, while it does not seem like days in the play. (51)

#### IV.2.5 Fourth Act

On the surface the location has stayed the same. The events still take place in the same hut as before, but now it seems to belong more to the supernatural realm. In the previous Act it was a border place, where representatives from different worlds could meet. Now Heinrich seems to have retreated from the secular sphere. In this Act Heinrich's real inner dilemma becomes apparent and comes to a climax.

He is trying to make himself master above the magical powers, symbolised by the dwarfs whom he seems to command and who help him produce his new glockenspiel. Heinrich's euphoria gets more and more ecstatic, his optimism is increasingly disturbed by dark anticipations. Heinrich is draped between worlds.(52) His downfall is being predicted by Nickelmann in very much the same way as that of the priest: the bell at the bottom of the lake will come back to haunt him.

Also the relationship between Rautendelein and Heinrich becomes problematic. She sees him in a godlike position,(53) believes in him and his success unconditionally and does not consider his human weaknesses, even though she knows about the possible dangers her world can bear for him and that sometimes she has to protect him.

Heinrich feels the urge to create the "göttliche Kunstwerk" (divine work of art), and he has to feel the frustration of his "Erdegebundensein".(54) He depends on her admiration, in her eyes he can be, what he knows himself that he is not in reality, a god. The first signs of rupture between Heinrich and Rautendelein appears when he accuses her of being a child, has to realise that he has hurt her and apologises.(55)

Then people from the valley come and try to storm the hut. Heinrich manages to fight them off, but he cannot fight off the feelings of guilt when finally his child-

ren appear with the jug of tears of their mother who has, out of sorrow, drowned herself in the lake where she now rests with the bell.(56) Heinrich let go of his wife like he let go of the bell. He tried to flee both, but could not free his mind. At the end of the fourth Act he hears the bell, as had been prophesied by the vicar and the mountain creatures, sounding from the depths of the water. Heinrich turns against Rautendelein and blames her for his desperation:

"Ich hasse dich! ich spei'dich an! Zurück!  
Ich schlage dich, elbische Vettel! Fort,  
verfluchter Geist! Fluch über dich und mich," (57)

#### IV.2.6 Fifth Act

The last Act's location returns to the beginning. We see the mountain meadow with Wittichen's house and the fountain. It is shortly after midnight.

In this Act Heinrich dies. He has realised that the catastrophe that befell himself, his family and Rautendelein was a result of his own making. Heinrich wants to see Rautendelein one more time before his death, and the Wittichen helps him to do this by means of a magic drink. Rautendelein now lives in the water with the Nickelmann. It becomes obvious that this is the underwater world which now also shelters Heinrich's wife and the bell. Nickelmann saw Magda there. She has turned into something of a white lady haunting the lake.



"Hätt'st du gesehn, was ich da unten sah,  
als tief im See geschah, was nie geschah:  
als eines toten Weibes starre Hand  
die Glocke suchte und die Glocke fand,

...  
Ich sah das Weib, ertrunken: breit und licht  
umschwamm ihr Haar das Dulderangesicht." (58)

In this last Act Heinrich stands for the whole of the mankind longing for the great mother, the "Sonnenmutter". In his vain attempts' to strive for the divine he destroyed the earthly values and comforts he had.

"... Ja, wer denn bin ich, [...]?  
Wie oft hab' ich den Himmel drum befragt:  
wer ich doch sei? Die Antwort kam mir nicht.  
Gewiß ist dies nur: sei ich wer auch immer,  
Held oder Schwächling, Halbgott oder Tier-  
ich bin der Sonne ausgesetztes Kind,  
das heimverlangt; und hilflos ganz und gar,  
ein Häuflein Jammer, grein' ich nach der Mutter,  
die ihren goldnen Arm sehnsüchtig streckt  
und nie mich doch erlangt..." (59)

The Wittichen cannot save Heinrich. It is impossible because of his nature, the fact that he is a human. What he desired - to live up in the mountain world and create a glockenspiel worthy of God, with the help of magic powers - was impossible for a human to achieve but the Wittichen grants him his last wish to see Rautendelein once more before his inevitable death.

The last Act's statements are of a universal nature, not only applying to Heinrich the artist who failed in his attempt to create a divine work of art, but applying to him as a representative of the human kind with his human tragedy - his longing for immortality while being trapped and tethered to a mortal world.

It can safely be stated that Rautendelein has her direct literary predecessors in contemporary charac-

ters, in Fouque's Undine and Andersen's "Meerweibchen" - who is also destroyed by the love of a human man. We also find here the melting together of the Silesian Folk tradition and Hauptmann's biographical influences in The Sunken Bell. When Hauptmann created his character 'Heinrich' whose relationship between two women, his wife Magda and the elf 'Rautendelein' presents him with an unsolvable conflict, he experienced himself a similar personal crisis. (60)

#### IV.2.7 The Concept of Dualism in The Sunken Bell

The composition is based on a dualistic spiritual principle. Already in the stage directions for the first Act Hauptmann characterises Rautendelein as a being who does not belong to the human world. The first thing the reader finds out about the otherworld she belongs to, is the hostility that exists between its inhabitants and Christianity.

Rautendelein compares her beauty with the one of Freia and there are other references to Germanic deities. (61)

Rautendelein's male counterpart is Heinrich who is a representative of the human world which is not looked upon very favourably by the inhabitants of the mountain world.

"I believe you are not used to the mountains, but stem from the humans who dwell in the valley." (62)



Already a superficial comparison between The Sunken Bell and the Welsh Lady of the Lake stories reveals important common ground. For example, the stories deal with two realms. In both examples the human world is represented by a male protagonist, and the 'otherworld' is the place from where the woman stems.

Rautendelein's world is situated on a mountain as against below the water surface which was the realm of the ladies in the tales already discussed. But also Rautendelein comes out of a well and at the end of the play will return there to live as Nickelmann's wife, as the queen of the under-water world. Apart from that it has been stated that the mountain world is also present in the Llyn y Fan story - there assigned to the male protagonist, as the place where the youth grazes his cattle and from where he approaches the lake.

In addition, mountain and water are both symbols of the 'otherworld', each presents a slightly different emphasis regarding the characteristics attributed to this realm behind 'reality'. In legends and fairy tales the mountain top often has to be reached by walking through a forest, which is frequently a magical place, and yet another universal symbol for the inner, spiritual life, the mortal's inner world. Whoever enters the realm of the magical, leaves behind the sphere of reality and generally enters a realm of great danger that has destroyed other less fortunate people or people who



were not 'chosen ones'. However, for those who can face the inherent dangers, the chance is offered to prove themselves, whereby they may be assisted by other mythical creatures, often animals.(63)

"der dem Berggeist verfallene kehrt sich von dem bisher verehrten Gottesbild ab und bekennt sich zu den unheimlichen Mächten der Natur."(64)

The idea of a mountain inhabited by gods and spirits can be found in many peoples' mythology. The Greeks' Olympus, the Jews' Sinai correspond to the blue/black mountain, or the mountain made out of glass in fairy tales. The supernatural forces which lie there can be experienced as a blessing as well as a disaster.(65)

In Hauptmann's The Sunken Bell the disgust that is felt by the inhabitants of the pagan mountain world with the Christian human world is expressed when the Waldschratz sinks the bell destined for a church on top of the mountain, and thus, forming a threat to the existence of the pagan world, into a lake in order to 'silence the cursed bell jingling.' As far as the mountain creatures are concerned the humans are living under a curse. The inhabitants of the mountain despise an attitude which looks upon the earth as a vale of tears, and sees the heavens only as the upper seal of this sepulchre.

The mortals' fatal destiny is not necessarily their essentially different nature, the fact that they are mortal, but the fact that the humans, even though they

do not belong to the mountain world, cannot exist totally independent of it. According to Waldschratt and Nickelmann the human race descended originally from the mountain world and will therefore always be partly connected to it. Thus it cannot totally be subdued by the world and the restricting circumstances human kind has chosen to live in. Humans are irresistibly attracted to the free world, but no longer strong enough to exist in it.

The mountain inhabitants blame Christianity for this dilemma since it took the humans away from their free world and turned them against their brothers and sisters. Any existing connections between the two realms result in a continuous threat for both sides.

The Nickelmann (with anguish)

"...

Is it the world of men that thou wouldst know?  
I warn thee, maiden. Man's a curious thing,  
Who naught but woe to such as thou could bring,  
Although, perchance, with ours his fate's en-  
twined,  
He is, yet is not quite, of our kind.

His world is ours - and yet, I say, beware!  
Half here, he lives - half, no one could tell  
where!

Half he's our brother; yet, this many a day,  
A foe he's been, and lost to us for aye.  
Woe, woe to all who our free mountains flee  
To join these mortals, hoping bliss to see!  
Man's feet are in the Earth. In toil and pain  
He lives his fleeting life. And yet - he's vain.  
He's like a plant that in a cellar shoots,  
And needs must pluck and pluck at its own roots.  
So, languishing for light, he rots away,  
Nor ever knows the joy of one sun-ray.  
The breath of Spring that kisses the green leaf,  
To sickly boughs brings death, and not relief.  
Pry thou no further, but let Man alone;



Lest thou should hang about thy neck - a stone.' (66)

Apart from Rautendelein and Heinrich all the other characters in the drama can be clearly assigned to either the Christian or the pagan and magical sphere. The spirits hate Christianity, because it intruded into their magic world and wants to replace it and suppress it. The Christians hate the mountain inhabitants because they live in fear of them. They only remember the magical realm's dark side and have forgotten that all beings have the same origin.

In the Llyn y Fan Fach tale it is the youth who is attracted to a woman from the otherworld; in The Sunken Bell, however, it is the woman from the otherworld who enters into the world of the mortals. The otherworld in Hauptmann's drama has, due to the fact that it is situated on top of the mountain, a slightly different significance:

Firstly, it is the opposite to the gloomy valley, and Heinrich wants to climb upwards into the mountain world, he longs for the light which he hopes to reach with Rautendelein's help. The mountain world believes in the Great Mother Sun, however its inhabitants are also conscious of their connection to the darker water world. The elves sing to accompany their dance:

"White and chill  
Shines the moon across the hill  
Over bank, and over brae,  
Queen she is, and Queen shall stay."



When asked about their origin, one answers:

"From where the light  
In the waterfall gleams bright,  
Where the glowing flood doth leap,  
Roaring, down into the deep.  
Then, from out the mirk and mist,  
Where the foaming torrent hissed,  
Past the dripping rocks and spray,  
Up I swiftly made my way." (67)

Here I believe it would be helpful to have a closer look at the original, German version, and compare it to the translation. A general problem that had to be faced when translating Die Versunkene Glocke into English were Hauptmann's word creations, which do not exist in German standard language, like for example "Sonnenmutter" or "Gurgelschäumeschacht".

"Wo das Licht  
sich im Wassersturze bricht  
und die Flut, vom Schein durchhellt  
sausend in die Tiefe fällt.  
Dort entstieg ich feuchter Nacht.  
Aus dem Gurgelschäumeschacht  
quoll ich auf und drang hervor  
durch ein tropfend Felsentor." (68)

The elves are children of nature, who are at home in all the elements. They come out of the water and dance in the air; they know the darkness and the light. The merriment of their dance is the result of their unconditional affirmation of nature. They do not carry out any evaluation of worldly phenomena. They are nature spirits who do not differentiate between good and bad. According to Hauptmann's drama, such a harmony with nature also means that there is no room for feelings and sensations, for those always presuppose a critical analysis of reality. The incapability to experience feelings is the curse that burdens the mountain world.

Apart from Rautendelein, the other mountain-world creatures do not recognise this deficiency in their lives. They are longing for the positive aspects the human world has to offer, like for example the variety of feelings. Like the Lady of the lake who, in the first instance, had to emerge to the water surface to be discovered by the youth, Rautendelein also fulfils this predisposition. She looks upon Heinrich as being the one who will be able to free her from her own world.

It has been suggested that Hauptmann has taken the motif of the bell sinking into a lake from Silesian-German folklore. Joseph Gregor knows of a Silesian legend where a mighty bell, made out of clay, lies at the bottom of a lake, inhabited by a white lady.(69) Hauptmann's bell has a very specific function within the tragedy. Heinrich founded his bell in order to serve God, so that it would proclaim the gospel in the mountains.(70) The bell stands as the symbol of Christianity that shall be brought to the pagan world.

The bell that plunges into the water calls into question Heinrich's worldly ambitions. Even though it was very highly-regarded and praised by the vicar and the rest of the valley people, Heinrich realises that his bell - which might have sounded nicely in the valleys - has not been made for the mountain heights. This acknowledgement means an acceptance of the otherworld,

the mountain world and its different nature, which offers in Heinrich's point of view an existence on a higher, superior level.

The bell falls over a precipice and thus does not reach its destination. This does not mean that it has disappeared. At the end of the drama its ringing from the depth of the lake announces a tragic ending. There is a mystical connection between the lake, into which the bell falls, and the mountain for which it was originally made. The bell was supposed to announce from the mountain-top the triumph of Christianity over paganism. - now it does this out of the depth of the lake.

#### IV.2.8 The Wittichen

The Wittichen is the first figure to be looked at more closely in this analysis of The Sunken Bell. Only those characters between whom a direct comparison was possible in the drama and the tale cycle previously discussed have been chosen for a detailed interpretation. Thus two figures who are quite important to the drama, Waldschrat and Nickelmann, have not been included. The Wittichen in The Sunken Bell may be seen as the wise woman, the counterpart to the youth's mother in the Llyn y Fan story. The Wittichen is not the real mother of either Heinrich or Rautendelein. She is a



mythological figure who combines kindness with magic powers. She possesses power over the other mountain spirits and assists Heinrich and Rautendelein with their honest attempt to reach the realm of the sun. She understands the dilemma of the mortal intruder into her own world and she knows that his attempt is doomed to failure from the onset.

"Do is kee Kraut gewachsa.  
A Menschakind muß sterba, 's is ni andersch.  
Und wenn schunn. Luß du dan! dar wiel's ni  
besser." (71)

The supporters of the Christian religion suspect the Wittichen of witchcraft, and believe that she brings disease and destruction to humans and animals so that, for example, the cows give blood instead of milk. (72) In reality, however, there is no evidence of this throughout the drama.

Apart from this, Hauptmann equipped his Wittichen with a robust and somewhat grumpy character, but one with a good sense of humour. Here she resembles the female protagonists in other works by the author, like 'Mutter Wolfen' in Biberpelz, or 'Mrs Lehmeann' in Einsame Menschen. Thus the Wittichen also has a distinct worldly side that is emphasised also through the fact that she is the only person in The Sunken Bell who speaks dialect. There were many speculations regarding her function and the correct interpretation of this figure, but no agreement. Joseph Gregor saw her as a unique amalgamation of witch and friendly grandmother. (73) Hans Joachim Marschan gave her the

same function the choir has in Greek tragedies, since she predicts and comments on future events.(74) Here, however, it has to be stated that she does this not as an outside observer but as an active participant in the event.(75) She does live in harmony with the world without losing her human characteristics, but she also cannot oppose the power of fate. She can soothe Heinrich's pain, but is unable to prevent his downfall. A striking characterisation in my opinion was given by Martin Schütze.

"She, too, has largely a symbolic significance, personifying the remnant of pagan wisdom and nature worship"(76)

#### IV.2.9 Rautendelein

Rautendelein is probably the most complex figure in The Sunken Bell. Heinrich calls her his 'fairy tale', the Christian priest sees in her the She-devil. She herself hints about her origin from the fairies' realm in the water, where she will return again at the end of the drama, when she descends into the fountain.

"weiß nicht woher ich kommen bin,  
weiß nicht, wohin ich geh'!  
ob ich ein Waldvöglein bin  
oder eine Fee"

...

Aber manchmal fühl' ich ein Brennen  
möchte so gerne Vater und Mutter kennen.  
Kann es nicht sein  
füg ich mich drein.  
Bin doch ein schönes goldhaariges Waldfräulein."(77)

"Where do I come from?... Whither go?  
Tell me - I long to know!  
Did I grow as the birds of the woodland gay!  
Am I a fay?

...



Yet of, as I sit by my well, alone,  
I sigh for the mother I ne'er have known.

...  
And I'm fair to see -  
A golden-haired maid of the forest free!" (78)

Also connotations with freedom and sovereignty shine through, supported by her comparison to the goddess Freia which comes later:

"I'm fairer; fair as Freya. Not for naught  
My hair was spun out of the sunbeams [...]  
To shine, in golden glory, even as the sun  
Shines up at us, at noon, from out a lake..  
Aha! Thou spread'st thy tresses, like a net,  
All fiery scarlet, set to catch the fishes!" (79)

Rautendelein is a child of nature and belongs to the magical realm. However she is also somewhat removed from the forest creatures' affirmative but unreflected attitude towards life and cannot share it completely. She wants to get to know human feelings. This wish to participate in the human way of life is present in her from the outset, it is not only evoked by Heinrich. Her nature is split, and this can be seen as the real cause of her own personal tragedy. She looks at herself in the "black water mirror" of the fountain, gives her image a name of its own and talks to it as if it was a person in its own right. (80)

"Ei, guten Tag, du liebe Brunnenmaid!  
Wie heißt du denn? - ei, wie? - Rautendelein?  
Du willst der Mädchen allerschönstes sein?  
Ja, sagst du? - ich ... ich bin Rautendelein." (81)

It is an argument between the fountain girl and Rautendelein, which even though it is carried out in a playful tone, is not devoid of seriousness. The fountain girl questions Rautendelein's golden beauty. Outer beauty in a fairy tale has to be seen as a symbol for



inner beauty and values, in the same way as gold does not stand for material but for ideal values.(82) She also doubts that Rautendelein is her real name and insinuates that the fountain girl personifies the true identity of the forest fairy. The description of Rautendelein combines the water and the sun symbols. She wants to use the 'sun beam hair', whose lustre brightens even the depth of the water, as a net to catch fish. Rautendelein vituperates against her mirror image and destroys it by throwing a stone into the water. However, her attempt to exclude the darker aspect of her nature proves unsuccessful even at this first trial. In destroying the fountain maid, the golden picture of Rautendelein has also vanished.(83) Rautendelein fails, for it is impossible for her to reach perfection.

"She is the poetic embodiment of incompatibles of human extremes.".(84)

Rautendelein was attracted to the human world because she wanted to experience the feelings of love. The desire was always present in her and comes to the surface when she meets Heinrich. She puts all her trust and hope in him, she sees in him the superior being who will let her participate in his development to a new spiritual level. The first step in her evolution to be a part of mankind were the tears she cried for Heinrich. However, in the end Rautendelein had to fail, because Heinrich himself did not succeed in his attempt to create a divine work of art. Heinrich saw in Rautendelein only one aspect, the light side. When

he cannot close his eyes any longer before her lower aspects, then he can only see those. He forgets the spiritual in her and regards only the brutish, because he himself is incapable of combining both aspects in his own nature.

#### IV.2.10 Heinrich

Heinrich is the main character of The Sunken Bell and, unlike all the other figures in the drama, cannot be interpreted from an essentially symbolic point of view. He does not stand for an idea or certain values but has been portrayed as a 'real human', and it is probably through 'Heinrich' that Hauptmann expressed his own experiences and thoughts. In what follows the reason for his failure shall be investigated more closely.

In this connection Heinrich's wrong estimation of Rautendelein is particularly important. By seeing in Rautendelein the materialisation of his dream he is missing from the onset the discernment that he also needs to overcome Rautendelein, that she also is in need of salvation. Instead of developing further and combining his and her world at a new, higher level, he takes a step backwards to a cultural level which already had been overcome by Christianity. He reverts back to paganism, he does not find the pantheism he

strives for but develops a kind of polytheism which does not see one God in every phenomenon, but assigns one deity to every aspect of nature. (85)

The longing for the supernatural, immortal sphere is common to most human beings. The suffering which they experience in this world leads to the wish for salvation that cannot take place in this world. Out of the contradiction between the longing for salvation and being bound to an inevitable fate on earth results the primeval tragedy of human kind. Only the artists have the privilege to free themselves for a time out of this earthly constraint: by creating timeless works of art they can participate in immortality. (86)

#### IV.2.11 The Sunken Bell and the Lady of the Lake Cycle

The previous section, I believe describes in the main what Hauptmann wanted to express in The Sunken Bell. The symbolic form, which the poet gave his statement formed the reason to name The Sunken Bell a fairy tale tragedy. However, Hauptmann's symbolism here is fundamentally different from the one used in folklore and mythology. In The Sunken Bell many symbols stand for one thing which is clearly defined and describable. The valley people, the vicar, Magda, Heinrich's wife, as well as the bell, represent simply the Christian world, whereby the main function of this Christian



world is to stand in opposition to the mountain world. Again the characters belonging to the pagan mountain world, in particular the Wittichen, Nickelmann and Waldschrat, have not been described in their full mythological depth that could be assumed, since they all have been based on complex mythological figures who have deep roots in German folklore. 'Waldschrat' shows many similarities with 'Rübezahl', who also used to lead people astray when they found their way up into the mountains. Throwing the bell into the lake is also a deed that is not unlike the deeds of the mischievous 'Rübezahl'. 'Nickelmann' reminds one of the German 'Wassermann', on the one hand, and also of the 'Froschkönig', the main figure in one of Grimm's best known fairy tales, Der Froschkönig oder der Eiserne Heinrich. The Wittichen has been compared to two fairy tale figures, the witch, on the one hand, and the wise old woman, on the other. In Hauptmann's drama all those aspects have not been elaborated. The mountain world's inhabitants have been used in an accumulative way, they all stand for the same thing, the pagan world which is opposed to the Christian realm. The mountain creatures are merely seen as antagonists of the valley people. Also the 'water' motif has not been used in its depth, it is used as part of the contrast pair "water-air", and like the contrasts between darkness and light, black and golden, it is used to express Rautendelein's ambiguity. The comparison to Freia, the Germanic goddess of life and death, drawn by Rau-

tendelein herself, has to be interpreted in the same way. Rautendelein's ambiguity expresses itself in a strict and simple dualism: She inspires Heinrich to climb heights he could otherwise never have reached, while being accused by the valley people, and eventually even by Heinrich, of being a demon. She symbolises the two conflicting worlds, for which in turn many symbols can be found in this drama (mountain - valley, vicar - Wittichen, etc.) In The Sunken Bell the individual symbols lose a great deal of their expressiveness.

Folklore symbols are complex, their linguistic interpretation can hardly be a complete and exhaustive one, unless they are explained by using other symbols. (87) In this drama Hauptmann has used ancient, symbol-rich motifs and characters, who bring into his work their inherent magic and mystery. However, in The Sunken Bell those symbols have not been used in their universal meaning. (88)

A comparison between the motifs in the Lady of the Lake tales and the ones in The Sunken Bell shows that there are many similarities, but where the legend only sketches, Hauptmann gives detailed explanations and descriptions. The author used universal symbols in order to make a personal statement. When comparing the folk tale cycle with Hauptmann's drama there are obvious parallels like, for example, the female protagonists Rautendelein and the Lady of the Lake. Both

show a strong association with water, both can be identified with pre-Christian religions and deities, both are described as being very beautiful with long (blond) hair. Both exert an irresistible attraction for the male protagonist of the tales. Rautendelein probably longs more for Heinrich than the Lady of the Lake does for her suitor, perhaps this is because the element of sovereignty is not so distinct in Hauptmann's drama, Rautendelein is more the type of a child woman. She is very much bound to the element of the primitive forest spirits. We have been talking about two spiritual levels that can be represented by the Lady of the Lake. She can be identified with the primitive earth mother who was probably worshipped by mankind at an early stage of its development, or with the spiritual mother goddess. Also in Hauptmann's drama those two aspects can be identified with the figure of Rautendelein, and there lies part of the drama's tragedy. There is a misunderstanding between Rautendelein and Heinrich. While Rautendelein embodies, in the main, the first and lower level of the primitive earth mother and knows about her need for salvation, Heinrich sees in her the representative of a higher spiritual level and is deeply shocked and disappointed when he finally realises his error.

Heinrich is the counterpart of the youthful suitor in the folk tale cycle. Both have in common that they fall instantly in love with the woman and the fact that



in the end the union fails due to the man's wrongdoing or failure. Since the drama has only a short time span the couple do not get married and they have no family. Heinrich enters the world of Rautendelein, he decides to live in her realm, the supernatural world, while in the Lady of the Lake cycle the Lady comes out of the water to live with her human husband. Heinrich is described in great detail. It was suspected that the author Gerhart Hauptmann put into this figure his own experience, ideas and hopes, that he dealt in Heinrich with the dilemma an artist finds himself in when looking for immortality with his work while being bound by the earthly laws of nature. The mountain has been brought in connection with the youth of the Lady of the Lake cycle as well as with Heinrich.

The comparison between the Lady of the Lake cycle and The Sunken Bell can be taken further. The Wittichen reminds one of the youth's mother. Even though the latter has only been sketched, a deep interpretation showed various characteristics of the figure that can be recognised in the Wittichen. The Wittichen supports the union between the two unequal lovers and gives advice and help. The youth's mother was in possession of knowledge to make the youth's suit successful. Even though, in the folk tale, she lives in the human world, we suspected that in her true origin she was related to the realm of the Lady of the Lake.

A few more difficulties are present in a comparison between the Nickelmann and the Lady of the Lake's father. Nickelmann is not Rautendelein's father but her groom. Apart from that, there are similarities, both are portrayed as the king of the under-water world who is somewhat reluctant to lose the Lady of the Lake to the human realm, and who eventually will welcome her back again into the realm under the water. As has been stated Nickelmann has a close relative in German folklore in the fairy tale Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich, namely a frog who lives in a fountain and who marries a princess. (89)

In The Sunken Bell there are more figures and characters than in the folk tales. However, we have seen that rather than giving the drama's symbolism more complexity and depth, they merely add colour to the dualistic concept of the mountain world creatures on the one hand, and the humans in the valley on the other. In summary the play offers more detail - this lies within the nature of the works; the folk tale sketches and typifies while the tragedy has to go into detail in order to be effective on stage. Also in The Sunken Bell Hauptmann's biographical material could be detected together with motifs that were rooted in the Silesian-German tradition.



IV.3 Und Pippa Tanzt

Dramatis Personae

Tagliazoni, Pippa's father, an Italian glass worker

Pippa

The Director of the glassworks

Huhn, an old, redundant glass blower

Michel Hellriegel, a travelling journeyman

Wann, a mythological personality,

Wann's servant

Wende, the innkeeper of a low dive in Rotwassergrund,

Mutter Wende, the innkeeper's wife,

Guests in the inn

**IV.3.1 Summary of the Plot**

Even though Und Pippa Tanzt must be regarded as a surrealist work, the first act starts very much in the same way as many of the author's naturalistic tragedies. It is set in a 'dive' in the deep cold German Winter in a valley in 'Rotwassergrund'. Most of the drama's figures are introduced in this act, as, for example, the Director - the wealthy owner of a glassworks which is situated some distance away and Wende, the innkeeper. There is talk about economic decline in the area, a nearby glasswork has been closed. The innkeeper is worried about losing customers. In the meantime the owner of the glassworks lives well; he talks about his recent trips to Paris, the splendid banquets he attended and the beautiful ladies he met there. The strong contrast between this and the dark smoky inn becomes obvious. Other guests participate in a card game with an Italian, Tagliazoni, Pippa's father. The first Act is, in the main, concerned with painting this picture of people meeting in this dive, trying to find shelter from the hostile weather outside and trying to cope with the fact that the world they knew has changed and brought disruption and disorder into their lives.(90) This applies in particular to Huhn, an old redundant glass blower who seems not to be able to come to terms with the fact that there is no longer work for him in the glassworks. He still goes there frequently and is referred to as

"Auch so'n Gespenst aus der alten Glashütte, das weder leben noch sterben kann!"(91)

In the first Act also Pippa and Hellriegel are introduced. The Director offers money to Pippa's father to see her dance. Pippa is waken up out of a deep sleep. When the Director realises this he does not insist on Pippa dancing, unlike Pippa's father, who is after the offered money. Hellriegel enters the pub. He is a travelling journeyman whose appearance tells us that he has been on the road for a while. From the beginning there is a mutual fascination between him and the



beautiful, child-like Pippa. Towards the end of the first Act a strange dance takes place between Pippa and Huhn. This dance is interrupted when Tagliazoni is caught cheating at cards, chased outside and finally killed with his own knife in a struggle. In the turmoil, while everybody runs outside to see what has happened, Pippa collapses and Huhn carries her away unconscious.

### Second Act

In the second Act the action occurs in Huhn's home, a neglected hut up in the mountains. Huhn, whom we saw carrying the unconscious Pippa out of the low tavern brings her now into his hut. Pippa wakes up, seems very frightened and wants to go back to the tavern, to "Mutter Wende", the innkeeper's wife. Huhn makes clear that he has every intention to keep Pippa with him, but he gives her all assurances that he will do her no harm. There seems to be a strange connection between Huhn and Pippa inasmuch that for some reason also Huhn seems to fear Pippa:

"Riehr mich ni an, sonste derschlagt mich mei Herze!" (92)

Then Hellriegel appears in Huhn's hut. He gives a perfectly logical explanation for his arrival there. When he saw what had happened to Pippa's father and realised that Huhn had taken her away, he set out into the mountains to try to find her. It seems to be a mere coincidence when he eventually finds her and at first he seems to believe that Pippa is not real but a result of his imagination: does she appear when he plays the mouth organ which he bought from the person who played it in the tavern in 'Rotwassergrund' to accompany Pippa's dance. (93) Also Pippa seems to be in a strange state of being half awake, half in a dream, not knowing where she is. (94) Very soon, however, Pippa and Hellriegel admit their mutual feelings for each other and give each other assurances that they will never part but escape together from Huhn's hut over the mountains into the land of Pippa's origin, to Italy and the water city Venice, where it is always sunny. (95)

### Third Act

The third Act is located at the mountain top, in the cozy and quite prosperous mountain hut of Wann. The Director comes into Wann's home in search of Pippa, but then wants Wann to free him from his obsession with her. Pippa enters Wann's hut and it is not clear whether her arrival at the very moment the Director and Wann were talking about her is a coincidence or whether this happens as a result of Wann's 'magic' to cure the Director from his feelings for Pippa. She has found



the way to Wann after Hellriegel collapsed in the snow where he is lying now near his death. While Wann and the Director come to the rescue Huhn enters the hut secretly and hides. The Director is looking at Michel Hellriegel's state and realises what a commitment to Pippa means and decides it is not for him, and leaves to go back. Hellriegel and Pippa stay, Hellriegel urges Pippa to get on the way, continuing their journey to Venice, the water city, while Pippa wants to accept Wann's invitation to spent the night protected from the cold and the snow storm. Wann sends Hellriegel on a fantasy journey to the glass city, afterwards they go to rest in Wann's house. The Act ends with a fight between Wann and Huhn during which Huhn suffers defeat.

#### Fourth Act

No change of location takes place. The persons acting are Pippa, Michel Hellriegel, Huhn and Wann. Huhn is ill, he lies on the bed and it looks as if a happy ending for Pippa and Hellriegel is imminent. They look no longer with hostility at Huhn. Now they have to fear him no longer, so they believe; they feel compassion for his suffering. However, while Wann leaves the mountain hut for a moment Huhn rises from his bed and starts dancing again with Pippa. This dance is something that Pippa apparently has to do against her will.

"Michel, halte mich ... laß mich nicht los! er reißt mich!... es reißt mich! - sonst muß ich tanzen! ...ich muß tanzen! sonst sterb'ich - laß mich los!" (96)

Pippa's dance gets more and more ecstatic, until in the end, just when Huhn breaks a drinking glass in his hands, Pippa falls to the ground and dies. Her death is followed by Huhn's death. Hellriegel seems to undergo a transformation, he retreats from the world: this is symbolised in the play by the fact that he is suddenly struck with blindness. He does not realise that Pippa is dead. As far as he is concerned she walks beside him out of the hut into the water city with its palaces, where he and Pippa will live from now on.

The only person left is Wann, who is well aware that he sends Hellriegel blind out into the winter storm, married not to Pippa - as Hellriegel believes - but to a shadow. And still it seems to fill Wann with sorrow to send Hellriegel on this journey instead of being able to go himself.

"Es ist ganz hell geworden - Wann gibt dem blinden und hilflosen Michel einen Stock in die Hand, setzt ihm den Hut auf und führt den Tastenden, aber leise und glücklich Kichernden nach der Ausgangstür. Nun setzt Michel die Okarina and den Mund und spielt eine herzbrechende Weise." (97)

#### IV.3.2 History of Genesis

In the first instance the creation of this drama was instigated by Hauptmann's reminiscences of his youth.(98) In 1897 Hauptmann visited the island of Murano while travelling through Italy. There he was deeply impressed by the local glass blowing craft.(99) He also got to know the 'dream city' Venice.(100) Thus the connection was made with the local 'Walen'- and 'Veden-legends'. They tell about mysterious, magically and spiritually gifted glass blowers, who came to the 'Riesengebirge' from the South in order to look for gold and it was believed that they stemmed from Venice.(101). This explanation, however, is not without problems. In one of his preparatory works to this drama Der Venezianer (The Venetian) 1903 Hauptmann creates the mother of the Venetian. Hauptmann described her as full figured and tall, a little phlegmatic but confident. Also her skin was 'like milk and blood' and her rich hair was of 'such very pale, silky gold, that is called 'holy blond''.(102) This characterisation does not coincide with the traditional idea of the dark, temperamental Italian.

Pippa herself had a live model, the 16 year old actress Ida Orloff who, in 1906, played the main part at the première of Und Pippa Tanzt. She helped bring into being many more protagonists in Hauptmann's dramas, for example, Inigerd in Atlantis.(103)



Apart from this Und Pippa Tanzt is a remarkably independent work and proven literary influences which had a direct effect on the creation of the Pippa drama are difficult to find.(104) The drama was first shown in 1906 in Berlin at the 'Lessingtheater'. Its reception was not an enthusiastic one (105), but it was looked upon in the main with a lack of understanding.(106) Critics talked about "einen geschraubten Symbolismus" und "eine ganz unnütze Geheimniskrämerei".(107) In comparison to The Sunken Bell in Und Pippa Tanzt the relationships and connections between the individual characters are more complex and their development in the course of events is directly linked to the outside world. Therefore it seems appropriate to apply again a chronological procedure when looking at this drama in more detail.

#### IV.3.3 First Act

Pippa's fragility is characterised by Hauptmann as being like the delicacy of glass. This connection between Pippa, the colour and delicacy of glass, and the water-world is continuously repeated throughout the first Act.

The water-world plays a part from the onset of the

drama, for example when the Director states:

"...Hell wie am lichten Tag! zum Wahnsinnigwerden der Sternenhimmel! blau, alles blau [...] Die Forellen sogar - Gott, wie die Luder die Mäuler aufreißen." (108)

When she first appears Pippa is herself called a Venetian by the Director, who also says that he thinks she stems from the water city and out of a glass furnace. In the drama, Venice is often referred to as the city from where glass blowers come and thus Venice combines the glass blowing motif with water. Also, the semantic content of the symbols 'glass/mirror' and 'water' can be seen as very closely related. (109)

But there is also the connection between Pippa and fire:

"Wenn die Weißglut aus dem Ofen bricht, seh ich dich oft ganz salamanderhaft in den glühenden Luftten mit hervorzittern. Erst langsam im dunkeln zergehst du dann." (110)

Pippa is a gypsy girl with open, red-blond and full hair. It is insinuated that, like Rautendelein, she comes from a place beyond reality and does not know about her origin. Her mother comes from beyond a large watershed. (111) Here the connection between reality and otherworldliness becomes particularly evident. On a naturalistic level the expression 'beyond the watershed' could simply mean that Pippa's mother comes from the other side of the Alps, from Italy. On a symbolic level it could mean that beyond the watershed hints to the otherworld and thus explain Pippa's partly superna-

tural origin.

One main counter figure to Pippa is Huhn. From the very beginning the existing relationship, and the similarities and contrasts between the two characters are emphasised. The old glass blower is described as being an old ghost from the old glasswork who can neither live nor die. (112) Like Pippa he has long, red hair, however the texture and look of it are rather very different:

"Ein riesiger Mensch mit langen roten Haaren, roten buschigen Brauen und rotem Bart, von oben bis unten mit Lumpen bedeckt." (113)

He also has watery, red-rimmed eyes and thick lips. (114)

The theory has been proposed that Huhn and his relationship to Pippa should be seen less in a symbolic and more in a realistic way. McCormick suggests that Huhn is nothing more than an old redundant glass blower and sees him

"caught in the intermediate realm by his inability to accept the closing of the furnaces." (115)

However, a consequent following of McCormick's approach who wants to:

"resist the temptation to pile up 'meanings'" (116) would leave a rather flat and insignificant interpretation of the play. McCormick also sees in the Director in the first instance an "overaged Prince charming."

However, the Director constitutes a further important



factor in the drama's figure constellation. In a Silesian 'dive' he dreams of Paris, of illuminated restaurants, of duchesses in gold and silver and Brussels lace, bare bosoms, passionate red lips, and sinful looks. The Director's first thought is always how to make money out of a given situation and seems to be used to getting his own will. Therefore his feelings and his behaviour towards Pippa are quite uncharacteristic for him. At first he wants to see Pippa dancing and is prepared to pay her father money for this. But when she finally appears in front of him, he does not insist on her dancing, because she is obviously very tired; he understands that she does not belong to his material world and that this time he cannot buy what he longs for. He feels desire for Pippa, however he respects her and cares for her.

"Ach was! Es liegt mir jetzt nichts am Tanzen!  
(Nur für Pippa) Mir genügt's, wenn du nur da bist,  
reizendes Kind!" (117)

The Director has an antagonist, Hellriegel, who must be seen as the actual main male protagonist of the drama. He is described as approximately twenty-three years of age, a journeyman wearing a thin cap, a jacket as well as vest and trousers that are still halfway decent; and he carries a knapsack with a brush fastened to it. His shoes are worn out. Traces of a long and hard journey are expressed in the pale and exhausted features and movements of the young man. His face shows fine, unusual - almost noble - features; on the upper lip a soft beard dawns. A hint of the fantastic lies over

the slender appearance and there is a hint of infirmity. (118)

Hellriegel and the Director represent two opposites that attract and repel each other. They seem familiar enough so that the Director understands Hellriegel's reason for his journey and his destination:

"Ins Land wo Milch und Honig fließt." (119)

The special things, that Hellriegel wants to learn, he describes as:

"Etwas klares Wasser mit bloßen Händen zu Kugeln ballen". (120)

The Director's answer that people in Silesia do this all the time, forming water into balls, by using snow, is one typical example of his attitude towards life. The Director feels the continuous need to demonstrate his sense of reality and practicality, this attitude explains also his remarks about whether Hellriegel's papers are in order. (121)

Nevertheless, even though he attacks Michel Hellriegel's attitude towards life frequently and tries to ridicule his dreams, the Director seems strangely familiar with Michel's way of thinking. The Director gives an explanation as to why he understands Hellriegel, even though he is so very different from his own character. The Director has given up the ideals he might once have had and which he now detects in Hellriegel.

"Ja, ja, so geht's. Morgens den Himmel voller

Geigen, am Abend kein heiler Knochen im Leib." (122)

Michel Hellriegel's and the Director's attitude towards each other is summarised in one short dispute:

"Director: '... Wolkenkuckucksheim ist noch ziemlich weit.'

Hellriegel: '... Aber ich habe Lust und Ausdauer.'" (123)

During the rivalry for Pippa's affection that breaks out between Hellriegel and the Director, Hellriegel behaves very reservedly. The reason for this may not so much be rooted in the Director's authority but may be due to the fact that Hellriegel seems to be in secret agreement with Pippa from the moment they meet. (124) In the end, however, it is Huhn who possesses power over Pippa. The dance between Huhn and Pippa takes place in a way that suggests something clumsy and enormous trying to catch something beautiful and swift. During the dance both go into a state of excitement and ecstasy. (125) From the three antagonists, Hellriegel, the Director and Huhn, Huhn is the one who catches Pippa at the end of the first Act.

The first Act of the drama is easily understood on the logical, material level without interpreting the rich symbolism which is inherent. See, for example, the complexity of the figure Pippa, the relationship between Hellriegel and the Director who, while orientating themselves in opposite directions in the way they think and act, have at the bottom of their hearts a strong desire for Pippa. Also the mystery surrounding



the figure "Huhn" is only hinted at during the first Act: but it prepares us for the use of glass and water as symbols during the following acts.

One aspect of the Pippa figure has not yet been mentioned: at the onset it is said that the drama is played in wintertime. Pippa seems to be continuously cold during this period of the year, a fact which, according to Robert Mühler, has to be seen as a picture of

"Bedrohtheit des Menschen"

a symbol for the

"Ausgesetztsein der menschlichen Existenz, das der Dichter gebraucht."126)

Pippa is compared to a butterfly or a bird which has, for fear of Huhn, fallen out of its nest. These are symbols for the psyche, which is portrayed in the art of the antiquity often as a girl with the wings of a butterfly or a bird. The bird has also been interpreted as a symbol of the human soul.(127)

According to McCormick the main theme of the first Act is disorder.

"Names, images, and actions offer reinforcement of our view that order has broken down and that things are about to rearrange themselves."(128)

What becomes evident is that the Pippa drama is full of opposites and contrasts, Pippa and Huhn, the Director and Hellriegel, the warm tavern as against the cold and hostile snow outside. Soon it will also become apparent that the dualism contained in the Pippa drama is of

a spiritual nature.

#### IV.3.4 Second Act

The second Act brings a change of place, to a hut in the mountains, the neglected home of Huhn. This change of location cannot be seen as a simple continuation of the play in a different place, but must be understood as a second level insofar as climbing up into the mountains means the transmission from reality into the supernatural sphere. On a psychological level it can be interpreted as the entering into deeper/higher levels of human consciousness. (129)

Huhn, Pippa's kidnapper, stands in a friendly-horrid relationship to her, he is worried about her and cares for her. (130) Their mutual dependence is expressed in, for example, the following dialogue:

"Pippa: 'Huhn, alter Huhn, ach laß mich doch fort! ich kenn' Euch ja doch: Ihr seid Vater Huhn! Was ist denn passiert? weshalb bin ich denn hier bei Euch?'  
 Huhn: 'weil's eemal asu muß gehn ei der Welt.'  
 Pippa: 'Was muß so gehen? was meint Ihr denn?'  
 Huhn: 'Was eener ni hat, das muß a sich nahma!'  
 Pippa: 'Was meint Ihr denn? ich versteh' Euch ja nicht!'  
 Huhn: 'Riehr mich ni an, sonste derschlagt mich mei Herze!'" (131)

He has gone pale and trembles, he sighs and moves away because Pippa has touched his hands with her lips. Then Pippa tries to flee.

The relationship between Pippa and Huhn is characterised through mutual fear, dependence and, at the same time, a peculiar sense of belonging. According to Robert Mühler here Nietzsche's Dionysian 'primeval force' is expressed, a force which eternally recreates itself while destroying itself at the same time. (132) Huhn combines within himself the ecstasy of life with the chaotic darkness of the night. Huhn is the one who is chained to the earth, he is the prison of the soul. Pippa's predicament can now be better understood, because only outside of the physical, sensual world lies the freedom of the soul bird. (133)

McCormick sees in Huhn a redundant glass blower who struggles through life in a hostile environment, symbolised by the cold winter. (134) McCormick believes that the play enters into the mystical sphere only in the fourth Act. (135) He sees Wann as

"a bridge between the natural and the supernatural. (136)

The question needs to be posed if in Und Pippa Tanzt "a myth is used to explain real events", (137) why Hauptmann used these stylistic means to express circumstances like the psychologic and economic atmosphere in the low 'dive' in 'Rotwassergrund', when he could have achieved exactly this in a better way by using a naturalistic style. Also McCormick's 'realistic' approach fails to explain fully Hellriegel's fantasy journey in a model gondola. He tries to explain this with the circumstance



"... that Hauptmann is sometimes painfully inconsistent in his use and integration of symbols ..." (138)

It needs to be clarified what motivated Huhn to take Pippa and capture her. His attitude towards her is not a hostile one. Huhn who symbolises the physical, sensual part of the human world, longs for salvation from this soul-less condition. He reaches out for the realm of the soul which can, once it has been set free, exist outside sensory perceptions. Huhn's character combines archaic belief in demons and animism with the need and longing for salvation. (139) However, in the end he will not achieve salvation, because at the very moment when he captures the soul he deprives it of its wings and thus its capability of salvation.

Pippa, who in the first Act belonged totally to the real world is, to a certain extent, lifted out of reality during the second Act. Throughout the second Act there are repeated references to her being in a state of shock or semi-sleep and only half conscious. (140) To begin with, she is unconscious when Huhn enters the hut with her. (141) She speaks to Hellriegel while she is half asleep, (142) and when Hellriegel starts to play the mouth organ she does not know where she is, she seems to think that she is still in the 'dive' with her father. (143) Hellriegel seems to doubt that she is real, he seems surprised that she has a 'real' heart. (144) Still, on a logical, intellectual level Pippa's condition could be explained

through the shock she must have received by that evening's event - after having been dragged out of deep sleep to dance in the smoke-filled pub she witnesses an argument between her father and the other card players in the course of which her father, her only living relative, is killed. Followed by that she is kidnapped by the frightening looking Huhn and finds herself miles from anywhere and anybody in terrible weather conditions up in the mountains in Huhn's neglected hut.

Pippa's suffering is caused by Huhn who locks her into corporeality and thus gains power over her. The soul might try to overcome the brutish principle; however, as long as the connection between both exists it cannot enter the realm of the transcendental, otherworldliness which would mean a negation of any belonging to the earth.

Hermann Schreiber points out the connection between Pippa and the sun myth. He refers to text passages where she is described as a 'little red-haired nymph,' or 'a golden girl'.(145) The fact that Pippa has red-golden hair, even though she is supposed to stem from Italy, supports this theory.

Other pictures used when attempting to interpret the Pippa figure may help to further clarify the matter. Pippa's delicacy is continuously compared to the fragility of glass, the Director suggests that in reality



Pippa stems from the glass furnace, and she admits that she likes sitting near it. (146) Huhn calls her repeatedly 'a little spark'. This has to be seen in connection with the text passages where she is compared to a bird. Pippa the little spark that has escaped out of the glass furnace and spends now her time freezing in the cold winter, Pippa who flies like a frightened little bird blindly against the walls of Huhn's hut, reminds us - according to Mühler - of a philosophical tradition that reaches back to scholasticism and which, through the mystics of the late middle ages, entered the philosophical ideas of Böhme, from where Hauptmann took it over. (147) The interpretation of individual philosophers differ in details, however, according to Mühler, they all see in the spark:

"die allen Menschen innewohnende, durch den Sündenfall nicht aufgehobene, ja unvergängliche und an und für sich einer Verwirrung nicht ausgesetzten im Geiste wirkende Macht, welche dem Bösen widerstreitet und zum Guten hintreibt." (148)

The spark is an ideal which is inherent, however hidden, in every human being and Pippa symbolises this. But she is, at the same time, an earthly, material image of this ideal, compared to the beauty and fragility of an Italian champagne glass.

All those aspects now are repeatedly emphasised and brought in connection to the water city, Venice. Mühler suggests that Pippa's Venice is not identical with the real city in Italy, but is situated at another location, not on this earth. He sees Venice as



the town Vineta, sunk into the earth's inside, whose name carries the meaning of 'joy'.(149) In the end both interpretations complement rather than contradict each other. Earth and water are the origin of all life and all life will eventually return there.

"Hellriegel: 'Sag mal, wo bist du geboren, Pippa?'  
Pippa: 'Ich glaube in einer Wasserstadt..., und Tag für Tag scheint die liebe Sonne!'"(150)

Hellriegel passes Huhn's hut during his journey over the mountains. This is in itself a coincidence difficult to explain from within the plot. Moreover he knows that he will find Pippa here with Huhn, whom he calls a monster, a forest god and a brute. Hellriegel knows that he depends on Pippa in order to achieve his goal to find the water city. It does not cross his mind to capture and keep her against her will, like Huhn did. But then, he does not have to resort to such means since basically he already carries Pippa within himself, he can make her magically appear with his 'Okarina', because she already exists in his 'exhausted mind.' Hellriegel has doubts about his mind when he suddenly sees Pippa in front of him. Thus he has made the next step on his way to the mystical sphere that can only take place in a state of being beyond oneself and in ecstasy. Hellriegel finally transcends the realm of reality. He wants to form water into balls but is not satisfied to do this by using snow. Therefore he has to free himself from the empirical sphere of the senses. Mühler calls this area the metacosmos in opposition to the macrocosmos which is symbolised by

Huhn and needs to be overcome. (151)

#### IV.3.5 Third Act

The third and the fourth Acts are situated in the home of Wann. It lies on top of a mountain which is even higher than the one where Huhn's hut was located and Pippa and Hellriegel have to put up with a dangerous ascent. The spatial climbing up the mountain symbolises the ascent to the supernatural realm or, in psychological terms, an ever deeper submerging into the inner spiritual sphere. In the stage directions the model of a Venetian gondola is mentioned as one of the many objects in this cozy place up on the mountain top. This little model will play an important part in the following events as the vehicle that will eventually enable Hellriegel to make the journey to the other-world.

Wann is a mythological figure. The wisdom and the capabilities of this mountain inhabitant lead the Director to suppose he could be a 'Wale', one of those legendary gold prospectors. (152) In the legends the 'Walen' are in possession of a magic mirror which enables them to see things that happen a long distance away. (153) Wann has turned his back on the world, he spends his time waiting for another

"musikalisch-kosmische Bruderschaft", (154)

which, however, cannot be experienced in this world. Until he can enter this other sphere, that cannot be reached by means of the senses, Wann has to spend his life in waiting and observing the events going on in the outside world. His existence in the lonely hut up in the snowy mountains is compared to a ship that drifts on the great wide ocean.(155) Wann has reached the highest possible level of consciousness for a human being. His disadvantage - in comparison to Hellriegel - is that, even though he is in possession of all the knowledge and wisdom possible, he is not the chosen one who in the end will enter into the water city together with Pippa.

In this mystical place, up in dizzy heights, the Director - on his way to find Pippa - meets up with Wann. The Director is the only real human being in the drama, the only person who does not have to be interpreted as a symbol. Because of this Paul Grumann believed that he was in reality the main figure of the drama.(156) Grumann posed the theory that all the events in the drama were a dream of the Director, his interpretation of the world.(157) He also pointed out that during the course of the fourth Act Wann, Hellriegel, Huhn and Pippa melt together into one personality, and all its different aspects are depicted by individual figures.(158) This theory comes close to the integrated interpretation approach of Drewermann. However, the choice of the Director as the centre figure is



probably an unfortunate one, since he disappears in the third Act and plays no further part in the plot.

The conversation that develops between the Director and Wann in the hut up on the mountain-top is ingenious, humorous and full of allusions. The Director is quite unsure of Wann's true nature, he hesitates between seeing in him a mythical personality and a strange old man who has retired in his hut up in the mountains. (159) Wann treats the Director with humorous and slightly contemptuous understanding. He knows that the owner of the glass works has climbed the snowy mountains in search for Pippa. Wann is mighty, he possesses a book that shows events happening on earth, looks through a telescope and can see events as they happen in the valley as, for example, the argument in the 'dive' in Rotwassergrund.

The Director wants Wann to help him. He is the realist, he knows that Pippa, whom he hunts but cannot find, will not bring him happiness, so he has come to Wann to ask him to be freed from his longings.

"Ich kann nicht leben und kann nicht sterben. Nehmen Sie ein Skalpell in die Hand und suchen Sie die vergiftete Pfeilspitze, die mir irgendwo im Kadaver sitzt und mit jeder Minute tiefer dringt. Ich habe die Angst und das Jucken satt, den schlechten Schlaf und den schlechten Appetit." (160)

The cure which heals the Director consists of his knowledge that Pippa belongs to Hellriegel. Also when he sees the effect the past events had on Hellriegel -

who on his way up to the mountain-top with Pippa nearly died and was rescued only in the last minute - he changes his mind about wanting to be with her. In addition he has to realise that Pippa does not know him. He decides to return to the world. (161) The Director leaves Wann's hut and Pippa, since he cannot face the consequences that being together with Pippa would demand.

#### IV.3.6 Fourth Act

It was stated that, according to Paul Grumann, individual figures within the drama each symbolise one particular aspect of the same personality. Pippa establishes that Huhn looks like Hellriegel, and a little later she recognises in Huhn a likeness to herself. In Wann's realm Hellriegel has to suffer the last struggle between the soul and the brutish. The fourth Act describes Hellriegel's process of purification, before finally the door to his fairy tale city will be opened to him. Nevertheless Pippa and Hellriegel must participate in Huhn's suffering.

The price which Hellriegel has to pay for unification with Pippa is a parting with the sensual material world. His blindness which, as he states, equips him with an all-seeing view, is representative of the loss

of all senses which is necessary for experiences that reach beyond the human world. A comparison between Hellriegel and Odysseus has been made: he was also clairvoyantly blinded.(162) Hellriegel no longer depends on his senses, because where he goes now - into the water palace with the golden stairs - he will experience all things with the supra-sensuous capabilities which he has now gained. Hellriegel has also turned his back on the world. He himself has lost his corporeity and is now compatible with and equal to Wann. The marriage of Pippa and Hellriegel is the ideal connection between spirit and soul, freed from all earthly constraints. Robert Mühler looks upon this relationship as a resemblance to a hieros gammos where a mortal comes together with a divine partner.(163) Pippa's death only expresses that the soul is now really totally free of all corporeity.

There were many versions of the end of this drama. It is significant that Hauptmann eventually opted for the spiritual journey of Pippa and Hellriegel in the gondola to the water city.(164) Towards the end of the piece, the climax of events, the 'water' motive is used more frequently. The Director says to Wann:

"Toll, wie einem hier oben bei Ihnen immer wie in einer Schiffskabine zumute wird! Im Sturm auf dem großen Ozean!"(165)

Hellriegel always dreams about Venice, the water city and sees Pippa as an inhabitant of a beautiful water castle, Pippa herself remembers travelling in a gondola



amongst houses. During Hellriegel's journey to the other world he sees 'a hall made out of corals.' (166)

This interpretation cannot claim to be complete. It is the main characteristic of real symbolism that it is very difficult to comprehend, and in the end not totally decipherable. To the question what the main statement of the piece was, Hauptmann is supposed to have given the answer:

"If I knew that I would not have had to write down the whole story." (167)

#### IV.4 Comparison and Conclusion

At the turn of the century an author, who has in the main been assigned to the naturalistic school, wrote two fairy tale dramas which contain many symbols that could also be found in the lake legend cycle. First of all Rautendelein and Pippa were seen as counterparts of the Lady of the Lake. Both dramas had in common with the Lady of the Lake cycle a connection between the female protagonist and the element of water. Pippa is connected to glass, she comes from Venice, the water city. Hellriegel reaches her water palace in a gondola. There is also a connection to the sun motif, the hair colour of Rautendelein and Pippa is golden-red. Both female protagonists are of exceptional beauty that exerts an irresistible influence on the other sex. The

relationship between a mortal man and a supernatural woman leads to a tragic end of the male protagonist while the women of those tales return to their element, the realm of the water. Hellriegel goes with Pippa, but not in the real world, he has been blinded, and this blindness refers to his physical as well as his mental condition. He is married to Pippa's shadow and seems hardly aware of what is going on around him, he has not realised that Pippa has died. The question can be asked how long he is going to survive, blinded, in a snow storm up in the mountains.

In the case of The Sunken Bell the figure constellation makes a comparison to the Lady of the Lake cycle relatively easy:

Rautendelein	- Lady of the Lake
Heinrich	- the youth
Wittichen	- the youth's mother
Nickelmann	- Lady's father

In general in Hauptmann's drama the characters are described more extensively than their counterparts in the folk tales. This was explained through the fact that we are dealing here with different types of works, the folk tale on the one hand, and the fairy tale drama which was written to be put on stage on the other. The folk tale stylises and typifies where the individual work created by one author goes into far more detail.

Consequently in The Sunken Bell there are more people who are representatives of the two worlds. Where the folk tale mentions the church, weddings, etc., the drama introduces the valley people, the vicar, the barber, Heinrich's family and neighbour and brings Rautendelein's supernatural realm to life with elves, woodmen and forest spirits.

In Hauptmann's drama the supernatural world is situated on top of a mountain. Here however the closeness to Rautendelein's fountain and the underwater world has been emphasised. The mountain was seen as an expression of a higher spiritual level which Heinrich wants to reach.

The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach was seen in possession of great knowledge of herbs and medicines, which she passed on to the human world through her sons. Also Rautendelein, like the Wittichen, is in possession of this medical knowledge: She descends in the second Act to the valley to cure Heinrich from his illness. It is Rautendelein's wish to live like the humans. During the course of the plot, however, it is Heinrich who ascends into Rautendelein's world. This motif reminds of the tale cycle in Welsh (water folklore) where a human man entered into the fairy realm.

The bell has been seen as being particular to Hauptmann's play. Not unfamiliar, however, is the idea of



values and ethic standards sinking symbolically into the lake in order to re-emerge when the time comes to have a massive impact on people's lives. We have seen that the Lady of the Lake stood for those values, and in particular in chapter II of these investigations the sunken city has been interpreted as dealing with the ideas of past cultures and their values being hidden in the subconscious of people's memories to be raised again at some future date. This circumstance was expressed through the submerging of a human dwelling into the lake. With reference to Hauptmann, there is a twist in the use of this symbol of submerging inasmuch as the bell represents Christianity while the sunken city generally stood for pre-Christian pagan cultures overcome by Christianity. In The Sunken Bell Heinrich tries to overcome Christianity by submerging the bell, its symbol, into the lake. Also, where the folk tale is universal, Hauptmann's fairy tale tragedy contains personal statements, and we have seen that Hauptmann probably identified with the experiences of his main male protagonist.

In Und Pippa Tanzt symbols and their content are more complex. Before comparing the drama to the folk tales it was necessary to interpret Und Pippa Tanzt to some degree in its own right. Even though there is a wide dispute in secondary literature with regards to what the exact statements behind Hauptmann's symbolism in this work are, they all have in common the acknowledge-

ment of a

"persistent urge to reconcile the two levels of reality and myth in the play." (168)

Even though she is, like Rautendelein a child woman, Pippa is portrayed far more powerfully than Rautendelein. This is not so much due to her personality, but rather through her function in the play and the influence her sheer presence seems to have on other people. She carries to a greater extent the sovereignty as a characteristic that could be identified with the Lady of the Lake. However, in the end all female protagonists have to submit to their fate and leave their men. Pippa is not clearly attributable to the supernatural realm. In the beginning of the first Act there is no hint that she is anything else than a poor beautiful girl, and throughout the play there is no hard and fast proof that she is not a human being, but what she says about her own origin and what others assume about her nature lead to assumptions as to her 'otherworldliness'. She is a mixture, with a very real father and a mother who comes from the water city, beyond the watershed. Pippa symbolises life, the spiritual life in the first instance - and here she is very compatible to the role the Lady of the Lake played in folk tales. In the case of Hauptmann's work it could be stated that his Pippa stands for the spiritual life, the spiritual level, and we have seen that the tragedy in The Sunken Bell was partly evoked through the fact that Rautendelein, the fountain maid, only ever stood for the lower level, the realm of nature spirits. Her closeness to

nature was not the result of the fact that she had moved again towards it through a deep understanding but rather because of the fact that she had not yet moved away from nature. This is the reason why she looked upon becoming a human as an aim she desperately wanted to reach. Heinrich got mixed up between two realms the lower sphere bound to nature and the higher consciousness which has again come close to nature. This eventually leads to the tragic misunderstanding between him and Rautendelein.

McCormick sees as the Pippa drama's main theme "the theme of a journey". The journey is undertaken in its entirety only by Hellriegel. McCormick talks of a pilgrimage.(169) Michel Hellriegel has a lot in common with Heinrich the bell founder. Both take great pride in what they are doing and are striving to create a very special work. Both are in search for a new fantastical life which they believe they can only reach aided by the woman they love. Heinrich and Michel are prepared to brave all dangers which both of them face climbing up into the mountains. The mountain, as a symbol of the other world in both dramas of Hauptmann is dangerous for humans. In particular in Und Pippa Tanzt the mountain world with its severe weather conditions is very hostile. In The Sunken Bell the mountain world is seen more from the side of the mountain spirits who live there, but also here the valley people live in fear of it and the Waldschrat leads



people astray and on to dangerous ground.

Hellriegel can be compared to the youth of the Lady of the Lake tales. Hellriegel is not Pippa's only suitor, there is also the Director with his cynical attitude towards life and any ideals Hellriegel might stand for. The situation might become more explainable when looking at persons and plots in combination. In the Lady of the Lake tales the relationship failed because the lady was required to totally subdue to the human world; her husband did not acknowledge her essentially as being different from human women. In the Llyn y Fan tale the Lady of the Lake re-emerged from the water only after the youth had experienced desperation deep enough to make him prepared to join the lady in the water where he would surely have found his death. In Und Pippa Tanzt we could see the suitor role split into two figures. The Director committed to the real world and its pleasures, even though infatuated with Pippa, is not prepared to follow to the end the road that would lead his courtship to success. When he sees what a unification with Pippa would demand of him, that is, turning away from the world, and acknowledging and facing frightful appearances from other spheres beyond reality, he turns back to his 'dive' in Rotwassergrund.

This leaves Michel Hellriegel who can be successful because he is prepared to pay the price. His blindness symbolises his turning away from the world of senses

and reality to a new orientation towards inner realities.

Huhn was seen as an important figure in the Pippa tragedy who has no equivalent in any of the other tales discussed. He needs to be looked at in connection with Wann. Both are compatible in age and total opposites with regards to their nature. Huhn represents the beastly primitive part of human life, the part of the human personality which has to be overcome. This explains the strange dependence that Pippa has from him. Huhn is the primitive force which is still part of Pippa's human nature. His death is necessary in order to 'free' Pippa and Hellriegel, but this leads to Pippa's fleshly death as a logical and direct consequence.

Wann, an antagonist of Huhn, managed to overcome to being bound to the earth, to a great extent. He lives in dizzy heights, lives without desiring what an earthly existence has to offer, he has gained wisdom and power. The question is: how far is Wann an embodiment of what Hauptmann wanted to be as an artist and therefore of what stands outside the figure constellation as an individual contribution by Hauptmann, a mythological figure with strong biographical background. Wann's tragedy at the end is that in spite of all his wisdom he was, unlike Hellriegel, not chosen to reach the water city with Pippa.

In a comparison of figures between the folk tale cycle and Und Pippa Tanzt the constellation is as follows:

Pippa - The Lady of the Lake

Hellriegel (together with the Director) -the youth

Huhn - Part of Pippa and Hellriegel to be overcome to make entering a higher level possible.

Wann - a mythological figure, has some aspects in common with the Wittichen. There might also be some aspects of the Wittichen recognisable in Mutter Wende, the innkeeper's wife. Pippa seems to think of her as a person who can offer protection. We have seen that all tales dealt with in this thesis contain strong parent figures.

In Und Pippa Tanzt the figures have been used as true symbols, each character standing for a different aspect of one personality.

While the two dramas must be seen embedded in the context of Hauptmann's works, some of the connections - for example regarding the protagonists in both dramas - must be seen in their own right. Since they have been composed by one author, the first purpose of both pieces can be seen to be the intention to make a personal statement or express personal feelings and experiences. In order to do this Hauptmann has chosen a symbolic language. We have seen that the first example, The Sunken Bell must be judged, to a certain extent, as an unsuccessful attempt to use of the sym-



bols in their full density. The author's intentions are too obvious, the symbols are used purely as tools which do not do justice to their inherent expressiveness and therefore make statements and figures at times seem rather flat.

However, against this must be held the drama's initial success on stage. Perhaps this can be attributed to its relative simplicity, to its very obvious symbolism that made it possible for a contemporary audience not 'trained' in the use of symbolic language' to understand the piece.

We have seen that Hauptmann incorporated many of his own personal ideas and ambitions in the main male protagonists of his plays, for example, the striving for perfection as an artist. The writing of the drama The Sunken Bell coincided also with Hauptmann's personal experience of an unhappy love. The Pippa drama presents more difficulties when an attempt is made to establish one figure with whom Hauptmann might have identified himself, since its psychological complexity suggests that all the characters contained in Und Pippa Tanzt reflect one particular aspect of a personality. It is, therefore, not possible to establish without doubt who in the Pippa drama has to be seen as the main male protagonist through whom Hauptmann tried to express himself. There is also a possibility that the emphasis on who is the main figure could change in

the course of the plot. In the end this figure who carries the final statement will almost certainly be Wann. Even though in possession of wisdom and in spite of having his back turned on the world, he is left behind when Hellriegel starts his journey to the dream and water city. Wann was after all not chosen to make this last and final step. There will certainly be aspects in all figures, Michel Hellriegel, Wann, Huhn and the Director that evolved out of the author's personality. The creation of all those figures were inspired by the author's own experience. But when looking in the Pippa drama for the 'core' figure who would form the centre of a mythological personality of whom all the other characters in the drama are but aspects, the theory shall be posed, that in the beginning Hellriegel stands for Hauptmann's aspirations as a young artist and invites the spectator to identify with him while in the end reality catches up with the events in the form of Wann who is left alone in his hut at the mountain top, between worlds, no longer belonging to this one and not chosen to enter the next.

As the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach undergoes a transformation during the cause of the folk tale's plot, Pippa also has to undergo a change - from material to spiritual life - that will enable her to live in her water city. Pippa and Rautendelein are closely connected to water. It is described as their real element, the realm from which they stem. This is stated quite

literally in the case of Rautendelein, the fountain maid. Pippa, in a more indirect way, originates from and - symbolically - returns to the water city Venice. Both female protagonists exercise an irresistible force over the male sex who cannot resist their attraction. All female protagonists in the dramas, as well as in the folk tale cycle, are described as being very beautiful. They stand representative for a system of values that contradicts the traditional ethical system of Christianity. In the case of Pippa this theme may be less distinct. We have here, however, many general references to the fact that order is breaking down within society from a sociological and economic point of view. In the first Act Tagliazoni is killed after playing false, we hear about the glassworks closing down causing economic decline in the area and mental distress to previous employees, like for example to the glass blower Huhn. When he lost work, he lost his purpose in life.(170) The basic conflicts in all the works discussed are the same, for example, the problems associated with the adjustment to a new life style which is totally alien from the old customs. In all the folk tales out of the Lady of the Lake cycle it was the Lady who went out of the water to live with her mortal husband. We have, however, learned that folk tradition knew of tales where this was also possible the other way round. In The Sunken Bell Rautendelein enters Heinrich's home to make him well enough so that he follows her into the mountain world. Pippa under-



takes the journey back to her home with Michel Hellriegel. Pippa helps Hellriegel to come with her. However, in reality she dies. Therefore, in all versions the woman retreats from the world to continue to live in another sphere of reality. This has disastrous effects on the men, in the folk tales symbolised by financial, material ruin, in The Sunken Bell expressed in Heinrich's physical death. In the Pippa drama there is apparent success of Hellriegel. But a closer look means that all he has to look forward to at the end of the fourth Act is his sure death. The chances of survival for a young man, up on the mountain, in the snow storm, blinded and mentally confused must be very slim.

Like in the material previously examined both dramas contain a strict dualism. In The Sunken Bell the subject is the contrast between the Christian and the pagan world. This is remarkable when considering that during modern times ancient deities hardly bore any real relevance to everyday life. However, the contrast between the principal characters who represent 'sensuality' on one hand, and 'world negation' at the other, was well known and dealt with by Hauptmann's - artistic - contemporaries. Thus the conflicts acted out in the dramas can be seen as relevant to a twentieth century audience. The dualism in the Pippa drama is more complicated and the sides allocated to one particular figure are not always clear. Consequently

the border between reality and the otherworld is a fluid one and not always recognisable. Similar to The Sunken Bell in Und Pippa Tanzt Hauptmann basically describes human kind's dilemma when striving for perfection and freedom while at the same time having to obey the earthly natural laws.

In the centre of both works stands a female character who bears close relationship to ancient mythological figures rooted in the Lady of the Lake and the water goddess tradition. Fairy tale and drama tell about the beauty of those creatures and the fascination they exert on the mortal man. In all cases an attempt is made between the member of the human world and the non-real world to come and live together. This union is not supported by members of the human realm, the valley people in The Sunken Bell - the Director admits that a union with Pippa would be too strenuous and dangerous. The Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach meets with difficulties when she is asked to participate in crucial aspects of human life, a christening, wedding and a funeral. Pippa is frequently referred to as being too delicate and fragile for this world. Parent figures play a part as supporters of the union and friends of the young couple. In the Lady of the Lake cycle the youth's mother knows how to persuade the Lady to come out of the water, also her father - even though he insists on the marriage conditions - is not opposed to the union. The Wittichen in The Sunken Bell and Wann in Und Pippa

Tanzt have similar protective functions.

In the end the union fails, on the surface, because of the inadequacies of humans - the man cannot keep the marriage contract, Heinrich cannot complete his glockenspiel, Michel cannot protect Pippa from Huhn (i.e. he cannot respect the brutish aspect of the human existence). That means, it is fate that makes the union fail, the couple cannot change or escape human nature. The women return to the water, their element. A transformation of the female main protagonist takes place in all tales. In this transformation several level of consciousness can be involved: Rautendelein represented the preconscious closeness to nature. Pippa and Huhn, the Lady of the Lake, during the time they lived with their human husbands, stood for the human, earth-bound existence. Pippa after her death as well as the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach, for example, when she reappears to her sons, symbolise the metaphysical sphere. Only in the Lady of the Lake cycle all three aspects are contained: The subconscious sphere, symbolised by her life in the under-water world before she appeared to the youth. As the mortal's wife she represents the human realm and after her return to her sons she is the bringer of knowledge and the symbol of wisdom.

An overall conclusion that could be drawn out of the investigations of the folk tales as well as from Hauptmann's dramas could be that the only chance of succeed-



ing in combining two principally contrasting spheres, may it be materialism - spiritualism, sensuality - seclusion from the world etc., is to undertake the dangerous journey into the subconscious or the unknown. This may mean, on the one hand, to accept previously suppressed parts of the consciousness, because they were denied as primeval and overcome. On the other hand, it can lead to making the next step in the development of the conscious mind into the spiritual sphere where cosmic harmony prevails and earthly constraints and pleasures no longer exist. In a way those two explanations supplement each other insofar as in order to take the latter step one must have taken the first one.

IV.5 FOOTNOTES

(1) Alexander, Neville, E., Studien zum Stilwandel im dramatischen Werk Gerhart Hauptmanns (Stuttgart, 1964) p.2.

'a writer who was misled by bourgoise sentimentality into the eradication of honest and true exposure of social grievances in the arts.'

(2) Bytkowski, Sigmund, Gerhart Hauptmanns Naturalismus und das Drama (Hamburg, 1908) p.1.

(3) Hanneles Himmelfahrt-1894, die versunkene Glocke-1896, Schluck und Jau-1900, der arme Heinrich-1902, Elka-1905, Und Pippa tanzt-1906.

(4) Guthke, Karls., Gerhart Hauptmann, Weltbild im Werk (München, 1980) p.20.

(5) Hauptmann, Gerhart, Sämtliche Werke edited by Hans-Egon Hass (Frankfurt/Main - Berlin, 1966) vol.VII, p.675.

'I came to recognise the powers that exist above us in their untouched frightfulness and in their frightful untouchability'

(6) Fischer, Gottfried, Erzählformen in den Werken Gerhart Hauptmanns unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit- und Raumgestaltung (Bonn, 1957) p.103.

'The materialism and the rationalism of these years provoked the demand for the metaphysical.'

(7) Stumpfe, Ortrud, Die Symbolsprache der Märchen (Aschendorff, 1965) p.192ff.

(8) Schütze, Martin, "Hauptmann's 'Die Versunkene Glocke'", Americana Germanica 3 1899, p.60.

(9) Cowen, Roy C., Hauptmann Kommentar zum dramatischen Werk (München, 1980) p.105.

(10) Weisert, John, "Critical reception of Gerhart Hauptmann's 'The Sunken Bell' on the American stage", Monatshefte 43 1951, p.221.

(11) ibid. p.222.

(12) Hauptmann, Sämtliche Werke vol.I. Dramen.

(13) Hauptmann, Gerhart, The Sunken Bell (London, 1913).

(14) This is another name for the Wittichen and according to John Walz the name has been taken from Grimm. (Walz, John, "Folklore Elements in Hauptmann's 'Die versunkene Glocke'", Modern Language Notes 16 1901,

p.45)

(15) Hauptmann, "Die Versunkene Glocke, ein deutsches Märchendrama ", Hauptmann, Gerhart, Sämtliche Werke vol.I, Dramen, pp.757f.

'You have fallen in disgrace. The 'Buschgroßmutter' hates you because you deliver wax for the church candles.'

(16) *ibid.*, p.802.

'a beautiful golden haired girl of the woods'

(17) 'twin breasts' - this could be a connotation to the Song of Songs, see for example the following verses:

'Your two breasts are like two fawns, twin fawns of a gazelle' (Song of Songs, 4.5)

(18) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.762.

(19) Walz, Folklore Elements p.69.

(20) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.764

'a goat footed, goat bearded, horned forest spirit comes jumping onto the meadow in comical leaps.'

(21) Walz, Folklore Elements p.98.

(22) Hauptmann Die Versunkene Glocke p.764.  
'they mix their bread with caraway.'

(23) *ibid.* p.765

'the damned bell ringing'

(24) For references to the motif of the bell that disappeared into the lake and is heard ringing from time to time, see Walz, Folklore Elements p.65.

(25) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke pp.765ff.

(26) *ibid.* p.767.

'The old Wittichen comes leaping out of the woods with a pack basket on her back. Her hair is snow-white and open. Her face looks more like that of a man than a woman, [she has] beard fuzz.'

(27) Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen gesammelt durch die Brüder Grimm (Frankfurt/Main, 1979) vol.I p.112.

(28) *ibid.* p.168.



(29) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke pp.768f.

(30) *ibid.* p.770.

(31) *ibid.* p.776.

(32) *ibid.* pp.770f.

(33) *ibid.* p.771.

'I know, I know, I did not know before, that life is death and death is life.'

(34) *ibid.* p.777.

(35) *ibid.* p.778.

(36) *ibid.* p.781.

(37) *ibid.* pp.778f.

(38) *ibid.* p.791.

(39) *ibid.* p.793.

(40) *ibid.* p.795.

(41) According to Walz this is yet another similarity to German, Swabian folklore. (Walz, Folklore Elements p.66.)

(42) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.804.

'His sickness is a very deep and inner one. An incomprehensible suffering eats him up, wears him down. I don't know what I should fear or hope for.'

(43) *ibid.* p.802.

'It [the bell] might sound [nicely] down in the valley, but not in the mountain.'

(44) *ibid.* p.805.

(45) *ibid.* p.808.

'an image of his soul'

(46) *ibid.* p.815.

(47) *ibid.* p.814.

'a cursed species'

(48) *ibid.* p.817.

(49) *ibid.* pp.819f.

(50) *ibid.* pp.825f.

(51) *ibid.* p.828.

(52) *ibid.* p.835.

(53) *ibid.* p.830.

(54) *ibid.* p.838.

'being bound to the earth'

(55) *ibid.* p.840

(56) Walz points out that this scene is also rooted in German folk tradition. (Walz, Folklore Elements p.67. In the folklore of the 'Eifel', another mountainous area of Germany, there are many tales about churches and villages that have sunken into lakes, the 'Eifeler Maare', a vulcanic area. Those sunken bells can also often be heard ringing.

(57) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.851.

'I hate you! I spit on you! back! I hit you [...] hag, go away you damned spirit, damn you and me.'

(58) *ibid.* p.856.

'If you had seen what I saw down below that happened deep in the lake, (something) that never happened (before); when a dead woman's motionless hand looked for the bell and found it.

...  
I saw the woman, drowned: bright and light her hair surrounding her sufferer's face.'

(59) *ibid.* p.860.

'Yes, who am I?  
How often have I asked heaven this question who I am,  
but there was no answer.  
Only one thing is certain, whoever I might be, hero or weakling, demi-god or animal, I am a child abandoned by the sun and want to go home, totally helpless, a picture of misery crying for the mother who reaches out with her golden arm yearning; however, she will never reach me.'

(60) Dinter, Kurt, Gerhart Hauptmann, Leben und Werk eines Dichters (Berlin, 1932) pp.49f.

(61) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.824.

(62) *ibid.* p.769.

(63) Von Beit, Hedwig, Symbolik des Märchens, Versuch einer Deutung (Bern, 1986) p.46.

(64) *ibid.* p.48.

'The person who has fallen into the power of the mountain spirit turns his back to the God whom he worshipped hitherto and acknowledges the uncanny powers of nature.'

(65) *ibid.* p.47.

(66) Hauptmann, The Sunken Bell p.39.

(67) *ibid.* pp.30f.

(68) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke pp.783f.

'Where the light  
is broken in the waterfall.  
And the floods, brightened by the light  
fall roaring to the depths.  
From there I rose out of the moist and humid night  
out of the gurgling foam shaft  
I welled up and stepped forth  
through a dripping fate of rocks.'

(69) Gregor, Joseph, Gerhart Hauptmann, das Werk und unsere Zeit (Wien, 1952) p.322.

(70) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.797.

(71) *ibid.* p.773.

'There is no medicine for this,  
a human must die, there is no other way.  
What does it matter. Leave him, he does not want  
it otherwise.'

(72) *ibid.* p.770.

(73) Gregor, Gerhart Hauptmann, das Werk und unsere Zeit p.323.

(74) Marschan, Hans Joachim, Das Mitleid bei Gerhart Hauptmann, psychologisch-ästhetische Betrachtungen (Dortmund, 1919) p.103.

(75) Walz, Folklore Elements p.93f.

(76) Schütze, Hauptmanns 'Die versunkene Glocke' p.92.

(77) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.762.

(78) Hauptmann, The Sunken Bell p.2



(79) ibid. p.3. See also Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke pp.761f.

(80) Here we recognise the 'twin sister' motif which is also present in the Llyn Y Fan Fach story.

(81) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.762.

'Hello, you nice fountain girl  
what is your name? what, Rautendelein?  
You want to be the most beautiful girl?  
Yes, you say? - I ... I am Rautendelein.'

(82) Stumpfe, Die Symbolsprache der Märchen pp.35ff.

(83) McCormick, E. Allen, "Rautendelein and the Thematic Imagery of the 'Versunkene Glocke'", Monatshefte 54 1962, p.325.

(84) ibid. p.325.

(85) Hauptmann, Die Versunkene Glocke p.823.

(86) Tettenborn, Joachim, Das Tragische bei Gerhart Hauptmann (Jena, 1950) p.51.

(87) Von Beit, Symbolik des Märchens p.15.

(88) See to this for example Milch, Werner, Gerhart Hauptmann, Vielfalt und Einheit seines Werkes (Breslau, 193) p.28. He comes to the conclusion that Hauptmann has taken the content out of his symbols. (ibid. p.37)

(89) Grimm, "Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich", Grimm, Kinder und Hausmärchen vol.I pp.35ff. See to this also Walz, Folklore Elements p.47.

(90) McCormick, E. Allen, "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa tanzt'", Edward R. Haymes, Theatrum Mundi Essays on German Drama and German Literature (München, 1980) p.94.

(91) Hauptmann, Gerhart, Und Pippa Tanzt, ein Glashüttenmärchen (Stuttgart, 1965) p.7.

'Also an old ghost from the glassworks who can neither live or die.'

(92) ibid. p.26.

'Don't touch me, or my heart will burst.'

(93) ibid. p.27.

(94) ibid. pp.28f.

(95) ibid. pp.33f.

(96) *ibid.* p.61.

'Michel, hold me ...don't let me go! he tears me ... it tears me! ... or I must dance! ... I must dance! or I die! - let me go.'

(97) *ibid.* p.66.

'It has become very light. Wann gives a walking stick to the blind and helpless Michel, puts a hat on Michel's head and leads Michel, who is feeling his way while at the same time giggling happily, to the front door. Now Michel starts to play the mouth organ, he plays a sad, heartbreaking song.'

(98) Hauptmann, Sämtliche Werke vol.VII, p.538.

(99) Behl, Carl F.W., "Die Metamorphosen des alten Wann", Gerhart Hauptmann-Jahrbuch 1948 p.99.

(100) Hilscher, Eberhard, Gerhart Hauptmann (Berlin, 1969) p.205.

(101) Behl, Die Metamorphosen des alten Wann p.481.

(102) *ibid.* p.102.

(103) Cowen, Roy C., Hauptmann Kommentar zum Dramatischen Werk (München, 1980) p.138.

(104) *ibid.* p.146.

(105) *ibid.* p.147.

(106) Rasch, Wolfdietrich, "Und Pippa tanzt", Von Wiese, Benno (ed.), Das deutsche Drama vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart (Düsseldorf, 1958) vol.2, p.196.

(107) Sternberg, Kurt, Gerhart Hauptmann, der Entwicklungsgang seiner Dichtung (Berlin, 1910) pp.353f.

'a 'stilted and pompous symbolism' and a 'totally unnecessary mystery mongering'.

(108) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.7.

'...of course, a brightness, as if it was bright daylight! It's enough to drive you crazy the firmament! Blue, everything is blue! (He leans over his plate) Even the trouts - God, the poor creatures with their mouths wide open ...'

(109) The Lady of the Lake has often been portrayed sitting on the water, combing her hair while using the water surface as a mirror, like, for example, the

"Loreley" of the Rhine.

(110) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.11.

'When the white embers break out the furnace I often see you like a Salamander trembling in the glowing air. Then, only slowly, you dissolve in the darkness.'

(111) *ibid.* pp.11f.

(112) *ibid.* p.7.

(113) *ibid.* pp.7f.

'A giant man with long red hair, red bushy eye brows and a red beard, covered from top to bottom in rags...'

(114) *ibid.* pp.7f.

(115) McCormick, Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa Tanzt' p.97.

(116) *ibid.* p.98.

(117) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.11.

'Never mind! I don't care for dancing now (only to Pippa) it is enough for me to have you here you gorgeous child.'

(118) *ibid.* p.13.

(119) *ibid.* p.14.

'to the land where milk and honey flows.'

(120) *ibid.* pp.14f.

'to form with bare hands balls out of clear water'

(121) *ibid.* p.57.

(122) *ibid.* p.15.

'O yes, that's how it is. In the morning the sky hangs full of violins, in the evening there is not one unbroken bone in the body.'

(123) *ibid.* p.16.

Director: 'Cloud cuckoo land is still quite a way off'

Hellriegel: 'But I possess inclination and perseverance.'



(124) *ibid.* pp.15f.

(125) *ibid.* p.18.

(126) Mühler, Robert, "Kosmos und Psyche in Gerhart Hauptmanns Glashüttenmärchen 'Und Pippa tanzt'", Mühler, Robert, Dichtung der Krise (Wien, 1951) p.308.

'a picture of this threat to the human kind, a symbol for the exposure of the human existence, of which the poet makes use.'

(127) *ibid.* p.309.

(128) McCormick, Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa Tanzt' p.94.

(129) Schreiber, Herrmann, Gerhart Hauptmann und das Irrationale (Aichkirchen, 1946) p.88.

(130) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt pp.24f.

(131) *ibid.* p.26.

Pippa: Huhn, old man Huhn, please let me go. I know you: You are Father Huhn. What has happened? Why am I here with you?

Huhn: Because this is how it has to be in this world.

Pippa: What's got to be? What do you mean?

Huhn: What one does not have, he has to take.

Pippa: What do you mean, I don't understand you?

Huhn: Don't touch me or my heart will burst.

(132) Mühler, Kosmos und Psyche p.321.

(133) Rommel, Otto, "Die Symbolik von Gerhart Hauptmanns Glashüttenmärchen 'Und Pippa tanzt'", Zeitschrift für Deutschkunde 36 1922, p.392.

(134) McCormick, Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa Tanzt' p.98.

(135) *ibid.* p.104.

(136) *ibid.* p.105.

(137) *ibid.* p.105.

(138) *ibid.* p.101.

(139) Rommel, Die Symbolik von Gerhart Hauptmanns Glashüttenmärchen p.391.

(140) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.24.

(141) *ibid.* pp.23f.

(142) *ibid.* p.27.

(143) *ibid.* p.28.

(144) *ibid.* p.31.

(145) Schreiber, Gerhart Hauptmann und das Irrationale p.88.

(146) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.11.

(147) Mühler, Kosmos und Psyche pp.311f.

(148) *ibid.* pp.312f.

'... which lives in all men living and not extinguished by the fall of man and therefore an imperishable power working from within the spirit, that is not exposed to mankind's confusion but fights the evil and works for the good.'

(149) *ibid.* p.337.

(150) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.32.

Hellriegel: Tell me Pippa, where were you born?  
Pippa: I believe in a water town ... and every day the sun is shining there.'

(151) Mühler, Kosmos und Psyche pp.35ff.

(152) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.38.

(153) Rasch, Und Pippa Tanzt p.200.

(154) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.39.

'a musical-cosmic brotherhood'

(155) *ibid.* p.41.

(156) Grumann, Paul, "Hauptmann's viewpoint in 'Und Pippa tanzt'", Poet Lore 20 1909, p.130.

(157) *ibid.* p.130

(158) *ibid.* pp.131ff.

(159) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.39.

(160) *ibid.* p.41.

'I cannot live and I cannot die. Take a scalpel in your hand and look for the poisoned arrow head, which sticks somewhere in my carcass and which goes deeper into me every minute. I am fed up with the fear and the itch, with sleeping badly

and having no appetite.'

(161) *ibid.* p.44

(162) Guthke, Karl S./Wolff, Hans M., Das Leid im Werke Gerhart Hauptmanns fünf Studien, (Berkley - Los Angeles, 1958) p.30.

(163) Mühler, Kosmos und Psyche p.35.

(164) see Rasch, Und Pippa Tanzt p.117.

(165) Hauptmann, Und Pippa Tanzt p.41.

'Great how one feels up here in your house like in a ship's cabin in a storm on the great ocean.'

(166) *ibid.* pp.48ff.

(167) Hilscher, Eberhart, Gerhart Hauptmann (Berlin, 1969) p.251.

(168) McCormick, Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa Tanzt' p.93.

(169) *ibid.* p.97.

(170) See to this also *ibid.*, p.94 and 97.



V. WALT DISNEY'S CARTOON 'THE LITTLE MERMAID'

V.1 Summary of the Plot

Walt Disney's Little Mermaid is different from the previously discussed works in as much as the main female protagonist is a real mermaid.

Ariel is the sea king Triton's youngest daughter. She lives with her older sisters and with her father in an underwater palace, where they all lead a happy, carefree life. The only dangers threatening the 'merfolk' come from humans whom King Triton calls the 'fish eaters'.

Ariel is different from her sisters. She is curious about the human world which as far as King Triton is concerned is taboo to the 'merpeople', especially to his youngest beloved daughter. Nevertheless Ariel undertakes excursions which lead her sometimes even above the water surface, to collect items that belong to the human world. On these journeys she is accompanied by her friend, a fish called 'Flounder'. She is so taken up with completing, her 'collection', a collection of objects representing human civilisation, that she forgets her debut at the concert hall, where she was supposed to sing with all the other sisters. It is also on this particular occasion that both Ariel and Flounder only narrowly escape the jaws of a nasty shark chasing them through a ship wreck. When she fails to appear at the concert her father orders 'Sebastian' the concert master (a crab) to look after Ariel, and to report all her steps back to him.

Ariel disobeys her father again and, allured by the noises and lights of a fireworks, swims to the water surface. A party is being held on board of a ship, it is the prince's, Prince Eric's birthday. Ariel secretly observes the festivities and falls instantly in love with Eric. A terrible storm breaks loose, the ship sinks and Ariel rescues the prince from drowning. He had returned to the burning ship, in order to save his dog 'Max' from the flames. The prince, after being brought back to land, has only vague memories of the beautiful girl who rescued him and sang to him shortly before he regained consciousness and was brought back home by his servant 'Grimsby'.

Ariel starts to spend even more time with her day dreaming, it becomes obvious to her sisters and then to her father that she is in love. King Triton makes Sebastian, who was supposed to look after Ariel, tell him with whom his youngest daughter has fallen in love. When he finds out

that she has chosen a human, the king is outraged. He forbids Ariel to ever try and see or even think of him again.

Before the ship sunk the servant 'Grimsby' had given to Eric as a birthday present a statue of the prince. This statue has sunk with the ship to the sea floor where Flonder found it and added it as the price piece to Ariel's collection. While admiring the stone picture of her prince Ariel is discovered by the king, who on finding that he is not getting through to his daughter, destroys her 'collection' and the statue with it.

Ariel is left in desperation. She is approached by 'Flotsam' and 'Jetsam', two sea eels who are the magic helpers of 'Ursula', a sea witch. They persuade Ariel to accept the sea witch's help. They make a deal. Ariel has to give her beautiful voice to the sea witch and in return she gets a pair of legs, that enable her to walk and live like a human being. She is given three days during which she has to make the prince give her a 'real kiss', the kiss of love. If this happens she can stay on land forever. If not, she will come under the sea witch's power and turn into a poor pitiful creature.

On land Ariel, with the help of her two friends, Flonder and Bastian, manages to spend the three days in the Prince's company. Eric likes the strange girl very much, but he still waits to meet again the girl who saved him from certain death in the water and whose voice he remembers so vividly. Nevertheless he is only prevented in the last minutes by Flotsam and Jetsam, to give her the kiss of love. Ursula, on seeing her plans endangered by Ariel's possible success, changes her shape into the one of a beautiful girl who, since she has Ariel's voice, tricks the prince into giving her the promise of marriage. This is only prevented in the very last minute through the cooperation of all, Ariel, her animal friends and King Triton, who has been called to help. (He has spent the time since Ariel's disappearance with searching the whole kingdom for her and regretting his behaviour).

It looks as if in the end after all Ursula would triumph. Even though the prince does not marry her, due to the fact that she has been unmasked by the animal friends as the sea witch, Eric's recognition of who Ariel really is, comes too late. The third day is over, before he can give her the redeeming kiss. Ariel has to return to the sea and into Ursula's power. King Triton persuades Ursula to take him instead of his daughter. The sea witch agrees to this exchange since it was the



sea king whom she wanted to destroy in the first place. In the end Eric challenges the sea witch, and eventually defeats her, releasing not only the sea king but also the other 'merpeople' who were trapped and bewitched by Ursula. The film ends with King Triton giving Ariel what she wants most in life, human legs, so that she can marry her Prince and live with him in his kingdom.

## V.2 Purpose and Method of Interpretation

This is the last example discussed in this thesis, that tells about the marriage between a woman from the water world and a human man. In Walt Disney's cartoon The Little Mermaid a traditional fairy-story has been turned into a successful cartoon. The question to be raised in the following interpretation will firstly be: What do the characters in the Little Mermaid story stand for? What is the story's symbolic meaning? As a result of these enquiries it may be possible to find the answer to the question why is the twentieth century still fascinated by the Little Mermaid?

The following investigation will concentrate on individual characters in the cartoon, their particular function and their interaction with others. Bearing this in mind overlaps will not always be avoidable since the interpretation will not necessarily follow the sequence of the film's plot. The interpretation method will be an immanent one in the first instance. Then, the investigation will also include the historic perspective as well as a sociological and finally a psychological approach. The change of societies from



matrilinear to patrilinear forms will again be briefly looked at. Then the interpretation will move towards an historic-evolutionary dimension when looking at the true meaning behind the idea of a creature who is half fish and half human, one who lives in the sea and longs to step outside the water in order to participate in human civilisation. Here the question of the relevance of fairy-tales for children will be raised and reference will be made in particular to Bruno Bettelheim's theories who writes in Kinder brauchen Märchen:

Im Laufe der Jahrhunderte, wenn nicht gar Jahrtausende, in denen die Märchen immer wieder neu erzählt und schließlich immer stärker durchformt wurden, nahmen sie allmählich einen offenen und einen versteckten Sinn an. In ihrer jetzigen Gestalt sprechen sie alle Ebenen der menschlichen Persönlichkeit gleichzeitig an." (1)

It will then be discussed how far this use of symbolic language and the 'latent' content expressed in fairy-tales and legends (2) is also an appropriate means of communication for adults, and whether, because of this, the Little Mermaid contains messages which are relevant for human beings of all ages.

### V.3 Ariel and the Origin and Tradition of the Tale

Ariel stands firmly in the tradition of Andersen's Meerweibchen. Both tales are based on Fouque's Undine. Friedrich Baron de la Motte Fouque's (1777 - 1843) Undine appeared in 1811 in the magazine Jahreszeiten. Undine in particular contributed to the

fact that the very productive Fouque became one of the most popular poets during the romantic area in Western Europe. Goethe and Heinrich Heine commented favourably on this tale and in the very year of its first publication the second edition took place. ETA-Hoffmann composed an opera based on this tale which was first performed in Berlin in 1816. There were, too, very successful Ballet versions of the tale during Fouque's own lifetime.

"Rasche und zahlreiche Übersetzungen sicherte der Undine eine weltweite Bekannt- und Beliebtheit, die eine immense - auch noch keineswegs abbreißende - literarische Rezeption zur Folge hatte. (Andersens Kleine Meerjungfrau, Oscar Wilds Der Fischer und seine Seele, Giraudoux' Ondine, Ingeborg Bachmanns Undine geht, etc.)" (3)

Disney's The Little Mermaid is very similar to Andersen's Meerweibchen. There are, however, important differences; Disney's happy ending is peculiar to this version and, perhaps, a concession to the young, twentieth century audience and its expectations. The cartoon film lacks completely the philosophical, religious and moral element which can be found in Andersen's fairy-tale.

Both adaptations of this material, Andersen's Meerweibchen and Walt Disney's Little Mermaid, can be traced back to the sixteenth century to the Theophrastus Paracelsus Schriften.

"Ich benutzte die Ausgabe von Conrad Waldkirch zu Basel, vom Jahre 1590, in deren neuntem Theil, S.45 das Liber de Nymphis, Sylphis, Pymalis et Salamander, et de caeteris spiritibus mir das ganze Verhältnis der Undinen zu den Menschen, die



Möglichkeit ihrer Ehen usw. and die Hand gab." (4)

The film introduces the Little Mermaid, Ariel, as one of many sisters. Within this framework her special position is established by characterising her as the sea king Triton's youngest daughter. At the beginning of the film we see the whole court of the 'merpeople' preparing for Ariel's debut in the mermaid choir. According to her age she stands at the brink of adulthood. Perhaps the impending concert could be interpreted as a form of initiation, that will make her enter the adult world of the 'merpeople'. (5)

However Ariel does not appear at the concert. She has apparently forgotten all about it and has undertaken, with her close and trusted friend Flounder, an expedition to the bottom of the sea from where she collects objects that stem from the world of the humans. In doing so she disobeys her father's, the sea king's instructions. This seems to stand in accordance with her overall character. Sebastian, the concert conductor, later on minder and friend of Ariel, tells King Triton that while Ariel has the "most beautiful voice", he wished that she would "show up for rehearsals once in a while." While her failing to attend the concert causes a scandal at the sea king's palace, Ariel and Flounder are searching through a ship wreck and looking for treasures like, for example, pipes, cutlery, musical instruments, pottery, candle-sticks, jewellery, glasses, corkscrews, etc. It seems as if



Ariel does not distinguish between those objects that she has collected, everything is of equal value to her since the objects symbolise the achievements and advantages of the human world. How much those things are worth to the Little Mermaid becomes apparent when she returns for the bag she dropped in which she has collected new treasures even though she is chased by a shark. This scene reveals at the same time the depth of her friendship with Flounder who accompanied her on this journey of discovery and who would certainly have fallen victim to the shark were it not for Ariel's courageous help.

Ariel is not only interested in, but has a deep longing for the human world which is regarded as being heartless and dangerous by other members of the 'merfolk'. This applies especially to Ariel's father, King Triton. His warnings however fall on deaf ears.

"I don't see how a world that makes such wonderful things could be bad"

Ariel states.

It is difficult to say whether Ariel must be seen as at least partially originating from the animal world. Even though she acknowledges the human realm as a way of life which is superior and thus preferable to her own world, this view is by no means shared by the other members of the underwater world. And the fact that she

communicates effortlessly with the other underwater creatures (for example her friends, the fish Flounder and Bastian the crab, as well as the sea witch's helpers Flotsam and Jetsam) does not necessarily put her on a lower 'evolutionary' level. Ariel represents an attitude which is in harmony with the creation and its creatures. Her being able to understand and talk to sea creatures expresses, in the first instance, her closeness to them. This assumption is supported by the fact that Max, Prince Eric's dog, even though he senses her sympathy towards the animal world and clearly seems to like her, does not speak to her as such. This attitude of Ariel towards nature and the world forms an important part of her character and form part of her attraction to an audience. However from Ariel's point of view it is clear that she feels captured in her own world while longing for the realm of the humans. She wants "to walk where the people walk..." and is prepared to pay whatever price is necessary to gain this privilege.

Here lies a major difference between the plot in Walt Disney's 'Little Mermaid' and the previously discussed tales. In Disney's tale the feelings of affection between the female and the male protagonists are mutual and it is the Little Mermaid who clearly takes the initiative. She does not show the refractory attitude which is found in the tales of the 'Lady of the Lake'.

Also, even though there is no mention anywhere about the age of the Ladies of the Lake a comparison between the two tale cycles gives the distinct impression that the mermaids are younger. They are described as 'child women' even though they are ageless, and perhaps this characteristic has been emphasised in particular for the young audience of a Disney cartoon. When describing her as the youngest sister on the verge of adulthood she turns into a figure with whom younger viewers can identify.

Along with this goes the circumstance that Ariel seems to lack the important attribute of sovereignty which is inherent in the Lady of the Lake tales. There the Lady's sovereignty is at the root of her admiration and dignity. This could give one indication that while most of the 'Lady of the Lake' tales have their origin in mythology, the basis of the 'mermaid' cycle is a fairy-tale. One of the main differences which has been pointed out between myths and fairy-tales is that in myths gods and goddesses, supernatural creatures are acting in their full power and demanding admiration, whereas in fairy-tales heroes and heroines are struggling and are dependent on friendly magic - often animal-helpers. The main protagonists in fairy-tales are not superhuman and thus offer a realistic possibility to those who hear them or read them to identify themselves with the heroes and thus live through the experiences and survive all the dangers the plot con-



tains until the happy end of the stories. (6)

While the 'Lady of the Lake' tales never doubt the human shape of their female protagonist (7) Ariel is fundamentally and from her essence different and separate from the human race. The 'Little Mermaid' is half human and half fish. She combines within herself two different worlds. The underwater world and human life on land are two possible ways of existence in the film but they are not seen as equal. A clear evaluation in favour of the human world takes place. While the 'merfolk' are seen as belonging to the water world their shape identifies them as beings on the verge between two realms. A possible conflict seems pre-programmed, this conflict has been personified in Ariel.

Ariel is fascinated by all things that originate from the human world and she is convinced of the accuracy of her judgment regarding the human world and for this even risks the anger of her father, the powerful sea king who, after she has missed the concert, strictly forbids her to return to the surface of the water. Like a strict twentieth-century father he expects his daughter to live according to his rules:

"... as long as you live under my ocean."

Nevertheless, in a further act of disobedience Ariel goes once more to the surface of the water. Here she sees Prince Eric for the first time and instantly falls

in love with him. She has to witness the sinking of his ship and she saves him from drowning.

#### V.4 Prince Eric and the Dualism of two Realms

Prince Eric is the first human being whom the mermaid meets. Nevertheless when she first sets eyes on him on board his ship she acknowledges his handsomeness even though she really lacks any means of comparing him with other humans. Prince Eric has to be seen as representing the human world to the mermaid, at least all the positive aspects of which she has always dreamt.

But how representative of his society is Eric? During the Prince's birthday celebrations it becomes apparent that, like Ariel, Eric is not conforming to all the norms and regulation with which he is expected to conform. For example, he does not approve of his birthday present, a statue which depicts the prince as a hero and warrior. Grymsby's (his chamberlain) dissatisfaction with the prince, because he has not yet found a suitable match, points in the same direction. Instead of entering into a marriage appropriate for a prince and future king, Eric prefers to wait for the great romantic love.

"She's out there somewhere. I just haven't found her yet. Believe me, Grim, I'll find her, I know without a doubt. It will just, bam, hit me like lightning."

In a way this is exactly what happens then in the following scene, when lightning hits the ship causing it to catch fire and eventually sink. Like the two elements fire and water, Eric and Ariel meet here for the first time, even if it is - at least on Eric's part - not out of free will.

Another 'rescue scene' takes place in the water, with reversed roles. At the end of the film, when it looks as if the sea witch Ursula will finally triumph and Ariel has reverted back to her mermaid shape because of her, as it seems, unaccomplished task, Eric climbs into a rowing boat to help Ariel and fight the sea witch. As in the 'Lady of Llyn Y Fan Fach' tale, the male protagonist is only able to be with his love, after he demonstrates that he cares for her more than for his own life and is willing to enter her element, the water, even if this could prove deadly.

Throughout the plot there are hints regarding this heroic side of Eric. He looks handsome and strong and demonstrates repeatedly great courage. He risks his own life in order to save his dog, Max, and later on Ariel, King Triton and the other bewitched 'merpeople'. Eric also has a deep understanding with the animal world. This becomes evident for the first time when Max, his dog, shows the same reaction towards the statue as Eric. Both are shown as having the same facial expression and seem to make similar growling



noises.

Eric is a strong, gentle person with an affection for animals. His affinity with water, Ariel's element is demonstrated in the very first scene, which gives a powerful, joyful image when Eric and his birthday party celebrate on board his ship, which has a mermaid as a figure head. Eric thoroughly enjoys this trip.

"Isn't this great? The salty sea air, the wind blowing in your face - ah.."

He has not yet, it seems, come to know the darker and dangerous aspects of the water world.

Like Ariel, Eric is pre-dispositioned. Both protagonists are standing outside or on the verge of their own community and lean towards each other. Thus the mutual feelings of love which are experienced by both can be explained. Each recognises in the other an important aspect of his/her own personality which cannot be acknowledged or approved by their own societies.

While Ariel was attracted to Eric from the moment she set eyes on him, it is Ariel's voice which enchants and captures Eric and leaves an unforgettable and powerful impression on him. Once she has traded in her voice in order to receive legs from the sea witch, Eric does not recognise her, even though she seems "very familiar" to him.

"You seem very familiar to me, have we met?... You are the one I have been looking for ... You can't speak? Oh, then you couldn't be who I thought."

Nevertheless, the strange girl, who has been washed ashore near his castle has a very positive effect on him.

"That's the first time I have seen you smile in weeks",

says the close female servant when Ariel, who thinks Grimsby's pipe is a musical instrument, blows all the tobacco in his face. Even without identifying Ariel as the 'girl' who saved him from drowning and whose voice he heard subsequently, Eric grows very fond of her. During the tour through his kingdom he seems surprised and amused by her unconventionality - removing glove puppets of the player's hand during a Punch and Judy show, or turning upside down in the cart, to observe the horses running. After his initial shock about her daring way of leading the horses, when she succeeds in jumping over a big ditch, he folds his arms behind his head, leans back and relaxes. So, even under the conditions set by the sea witch, Ariel nearly succeeds in gaining a kiss of 'true love' of the Prince within the set limit of three days. Ursula the sea witch has to admit:

"..the little tramp, she is better than I thought.."

However from the start Ariel's and Eric's relationship is not a balanced one in every respect. In contrast to Ariel who must rebel against her father until the end and can only be successful after her father approves of her wishes, Eric is in a position of power regarding

his parent figures, who in the film are portrayed as his servants.

The reaction of Ariel's and Prince Eric's friends and family when they find out about the young people's encounter is also not a unanimous one. When the king learns about his daughter's love to a human, Ariel meets with great resistance, because from the king's point of view every connection with the human world is regarded as being extremely dangerous.

"Contact between the human world and the 'mer-world' is strictly forbidden... everyone knows that," states King Triton and calls human beings

"spineless savage, harpooning fish eaters, incapable of any feeling..".

On the other hand Grimsby does simply not believe Eric when he talks about a beautiful girl who rescued him out of the water then sang to him. Grimsby equates Eric's feelings with temporary mental confusion:

"Eric, I think you have swallowed too much seawater".

The land people do not regard reports about an encounter with the other realm as a tragic event, perhaps because they ignore their existence altogether. Grimsby, the chamberlain, refers to the seamen's talk about King Triton and the merpeople as "nautical nonsense". He has demonstrated already at the film's beginning how unfamiliar and alien he himself is to the water world when, during the prince's birthday party, he has to be seasick until he is, literally, green in the face.



The Disney cartoon deals with a thoroughly dualistic viewpoint. It consists of two worlds of which the two main protagonists, Ariel and Eric, are the representatives. Apart from this, Ariel, the female figure contains within herself elements of both realms. While belonging to the underwater world and the 'fish-folk' she strives individually to become a member of the human society because within herself she has discovered that she already has a frame of mind which has outgrown King Triton's realm and longs for new experiences and values.

She feels a strong attraction towards human civilisation, but as the object of her affection she has chosen a representative of this world who incorporates not so much the dashing masculine but rather more gentle aspects. Eric loves animals, plays the flute and could be described as a romantic dreamer who has no military aspirations. On the other hand, he is by no means a coward. Eric's capability of feeling great affection gives him also great courage. Twice in the film he proves this by firstly saving his dog from a burning ship and, secondly, by fighting the sea witch to save Ariel. He fights against the elements. He is also not afraid of rebelling against traditional ideas which, for example, might demand that he finds himself a 'suitable bride'. Thus the strict dualism in the tale points to harmony through the characteristics given to the two main protagonists. Eric and Ariel are the

meeting points where the two worlds can join together and where conflict is possible.

Ken Wilber attaches to this 'Dualism' the values masculine/spiritual and feminine/body and looks at it from an historical point of view. He assumes that its development took place during the age when the classical myths were created.

"Historisch gesehen wurde der Körper mit Weiblichkeit und der Geist mit Männlichkeit gleichgesetzt. Das bedeutete, daß die innere psychologische Dissoziation von Körper und Geist nach außen gerichtet eine soziologische Unterdrückung des Femininen durch das Maskuline bewirkte.

...  
Gemeint ist, daß Unterdrückung, Verdrängung und/oder Ausbeutung der Natur, des Körpers und der Frau aus denselben Gründen erfolgten. Natur, Körper und Frau wurden als eine Ganzheit gesehen, eine Ganzheit, die unterdrückt werden sollte..." (8)

#### V.5 The Sea Witch 'Ursula' and how the Evil One might once have been a Victim

Ursula can be characterised as the most complex creation of the film, even if this does not become apparent at first sight. She is not as easy to classify within the traditional range of fairy-tale or mythological figures, as, for example, Ariel the mermaid, or King Triton, the sea king. She has a direct parallel in Andersen's Meerweibchen. In Andersen's fairy-tale the little mermaid also goes to see a sea witch in order to ask her for help in gaining the prince's love and thus an immortal soul. However, in Andersen's fairy-tale the emphasis of the mermaid's longing is slightly



different, it is an immortal soul, the human's capacity of entering into god's realm after death for which she longs.

In both Andersen's as well as Walt Disney's version the mermaid knows that even though she is full of fear of the sea witch she will be able to receive help from her.

The Andersen fairy-tale reads:

"Die kleine Prinzessin blieb erschrocken for diesem Walde stehen; ihr Herz klopfte vor Angst; beinahe ware sie umgekehrt, aber da dachte sie an den Prinzen und die zu gewinnende Menschenseele und faßte wieder Mut". (9)

The scenes describing the meeting between the mermaid and the sea witch are remarkably similar in both versions, however the Disney variation is throughout lacking in the 'metaphysical' element contained in Andersen's story. Unlike Andersen's Meerweibchen, Ariel seems to be attracted by the more worldly comforts and accomplishments of the human world rather than the prospect of gaining an immortal soul.

Ursula the sea witch is King Triton's opponent who apparently wants to contest with King Triton for his kingdom. She is depicted not as a 'merwoman' but as an octopus. Thus she is part of the underwater world but, at the same time, a bitter enemy to the 'fish folk'. From the beginning she is introduced as a very angry creature.



When looking at the relationship between the sea-witch Ursula and King Triton there is open hostility and rivalry. It becomes evident that those hostile feelings are a result of things that must have taken place previous to the events described in the film. There was a time when Ursula ruled under the sea. When she first appears in the film she is shown observing the events that take place at King Triton's palace. She does this through the magic eyes of her eels, Flotsam and Jetsam:

"... Celebrations, ha... in my days we had fantastical feasts, when I lived in the palace..."

She complains that she feels:

"vanished, exiled and practically starving".

Taking her actual physiognomy into consideration this sounds either very funny or has been meant in a different, non-physical way.

Thus it might seem as if King Triton could have been the original thief and the present hostility between the two of them would be explained as an act of revenge on her part.

It would be useful to return briefly to Bachofen's theory which presumes a matrilineal form of society preceded a patriarchal one. Hereby the change of power has to be seen as not being a voluntary process but one often connected to a power struggle after which the hostilities between the sexes continue.

"Das Mutterrecht gehört einer früheren Kulturper-

iode als das Paternitätssystem, seine volle ungeschmälerte Blüte geht mit der siegreichen Ausbildung des letzteren dem Verfall entgegen." (11)

If one accepts that this tale contains a statement which assumes that matrilineal forms of society preceded patrilineal ones, other text passages would fall into place. For example, Ursula's somewhat ambiguous relationship to Ariel. Ursula's attitude towards Ariel is not really a hostile one but the sea witch rather sympathises with the daughter of her worst enemy. She almost seems to regret that she has to use the "poor little princess" as a tool to get at King Triton. This ambivalent behaviour of the sea witch towards the little mermaid does not have a direct parallel in Andersen's fairy tale. Here the sea witch is far more spiteful. In Andersen's fairy tale the mermaid's voice is taken by cutting off her tongue. Also one condition of her becoming human is that every step will hurt the mermaid as if she was treading on a sharp knife. The sea witch justifies the high price to be paid by the mermaid through the fact that the sea witch in return has to give a lot. In the Andersen tale one ingredient of the magic drink is the sea witch's blood which she takes out of her breast.

"Ich weiß schon, was du willst!" sagte die Meerhexe, "dumm genug! Indes sollst du deinen Willen bekommen, denn er wird dich ins Unglück stürzen, mein holdes Prinzeßchen.

...

Das Beste, was du besitzt, will ich für meinen köstlichen Drank! Mein eigen Blut muß ich ja dazu geben, damit der Trank scharf wird wie ein zweischneidig Schwert." (12)

In Disney's cartoon, on Ursula's part there are feel-



ings of sympathy mixed with contempt that she might feel for a young woman who has subdued herself to the rules and values of Prince Eric's world.

Ursula lives in a cave whose entrance is protected by teeth. It can only be entered through a long and narrow tunnel where horrible and pitiful creatures try to get hold of any intruder and prevent them from entering. (13) Ursula has very distinct views about the human world which the little mermaid is about to enter; to Ariel's remark that when she will become human she will never be with her father or sisters again she answers sarcastically:

"..that's right, but you'll have your man ... Life is full of tough choices."

She does not regard the price which she demands of Ariel in return for her help, as very high, but as:

"just a token really, a trifle ... what I want from you is your voice ... You'll never miss it."

In order to gain the Prince's love she reckons it is sufficient to have Ariel's "looks" and "pretty face" and she stresses the importance of "body language". She also gives her opinion regarding the male human beings:

"The men up there don't like a load of blabber they think a girl who gossips is a bore".

According to Ursula men prefer ladies who "do not say a word".

"Come on, they're not all that impressed with conversation, true gentlemen avoid it if they can..."

At the end of her great song which lays down her whole



chain of thought and ideas about the human world she addresses Ariel:

"Your poor unfortunate soul, come on, go ahead, make your choice ..."

The theory can be posed that the sea witch Ursula has actually undergone a transformation from being a victim of violence and seeking reparation and possibly revenge, to the personification of evil.(14)

However, in Disney's cartoon within its present context and in its present form, the historic aspect and interpretation level of the tale's meaning has been pushed into the background. In the Disney cartoon the margins between good and bad are clear-cut and simple. According to Bettelheim this is a postulate which needs to be fulfilled by fairy-tales in order to have a therapeutic and educational effect on children.

"Die Gestalten im Märchen sind nicht ambivalent, also nicht gut und böse zugleich, wie wir alle es in Wirklichkeit sind. Da aber Polarisierung den kindlichen Geist beherrscht, hat sie auch im Märchen Vorrang. Eine Person ist entweder gut oder böse, aber nichts dazwischen".(15)

Then he explains the reason for and the function of such polarised description of fairy-tale figures;

"Die Darstellung der charakterlichen Polarität erleichtert es dem Kind, den Unterschied <zwischen Gut und Böse> zu erfassen, was nicht so einfach wäre, wenn die Figuren lebensechter und so komplex wie wirkliche Menschen wären. Mit Doppeldeutigkeiten muß man warten, bis aufgrund positiver Identifikationen eine relativ feste Persönlichkeit entstanden ist."(16)

Nevertheless, such a one-sided, through and through negative interpretation of the character 'Ursula' does not match the humorous, perhaps sarcastic manner in

which she is depicted. In the scene where Ariel goes to see the sea witch to ask for help, Ursula rather reminds us at times, of a shady madam, who might on the surface display an interest in her protégés but is only seeking her own advantage.

Ursula fulfils another important function within this tale. In the 'Lady of the Lake' tales the conditions necessary for the formation of the relationship was made by the lady or her father, and the suitor has to comply with it. In the Little Mermaid it is the mermaid who has to fulfil a condition and pay the price. The sea witch's conditions to help Ariel sounds outrageous. However, at a closer look one could argue that in a way they are quite sensible. There is the kiss of love; it seems an adequate demand that, in order to take the risk Ariel is about to take, one has to be sure that her prince is worth the sacrifice. The loss of her voice could be translated into a mere statement: if she leaves her home to join Eric's world she can no longer say or be who she really is, she will lose her identity to a great extent. This statement could be borne out of the recognition that when living in a society orientated by different values and customs, it is difficult or impossible for a stranger to make his/her own voice heard.

The nasty sea witch Ursula has a direct opposite figure, Prince Eric's servant. The prince's female servant is simple, friendly and motherly. Apart from this there are striking similarities in the two women's appearance. Both are of similar age, have grey hair and are full figured. There could, however, not be two women more distant from each other. The motherly type stands against the vamp, expressed in their style of dress: the octopus lady with her many tentacles is in black with a deep décolleté, whereas the servant is wearing a high neckline and an apron.

Ursula is not incapable of feeling affection. She, too, has her animal helpers, characteristically sea eels. In the cartoon version they are given the names 'Flotsam and Jetsam'. Their destruction during the final fight provokes the sea witch's great rage. Her connection to the animal helpers bring her closer to Ariel and Eric, and suddenly make King Triton, to a certain extent the outsider, whose animal friend/servant, the crab Sebastian, disobeys him, changes sides and supports Ariel fully instead of watching over her and reporting back to King Triton as the sea king originally demanded.



In a comparison between Triton and Ursula, the sea witch emerges as the stronger part: however, she manages this only by making unscrupulous use of his weakness, the love for his daughter. Ursula is finally defeated by Eric. We have here the motif where the young hero gains victory over the monster which guards the beloved princess and he receives her hand in marriage as reward.

Eric has managed to climb on board the ship that sunk to the bottom of the sea, take the rudder and challenge the sea witch. Ursula has put King Triton's crown on her head and after witnessing the destruction of her animal helpers 'Flotsam' and 'Jetsam' gets angry and spreads her ink into the ocean - one remember that she is an octopus. During this process she grows bigger and bigger into a terrible monster. The ship that sunk to the bottom of the sea during a storm is being brought to the surface again by Ursula's lashing up the waves. Thus to a certain degree Ursula's anger has brought about her own destruction. She puts the crown on her head and is about to misuse her newly (re-) gained power for revenge. The ship as the subduer of the waves - the female water world, is being used by Eric to ram and deflate (!) the sea witch.

V.6 King Triton and the Evolutionary and Psychological Approach

There are two father figures in the Disney cartoon, the mermaid's father and Prince Eric's servant. Both have in common that they are authorities in their own traditional and cultural areas. Also, both go through some trouble to convince the young people in their care of just those values. The character of King Triton has, apart from this, a further dimension. He is also the mighty sea king who, however, unfolds the full strength of his power only sporadically and somewhat reluctantly. An aspect common to both father figures is their thoroughly positive alignment, they both represent stability and security. Even if their actions may not always be the most understanding ones, their intentions are always the best and in the end they are fully supportive to their children.

In the 'Lady of the Lake' tales the father figure could also play quite an important role as has been shown. However he was never personalised as has happened in the Disney cartoon. In the previously discussed tales he appeared only in his function as the Lady of the Lake's father, a figure of authority, even though the connection to him as king of the underwater world was never explicitly made.

The film depicts the conflict between King Triton and his daughter Ariel in a 'modern fashion' as a nearly trivial dispute between a father and his "headstrong teenage daughter".

"I set certain rules and I expect those rules to be obeyed ... Don't you take that tone of voice with me young lady.."

King Triton who is generally described as a loving and caring father, does not understand Ariel's actions until the end when he realises the depth of her feelings for Prince Eric.

King Triton's judgment of the humans must be seen as thoroughly justified and realistic from his point of view. He looks upon himself as being the ruler of all sea creatures and sees the need to protect his subjects. King Triton knows about the real threat which those "Barbarians" and "harpooning fish eaters" pose to his world.

"Contact between the human world and the 'merworld' is strictly forbidden ... everyone knows that"

Even though King Triton is this thoroughly positive figure, the cartoon never leaves any doubt that, while stability is one of his reassuring characteristics, the world and values for which King Triton stands are to be overcome by Ariel. Here one could introduce the evolutionary approach where it is assumed that tales like this conserve pre-historic subconscious knowledge about the evolutionary step



undertaken by life on earth when it came out of the water onto the land.

A closer look at the theories of Ken Wilber which he unfolds in his Halbzeit der Evolution (17) can contribute to a better understanding of this approach. He writes;

"Seine <des Menschen> früheste menschliche Ontogenese war eine Wiederholung der kosmischen Phylogenese". (18)

Wilber sees the development of the human mind in accordance with the enfolding of the rest of nature and the whole of the universe.

"Evolution/Geschichte - ein Pfad der Transzendenz und zur Transzendenz - beginnt also beim untersten Glied der Kette und erkämpft sich von dort aus mühsam ihren Weg nach oben. In einem sehr speziellen Sinn gilt dies auch für die aufsteigende Kurve der menschlichen Evolution/Geschichte. So wie die Ontologie, die Seinslehre, die Phylogenie, die Lehre von der Stammesentwicklung, rekapituliert, so begann auch die Entwicklungsgeschichte des Menschen auf den unteren Stufen der Großen Kette des Seins, weil sie alle früheren und vormenschlichen Stufen in menschlicher Form rekapitulieren mußte." (19)

Wilber has identified eight stages of consciousness through which the evolution of the human mind has to pass from Level 1 - physical nature and lower life forms to levels seven and eight, the "kausale Stufe (Dharmakaya, Stufe der vollkommenen Erleuchtung)", respectively the "Höchste Einheit" (...the absolute) (20). Wilber deals often with those two last stages together, since they embody a level of con-

sciousness of which human kind at present is not yet capable except for some rare examples where it can be achieved through methods of meditation. At present the great majority of people are at a relatively early stage of level four "Entwickelter Geist (Verstand) (Rationale, mental-ichhafte, selbstreflexive Stufe)" that brought the development of 'ego consciousness' with it. And Wilber sees the movement from the previous stage three, the mythological phase, to the present state of mind as a source of conflict out of which arose many of the great problems human kind is faced with today:

"Das ichhafte Selbstbewußtsein befindet sich auf halbem Wege zwischen dem Unbewußten der Natur und dem Überbewußten des GEISTES." (21)

He locates here also the period when the large mythologies were created. (22)

With regards to the plot of Walt Disney's Little Mermaid an application of the evolutionary and historical approaches would result in a statement that the 'merpeople' represent an earlier stage of development in human history. Ariel as a member of this early society tries to achieve a higher level of consciousness. The dilemma arises out of the acknowledgement that her success would be synonymous with the negation of the 'merpeople's' way of life. And one could say that here lies one of the major problems inherent in this story, since:

"Es scheint festzustehen, daß jede Stufe der

Evolution zwar über ihre Vorgänger hinausgeht, diese aber in ihre eigene höhere Ordnung einbeziehen, integrieren muß...Mit anderen Worten: Jede Stufe der Evolution transzendiert und umfaßt alle vorherigen." (23)

If we see the 'merpeople' as representatives of an earlier state of human consciousness when humans still felt closer to nature and part of it, then parallels can be traced between the 'merpeople's' lifestyle and the events described in Genesis two and three, when the first humans, Adam and Eve, lived in Paradise and after the 'Sündenfall' were driven out of it. Leaving Paradise could be described as the final awakening of the consciousness of a being separate from the rest of the living creatures and becoming aware of the own inevitable mortality. To suppose that the under-water-world of King Triton is a symbol of the garden of Eden could be supported when looking how the 'merpeople's' lifestyle is depicted in the Disney cartoon. The mermaids are shown with flowers in their hair, happiness seems to prevail in the under water world, there is a lot of singing and love is freely spoken of, even by King Triton who becomes alarmed only when he finds out that a human is the object of his daughter's affection. Even though this description cannot be backed up in detail by quoting relevant Bible passages, it comes fairly close to the general, popular idea of what Paradise might be, as it is for example described as a lifestyle which might be practised on an exotic island. Also Sebastian,



the courtly conductor and Ariel's minder, gives in a song where he talks about life under the water quite a revealing description:

"...  
Up at the shore they work all day  
out in the sun they slave away.  
...  
Down here the fish is happy  
...  
we got no troubles  
...  
Life is sweet here..."

This song is accompanied by a very colourful and joyful dance of many sea creatures joining in the refrain.

In a way one could say that the story describes the human striving to move onto a next higher stage of development. The 'merfolk's' frame of mind and the stages of development represent paradise in the historical sense as a period where harmony between the human kind and the rest of the world existed due to a lack of consciousness and a lack of awareness of human kind's mortality and an essence that felt separate from the rest of the world.

"Was in Eden fehlte, war die Bewußtheit der Erbsünde, nicht die Erbsünde selbst". (24)

Here it has to be said that the actual plot of the Disney cartoon covers this possible deeper interpretation of King Triton's realm by giving it distinct attributes that might be found in a western modern society, for example, the description of the concert during which Ariel was supposed to give her debut,

the fact that his youngest daughter spends rather a long time in what must be the equivalent of a mermaid's bathroom etc.

Ariel stands for a strong force that is driven out of this well-known, comfortable world by the longing for new horizons. At the same time she bears within herself the conflict of being physically bound to her own, old world. The story also tells about the dangers and difficulties awaiting whoever tries to break out of the strong forces that stand against the new developments because the gaining of new things inevitably brings loss of old values and security. In Andersen's tale the mermaid's transformation into human shape is connected to great physical pain and suffering.

"...dann schrumpft dein Schwanz zu dem zusammen was die Menschen niedliche Beine nennen, aber es tut weh, es ist, als wenn ein scharfes Schwert dich durchbohrte... aber bei jedem Schritt, den du tust, ist es als ob du auf ein scharfes Messer trätest, daß dein Blut fließen möchte. Willst du dies alles aushalten, dann will ich dir helfen". (25)

Also in Andersen's tale this transformation requires the mermaid to exchange her own lifespan of three hundred years with the shorter lifespan of a human.

A connection can be made between the global experience of the human kind, which presumably took place some ten thousand years ago when the personal ego was developed, and the experience of every human being undergoing the often painful and difficult

process of adolescence, longing for new fields of experience, while at the same time living through the anxiety of leaving familiar ground in order to head for the unknown. In the story the more abstract, historical and - for a young audience - hardly relevant elements fall together with something very personal that young people can easily relate to.

In the following the hypothesis shall be discussed that Ariel's transformation from a mermaid into a human being describes the integration between different levels of consciousness which exist within one single personality. Drewermann talks about a:

"Grundsatz, daß die Mythologie als projektive Psychologie zu verstehen ist". (26)

This means the integration between drives and instincts with the ratio on the understanding that the instinct is, from an evolutionary point of view, the lower, historically earlier part of the personality, which continues to play an important role and must not be neglected if a person wants to develop and maintain a healthy state of mind. Bruno Bettelheim who argues in his Kinder brauchen Märchen for the importance and possible therapeutic effect of traditional fairy-tales for the development of children states:

"Wenn das Unbewußte unterdrückt wird und sein Inhalt nicht ins Bewußtsein treten darf, wird entweder das Bewußtsein im Lauf der Zeit teilweise mit Derivaten dieser unbewußten Elemente überschwemmt, oder diese müssen unter so star-



rer zwanghafter Kontrolle gehalten werden, daß die Persönlichkeit dabei ernsthaften Schaden erleiden kann." (27)

In this sense the sea witch 'Ursula' could be interpreted as the forces of the lower levels in the subconscious that have gone out of control. It will be remembered that she ruled previous to King Triton.

Proceeding from the hypothesis that the Little Mermaid is the story of successful personal development and integration we need to look at the role which the individual figures play, each of them must be seen as one aspect of the same personality. The investigation follows here Eugen Drewermann's approach which establishes, in his Tieffenpsychologie und Exegese, a canon of rules for deep psychological interpretation of myths, fairy-tales and dreams. (28) Under rule no. 8 regarding a tale's central figure he states:

"Ineins mit der thematischen Zentrierung erfolgt auch die Zentrierung einer Erzählung um die Hauptperson der Handlung. Gerade für eine Deutung auf der Subjektstufe ist es sehr wichtig, welche Personen man als die zentrale Gestalt ansieht, die alle anderen Figuren und Ereignisse als verschiedene Seiten ihrer selbst im Vollzug ihrer eigenen Wesensgeschichte zur Darstellung kommen läßt." (29).

Ariel must clearly be seen as this main centre figure, the core of the personality. There are only very few scenes in the cartoon without her, for example, when she has not taken her place during the

concert; when King Triton shows his despair after Ariel has left home, and when Grimsby and Eric discuss the advantages of a 'real' girl over a dream girl. In all the scenes mentioned here Ariel is present either in the speech or in the thought of the other characters. It is now important to establish how the other characters relate to Ariel as the core.

King Triton is the most distinct male character in the film, and he will correspond with many young viewers' real life experience where the father figure will be dominant. He is depicted as an overall positive figure, gentle while at the same time demonstrating sufficient strictness to offer security. His non-understanding of the child's or teenager's mind must - from a child's point of view - also seem a very believable characteristic.

In the film Ariel undergoes a development which creates a temporary emotional distance between her and King Triton. However, in the end, she needs the security that he is the stronger one, powerful enough to protect her, and she needs his agreement for the next step in her development. When King Triton gets angry, the reasons for this reaction are well explained through the plot of the film, and the viewer can rest assured that his rage is only caused by his love and worry for Ariel.

King Triton's strength and power image receives a major set back when, in the end, he is nearly beaten by the sea witch and is only saved by Eric's actions. This circumstance could be seen as having a destabilising effect on young viewers who see the male figure on whose strengths one could rely, so badly threatened. This is the point where Prince Eric takes over the function hitherto held by King Triton. At the end of the film Eric represents the same male and protective virtues as King Triton and thus continues the tradition and offers love and security to Ariel.

One could argue that a relationship between King Triton and Eric as such does not exist. They seem to meet at the wedding for the first time. Previous to that, King Triton perceives Eric as a deadly threat to his daughter, rather than a possible acceptable son-in-law. But this enmity has no personal aspect and results from the fact that Eric belongs to the human race. The only direct communication in the film takes place through gestures at the end. We see Eric, the son, bowing respectfully to King Triton, who answers with a benevolent understanding nod, demonstrating their mutual consent. This means that there no longer exists a conflict for Ariel. Even though she has to leave her father's world she does this now in the knowledge that he loves her and he is assured of her love for him.



She has taken this important step into a new life with her father's consent.

It becomes apparent that Bettelheim's psychological approach is a very useful one when looking for methods of interpreting myth and fairy-tales. However, it needs bearing in mind that he stresses the importance of these tales for children. Bettelheim sees fairy-tales in the first instance addressing a child's frame of mind. Because of this he neglects to a certain extent the possible impacts which symbolic tales could also have on adults. Nevertheless he states:

"Wie bei jedem großen Kunstwerk ist auch der tiefste Sinn des Märchens für jeden Menschen und für den gleichen Menschen zu verschiedenen Zeiten anders." (30)

Finally, it must be stated that in this thesis Bettelheim's method was applied even though the author of Kinder brauchen Märchen himself does not seem to accept the validity of modern media regarding bringing children nearer to the true meaning of fairy-tales.

"Die meisten Kinder begegnen dem Märchen lediglich in verniedlichten, vereinfachten Versionen, die den Sinn entstellen und eine tiefere Wirkung unmöglich machen - in Film- und Fernsehbearbeitungen, in denen die Märchen zu bedeutungsloser Unterhaltung herabsinken." (31)

It was felt while this statement is certainly true for a number of recent productions of audio and audio-visual material, this is not the case with the

Disney production which makes extensive use of the film's possibility to present images and express symbols in pictures and thus comes, in a way, closer to the use of a 'symbolic' language than the spoken word. One has to admit that the medium film, in presenting ready made pictures, takes away part of the work that has to be carried out when listening to symbolic tales. The traditional way of presenting fairy-tales by telling them to children required the audience to transform the spoken word into images and pictures and thus, one could argue, opened more possibilities for the individual to use symbolic language to express his own personal feelings and ideas.

V.7 The Other Sisters and the Animal Helpers

Ariel's elder sisters stand for the personality before its transformation to a higher plane and then portray the personality during a development phase before integration takes place. As in many stories which contain the hero's elder siblings these do not fulfil any function other than the one of failing the progression. (32)

In Andersen's Meerweibchen, however, the sisters reappear towards the end of the story and make one last attempt to call the mermaid back into the

primitive realm.

Walt Disney's Ariel has two animal helpers, her friends Flounder and Bastian. They have also been newly created in the Disney film. However, in this new context they play very important roles. Even though the Little Mermaid strives to reach the world of the humans she finds true friendship amongst the animals, the world of her origin. These friends are prepared to follow Ariel to her new life on land even if this involves considerable dangers to their own lives. The film demonstrates this in a very humorous way when Bastian, the crab, would nearly have ended up in the French cook's pot. Again Bettelheim stresses the importance of this animated view of the whole world:

"Für das Kind, das die Welt zu begreifen sucht, ist es durchaus vernünftig, Antworten von den Dingen, die seine Neugier wecken, zu erwarten. Und da das Kind ichbezogen ist, erwartet es vom Tier, daß es über die ihm wirklich wichtigen Anliegen spricht - so wie die Tiere im Märchen und wie das Kind selbst sich mit seinen kleinen lebendigen Tieren oder seinen Spieltieren unterhält. Das Kind ist überzeugt, daß das Tier es versteht und mit ihm fühlt..."(33)

Apart from this Sebastian the crab has the function of guiding the audience through the tale as he comments on the events, and initiates any further necessary happenings, for example, the love song that is intended to get Prince Eric to finally kiss Ariel. Sebastian is at first shown as a close adviser to King Triton. In fact, the king entrusts



the care of his daughter Ariel to the crab. When Ariel leaves her home at the bottom of the sea, after her terrible argument with King Triton, Sebastian goes with her all the way through her adventure. He represents all the good, caring part of King Triton's parenthood which thus never really leaves Ariel and takes away something of her situation's threats.

Eric's dog Max needs mentioning here. Eric represents the level of human consciousness which finds itself in greater distance to the rest of the animal world when compared with, for example, King Triton's realm. It seems logical that Eric and his dog Max do not communicate by human speech. Nevertheless, their relationship is a very close one, and Eric has never any difficulties in interpreting Max's messages, for example, there is his fondness of Ariel, his wish to play, his dislike of Eric's birthday present, the heroic statue, etc.

"Hunde sind die Tiere, die in größter Nähe zum Menschen leben und dem Kind am menschenähnlichsten erscheinen... Hunde vertreten gewissermaßen das Ich des Menschen, jener Aspekt seiner Persönlichkeit, der die Oberfläche des Bewusstseins am nächsten steht, da es seine Aufgabe ist, die Beziehungen des Menschen zu anderen und zur Umwelt zu regeln. Seit prähistorischen Zeiten erfüllen die Hunde in gewisser Weise diese Funktion: Sie helfen dem Menschen, Feinde abzuwehren, und sie zeigen ihm neue Wege zum Umgang mit wilden und anderen Tieren." (34)

V.8 Mirror Image of the Figures in 'The Little Mermaid'

French Cook (fool)

Grimsby (parent figure)

Female Servant (parent figure)

Dog Max (helper to Eric)

Eric

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Ariel

Flounder (Helper to Ariel)

Sebastian (Helper to Ariel/Guide through the tale/split up from King Triton's personality)

King Triton (parent figure)

Ursula (Anti parent figure, symbol of evil)

Flotsam and Jetsam (magic helpers to Ursula)

Scuttle (See gall, fool, who pretends to be an expert regarding the human world but often gets things wrong. However, in the end makes a major contribution to fail the see witch's plan)

It becomes apparent that while the plot and statements in the film point to the upper world as the stronger one, without exception all the figures belonging to the realm below the water surface are far stronger, be they evil or good, than their counterparts on land.

V.9 Summary and Evaluation

The Little Mermaid story belongs, like for example, the Cinderella-cycle, to those tales where the female heroine has a particularly active role where she is not the passive princess just waiting to be rescued.

We have mentioned the two historic-evolutionary approaches, dealing with social changes in society from matrilineal to patrilineal forms and, secondly, the evolution of the consciousness, the awakening of the human mind which sets itself apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. Even though those aspects are still undoubtedly part of the Disney tale and, as has been shown, are relatively easy to trace, they seem not to be acute and relevant enough to justify the revival of this tale in twentieth century media.

In the following I raise certain questions about the kind of truth presented in this story.

Let us assume that in fairy tales and mythological tales all persons form different aspects of one personality. In this case it is still essential that one lead figure can be established who invites the viewers to identify themselves with her or him.



In 'The Little Mermaid' Ariel must clearly be seen as having this role. Does this mean the story targets girls especially? The Little Mermaid's character is particularly developed. We learn a lot about her personal family background while receiving hardly any corresponding details about Eric. Eric is shown only in connection with Ariel. Even during the birthday scene on the ship where he is introduced on his own he is observed by the mermaid.

When attempting to identify a basic message carried by this cartoon one could take a fatalistic and somewhat simplified view of the matter; one could interpret Walt Disney's cartoon in a way that it appeals to a young - in the first instance female - audience. Girls are encouraged to identify themselves with the Little Mermaid Ariel. The young audience is invited to live with the heroine through all the adventures, and they learn that disobeying the father's authority leads to immense troubles - and feelings of guilt. After all, it was nearly due to Ariel's behaviour that King Triton got into the sea witch's power. Finally, one could argue that the moral of the story is, that only when the father agrees can the girl in the end marry her prince and live happily ever after. But, if this was truly the message of the cartoon, if all it did was to reaffirm a child's powerlessness when confronted with a parent's authority, why would children like this

film?

Apart from this children know, in America and in the rest of the world, that marriage is not always an ideal solution and that by no means must it be a final arrangement. Is this film then an attempt to re-affirm and strengthen those values in the minds of late twentieth-century children by using old established fairy-tales as a vehicle?

Modern life offers our children a variety of identification models. Characters out of fairy-tales form only one - however persistent - part of this. Girls want to be princesses. With a boy the equivalent would be the hero: Here he can usually chose from a wide variety of models - Draggonlayer, Karatekid, Rambo, etc. The point is that the wish of children to be these mythological figures, to act them out, dress up and look like them, takes place before they have necessarily developed a clear understanding of what the price is for which the heroes and heroines have faced many dangers. The concept of marrying someone in a child's mind is not so much the union between a (young) man and a (young) woman but more of a closeness with a person who, of course, has to be beautiful/handsome. To a child, marriage often means unity, being close. This comes very near to the meaning of marriage in symbolic language. The marriage between, for exam-

ple, Eric and Ariel would have to be seen as the unification of different aspects of a personality, the development into a harmonious state of mind.

While Ariel was the lead figure, the core of the personality, Eric symbolises, firstly, development and progression and, secondly, adventure and the unknown that wants to be discovered. A very positive message is relayed to the young viewers. Progression, adventure and discovery are things worth while pursuing even against the temporary resistance of the parents. Even if dangers are lurking and sacrifices have to be made on the way, in the end there will be unification between child and parent and between conflicting aspects of one personality. This will give sufficient strength to continue the journey of life. The film expresses this by letting the marriage between Eric and Ariel take place on a ship on which they are at the end of the film sailing away to new domains. The final condition of marriage should, within the context of this tale, be interpreted in the sense that:

"Er weist ... auf das hin, was allein den Stachel aus der engen Begrenzung unserer Lebenszeit zu nehmen vermag: eine echte Bindung an einen anderen Menschen. Die Märchen lehren, daß man aufgrund einer solchen Bindung die höchste dem Menschen mögliche emotionale Lebenssicherheit und eine dauerhafte Beziehung erreicht, dies allein kann die Ängste vor dem Tod zerstreuen." (35)

Thus the plot contains an immensely reassuring and



comforting element which can accompany and support a child when he or she realises that growing up means inevitably temporary separation (physical and mental) from parents and, finally, the fact of every human being's mortality.

In summarising, the overall message contained in Walt Disney's Little Mermaid could be stated as follows: The film adheres to the traditional concept that personal happiness can be achieved by young women only in marriage. But the characteristics of the hero, Prince Eric, deviate from traditional patterns and put less emphasis on traditional, male values. The actions in this film are initiated by Ariel and it is shown that rebellion against tradition and her father's authority can be something positive.

In contrast to Andersen's fairy tale the cartoon film does not mention in great detail the sense of loss and sadness felt by the mermaid who has to leave behind her family, her friends and her familiar world. Perhaps the experience of a child could be similarly described, who does not mourn/grieve for past levels of development, but looks with anticipation forward to the next stage.

The symbolic message contained in the tale contains also a considerable element of hope. The tale tells

about resolving conflicts without ending up with hostility, - hostility between King Triton and his daughter and between Eric and King Triton. The only character faced with final destruction is Ursula, the sea witch, a personification of evil. She has to be overcome.

On a different level of interpretation Ursula has been identified as not really being the bad one. Through historic events she was driven into a corner, had to go into hiding and is now, understandably, bitter and spiteful. This interpretation has then been transferred to the psychological level. Ursula stands for the deep subconscious being oppressed, she becomes the evil ogress. The conclusion to draw from this is that human beings in Western societies have, in order to reach the next level of consciousness, neglected previous deeper levels. This resulted in the damage of the personality's spiritual essence.

This phenomenon has again been explained by Bruno Bettelheim. It has to be taken into consideration that he stands firmly in a Freudian tradition and thus identifies generally the subconscious as the location of a child's premature, chaotic wishes and urges.

Beim Kind jedoch überwältigt das Unbewußte, wann immer es zum Vorschein kommt, sofort die Gesamtpersönlichkeit. Das Ich des Kindes wird durch die Erkenntnis des chaotischen Inhalts

seines Unbewußten keineswegs gestärkt, sondern vielmehr geschwächt, weil es überwältigt wird. Deshalb muß das Kind die Vorgänge in seinem Inneren objektivieren, um sie einigermaßen in den Griff zu bekommen - von einer Steuerung ganz zu schweigen. Das Kind muß sich vom Inhalt seines Unbewußten auf irgendeine Weise distanzieren und ihn als etwas Äußeres sehen, wenn es die Herrschaft darüber erringen soll." (36)

The picture used in the tale which springs to mind here is the ship which sank and comes to the surface. The fight between Ursula and Eric is really a conflict which takes place inside one personality. In a way it is an acknowledgement of the existing deeper levels of his personality by Eric who gets on board of the re-emerged ship which has a figure-head on the bow depicting the mermaid. He goes on board, steers it, takes charge of it and thus removes the need for being evil. In the film this is expressed by Eric who deflates Ursula the sea witch, who after putting King Triton's crown on her head, has grown out of all proportions. The sea witch's destruction frees also the other creatures (personality aspects) which were captured by the sea witch, they regain their normal gregarious character. It seems that these creatures originally had been transformed by Ursula into their present sad and pitiful state because, like Ariel, they were striving for human values and experiences and, in order to do so, were seeking the sea witch's help. Ursula mentioned herself the fate of a 'mere couple' who wanted to come together, but the attempt was in vain. Trans-



ferring this to a statement based on the psychological approach one could say: Because they did not pay tribute to the subconscious on their way to the next harmonising unifying step, the attempt to reach a higher level of consciousness had to have catastrophic consequences.

In general it can be stated that the described step forward is a positive one and to be welcomed by humans. It is essential that during this development previous levels of existence and consciousness are incorporated and not denied. Otherwise they will get out of control and exert an influence which is not appropriate and proportionate to their real importance. On the way between these steps of development it can happen that what appears to be evil is not.

This condensed positive message depicts an attitude of life which can explain children's fascination with this tale and also the attraction it still has for adults. This is especially true, if one accepts that theories like the ones developed by Bruno Bettelheim can be widened and extended in order to include all human beings regardless of their age and, finally, the whole human species and its development.

Dieser Zustand besteht in einem konfliktfreien, ganzheitlichen, glückseligen Gewahrsein. Das bedeutet jedoch nicht den Verlust jeden Selbstbewußtseins oder jeder zeitlichen Wahrnehmung

und auch nicht, daß man in einen leeren Trancezustand verfällt, daß alle kritischen Fähigkeiten aussetzen und man sich in einem ozeanischen Brei suhlt. Vielmehr wird der Hintergrund des Selbstbewußtseins wiederentdeckt. Man ist der integralen Ganzheit und des expliziten Ich gewahr. Ganzheit ist nicht das Gegenteil von ichhafter Individualität. Sie ist einfach deren Urgrund, dessen Entdeckung die Gestalt des Ich nicht auslöscht." (37)

V.10 Footnotes

- (1) Bettelheim, Bruno, Kinder brauchen Märchen (München, 1980) pp.11f.

'In the course of centuries or even during thousands of years, during which fairy-tales were continuously told and eventually received their firm structure, they adopted an open and a hidden sense. In their present form <fairy-tales> address all levels of the human personality at the same time.'

- (2) Fromm, Erich, Märchen Mythen Träume. Eine Einführung in das Verständnis einer vergessenen Sprache (Hamburg, 1981) pp.18ff.

- (3) Fouque, F. de la Motte, Undine (Stuttgart, 1987) pp.95f.

'There were quickly many translations which secured that Undine became known and very popular worldwide. This was followed by an immense literary reception which is still on-going...'

- (4) Ibid. p.96.

'I used the edition of Conrad Waldkirch from Basel from the year 1590, where in its ninth part, p.45, the Liber de Nymphis, Sylphis, Pymalis et Salamander, et de caeteris spiritibus taught me the whole relationship of the 'Undines' to human beings, the possibility of marriage between them etc.'

- (5) See for example Mircea Eliade's elaboration on initiation. (Eliade, Mircea, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries. The Encounter between Contemporary Faith and Archaic Realities (London - Glasgow, 1968).

- (6) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.45.

- (7) One exception would perhaps be the tale where she is mistaken for one of her attribute animals, for example a swan. See Rhys, John, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) p.16.

- (8) Wilber, Ken, Halbzeit der Evolution. Der Mensch auf dem Weg vom animalischen zum kosmischen Bewußtsein. Eine interdisziplinäre Darstellung der Entwicklung des menschlichen Geistes (Bern - München - Wien, 1984) pp.269f.

'Looking at it historically the body was seen as a synonym for femininity and the spirit as a synonym for masculinity. This meant that the



inner psychological dissociation of body and spirit was transferred to the outside and thus caused a sociological suppression of the feminine element through the masculine element. ... What is meant here, is that a suppression, a repression and/or exploitation of nature, body and woman took place for the same reasons. Nature, body and woman were seen as a whole, a whole which should be oppressed...'

(9) Andersen, Hans Christian, Gesammelte Märchen (München, 1981) p.200.

'The little princess stopped terrified in front of this wood; her heart was beating with fear; she would almost have returned back, but then she thought of the prince and the human soul to be gained, and she regained her courage.'

(10) Ibid. p.201.

'On the first morning after his wedding to another woman your heart will break and you will turn to foam on the water.'

(11) Bachofen, Johann, Jakob, Das Mutterrecht. Eine Untersuchung über die Gynaiokratie der alten Welt nach ihrer religiösen und rechtlichen Natur (Frankfurt/Main, 1980) p.3.

'The mother right belongs to an earlier cultural period than the system of paternitas. Its full and undiminished flourishing met its decline with the victorious approach of the latter <the patrilinear forms of society>.' See also *ibid.* pp.6ff.

(12) Andersen, Gesammelte Märchen p.201.

'I know what it is you want,' said the sea witch, 'how stupid! However you shall have your wish granted, for it will bring you misfortune, my lovely little princess. ... The best which you own I want for my valuable drink. I have to give my own blood into it so that the drink becomes as sharp as a double sided sword''.

(13) These pitiful creatures also have their parallel in Andersen's tale, where they try to warn the Little Mermaid not to make the same mistake as they did.

(14) For a very detailed explanation of this historic and sociologic process that turns values like 'good' and 'evil' within mythological tales into their opposite see for example Fromm, Märchen, Mythen, Träume pp.155f.

- (15) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.15f.

'The fairy-tale characters are not ambivalent, they are not good and evil at the same time, like we all are in reality. Because polarisation is prevalent in a child's mind, it has also got priority in fairy-tales. A person is either good or bad, but nothing in between.'

- (16) Ibid. pp.15f.

'Polarity regarding character makes it easy for the child to understand the difference <between good and bad>, this would not be as easy if the figures were closer to life and as complex as real human beings. With <the introduction of> double meanings one has to wait until, as a result of positive identifications, a relatively firm personality has been formed.'

- (17) The title of the English original is Up from Eden 1981, however text passages quoted in the following in English are translations of the German version.

- (18) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.38.

'The human's earliest human ontogenesis was a repetition of the cosmological phylogenesis.'

- (19) Ibid. p.22.

'Evolution/history - a path of transcendence to the transcendental - starts at the lowest link of the chain and from there it struggles on its way up. In a very special sense this is also true for the rising curve of the human evolution/history. The ontology, which is the science of existence, recapitulates the phylogenesis, the science of the species development. The history of human development also started on the lower levels of the large chain of existence, because it had to recapitulate all earlier and pre-human steps in human form.'

- (20) Ibid. p.24.

- (21) Ibid. p.23.

'The ego central consciousness is half way between the unconscious of nature and the supra-consciousness of the spirit.'

- (22) Ibid. pp.109ff.

'Here his theories stand in accordance with other scholars who dealt with the subject, for

example Bachofen, Bornekamp, Markale. See also Vester who interprets this awakening of the 'Ego' as the real 'Sündenfall'. Vester, Frederic, Neuland des Denkens. Vom technokratischen zum kybernetischen Zeitalter München, 1984 p.456.

- (23) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.37.

'It seems to be established that every stage of the evolution exceeds its predecessors but also incorporates and integrates them in its own higher order. In other words: Every stage of the evolution overcomes and incorporates all previous ones.'

- (24) Ibid. p.352.

'What was missing in Eden was the consciousness of the original sin, not the original sin itself.'

- (25) Andersen, Gesammelte Märchen p.201.

'And then your tail will shrink to what humans call 'lovely legs', but it will hurt, it will be as if a sharp knife would cut through you ... but with every step you will make it will feel as if you were treading on a sharp knife that would make your blood flow. If you want to endure all that then I will help you.'

- (26) Drewermann, Eugen, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese. Band1: Die Wahrheit der Formen. Traum, Mythos, Märchen, Sage und Legende Olton, 1985 p.376.

'..the principle that mythology has to be understood as projective psychology.'

- (27) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.13.

'If the subconscious is being suppressed and its content is not allowed to enter the consciousness, in the course of time the consciousness will either be flooded with derivatives of these subconscious elements, or those elements must be kept under such a strict and forceful control that the personality can suffer serious damage.'

- (28) Drewermann, Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese pp.376ff.

- (29) Ibid. pp.376ff.

'Together with the centralisation of the theme a centralisation of the plot's main characters



takes place within a tale. Especially for an interpretation on the subject level it is very important which person one regards as the central character, who displays all other figures and events as different sides of him/herself in the course of the own history.'

- (30) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.19.

'Like in every great work of art, the deep meaning of a fairy-tale is also a different one for every human being and a different one for the same human being at different times.'

- (31) Ibid. p.32.

'Most children get to know fairy-tales only in minimised, simplified versions which defigure the meaning and make a deeper effect impossible - in film and television versions where fairy-tales are sinking to meaningless entertainment.'

- (32) Bettelheim interprets the fairy-story die drei kleinen Schweinchen whose main theme he regards to be 'the decision whether one wants to follow in live the principle of reality or the principle of urges' (Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.51) Three little pigs build a house made of straw, made of wood, made of stone. The wolf eats the first two piglets, only the house made of stone proves to be strong enough to withstand the wolf and protect its inhabitants. Bettelheim explains:

"Da die drei kleinen Schweinchen Entwicklungsstufen des Menschen darstellen, wirkt das Verschwinden der ersten beiden nicht traumatisch, das Kind versteht unterbewußt, daß wir frühe Seinsformen abstreifen müssen wenn wir auf höhere gelangen wollen." (Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.55.)

'Because the three little piglets symbolise the human development steps, the disappearance of the first two does not have a traumatic effect. The child understands subconsciously that we have to overcome early forms of existence in order to achieve higher ones.'

- (33) Bettelheim, Kinder brauchen Märchen p.57.

'For the child who tries to understand the world it seems sensible to expect answers from all the things which awake its curiosity. And because the child is self centred, relates everything to him-/herself, he/she expects from the animal to talk about those matters which are really important to him/her - like the

animals in fairy-tale and like the child talks to his/her own life or toy animals. The child is convinced that the animal understands him/her and shares his/her feelings.'

(34) Ibid. p.117.

'Dogs are those animals who live in closest proximity to human beings and who seem to the child most similar to man... Dogs represent the human's Ego, the aspect of the personality that is closest to the surface of the consciousness, since it is its task to regulate the relationship of the human being to fellow men and to the rest of the world. Since pre-historic times dogs in a way have fulfilled this function: They help human beings to fight enemies, and they show new ways to deal with wild and other animals.'

(35) Ibid. p.17.

'It points to what can take the edge of the narrow limitation of our lifespan: a true relationship to another human being. The fairy-tales teach, that, based on such a relationship, it is possible to reach the highest possible emotional security in life and a persistent relationship; only this can take away the fear of death.'

(36) Ibid. p.17

'With a child however, the subconscious whenever it appears overpowers at once the whole personality. The child's Ego is by no means strengthened by the acknowledgement of the chaotic content of its subconscious, but weakened, because it has been overpowered. Therefore the child must deal objectively with the events that take place in his/her mind, in order to cope with them to a fashion - not to speak of being able to guide them. The child has to find a way to distance him/herself from the content of his/her subconscious and see it as something taking place outside, if it wants to master them.'

(37) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.28

'This condition consists of a conflict free, wholesome, happy awareness. This however does not mean the loss of every consciousness or of every perception taking place in time, it does also not mean that one goes into an empty condition of trance, that all critical capabilities go missing and one wallows in an oceanic pulp. On the contrary the background of the

self consciousness will be re-discovered. One is aware of the integral wholeness and the explicit own personality. Wholeness is not the opposite of self reflected individuality. It is simply its base, the discovery of which will not eliminate self awareness.'



## VI CONCLUSION

The bases of every chapter in this thesis were mythological motifs that stood in connection with the Lady of the Lake. The objectives of this thesis were to show the existence of archetypal motifs and to trace their origin back to mediaeval times, as well as to shed some light on the variety in which they appeared in Welsh folklore tradition. Finally, an attempt was made to examine how far these motifs are still relevant today, and whether they still carry messages worth hearing.

The existence of the motifs chosen for closer investigation has been demonstrated in many variations. In our journey that spans from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century we turned the spotlight at first on Walter Map's Latin version of the Lady of the Lake cycle, and then looked at its many variations which flourished in Wales during the Middle Ages. During this process we also looked at a different, nevertheless related tale cycle about sunken cities. The investigations then moved on to the twentieth century and looked at how one author dealt with these motifs by creating two fairy tale tragedies. Finally The Little Mermaid, a Walt Disney cartoon was interpreted.

Initially the interpretation of the symbolism contained in Welsh lake legends led quickly to the

conclusion that under their surface those legends talked about historic events that took place in Wales during the time the tales were formulated. This applied on two levels, the secular, profane level and the ecclesiastical, religious level. In mediaeval times the differentiation between those two areas of life was not so strict as it is today. The tales reflected, in parts, the conflicts between the Welsh church and the Church of England. We have seen that this was a conflict which reached further than the spiritual lives of Welsh people. It would have had a direct impact on, for example, the juridical system that governed the people of Wales. The tales discussed in this thesis addressed, in particular, the relationship between husband and wife and looked at marriage as a legal institution. Traces can be found that suggest the Welsh and Celtic tradition and culture was contrary to those of the official establishment. A spirit of resistance seems to run under the surface of the tales and might well have contributed to their survival through the centuries.

"Wichtig ist, daß diese Erzählungen in einer offiziell verbotenen oder unterdrückten Sprache (Gälisch in Irland, Walisisch in Wales) vorgelesen wurden und somit die Sache auch noch einen politischen und kulturkämpferischen Aspekt bekam."

...  
 "Die Verknüpfung von einer ausgearbeiteten Tradition populären, mündlichen Erzählens mit der Sehnsucht nach Sprachautonomie und nationaler Unabhängigkeit dürfte für die Beliebtheit von Märchen im keltischen Sprachraum mit eine wichtige Rolle gespielt haben." (1)

The symbolic language in which those tales were formulated was used to address burning issues that affected people's lives. Apparent inconsistencies like, for example, the setting of marriage conditions and the circumstance that the Ladies of the Lake seem to expect that the marriage will end at some stage, led to a closer look at the Welsh legal system during the Middle Ages, where the parallels between the tales and the real situation could be found: divorce regulations that entitled a woman, under certain conditions, to return to her family with part of the possessions owned by the couple. We found adjustments to the tales' plot that stood in accordance with the ideas of Mediaeval times in Wales, during which those stories must have been formulated. The story of Belenë, where the principle that it was a husband's right to beat his wife seemed to be accepted, belonged to this group. (2)

On a spiritual level the Lady of the Lake could be related to the race of the fairies. This led to her connection to pre-Christian religions and the acknowledgement that those tales contain reminiscences of female deities which were regarded with disfavour in Celtic areas. Symbolic tales of the Lady of the Lake refer to real historic social conflicts that must have been associated with the establishment of patriarchal religions in Wales.



The question whether the change-over from the mother goddess to a patriarchal system is an inevitable, naturally-occurring phenomenon in the development of the human race was not discussed. Factual proof of the existence of those ancient female deities exists in the form of sculptures. In addition, legends and folk-tales tell about the period of change-over from matrilineal to patrilineal ways of organising society. This was seen to be at the root of the first interpreted tale, Walter Map's version of the Lady of the Lake, and was subsequently identified as the underlying theme of all the Lady of the Lake legends dealt with in chapter I.

In folklore and folk literature symbolic language has not only been used to keep valuable memories alive within the folk-tradition and to combine different customs, religions and ways of life. It could also be used to express superstitions. Chapter II of this thesis looked, in particular, at tales that dealt with customs and beliefs centred around wells and water. We looked at the Lady of the Lake's possible appearance as a white lady who might haunt a lake, like in the tale about 'Grassi'.<sup>(3)</sup> This led on to inundation stories, and again the question was raised as to how far could symbolic tales about sunken cities and palaces reflect reality and make statements about real human life.

It could be established that in Wales many wells have had (superstitious) beliefs and customs attached to them.(4) It is notable that in these water beliefs, apparently, Christian and pagan ideas coexisted peacefully. Water or wells dedicated to Christian saints could be used to bring people under a spell, or a person could be cursed by throwing a pin into a well. Roberts knew also of a well where reminiscences of the guardian of the well beliefs were practised. He states in a rather tinted way:

"Near the well resided some worthless and infamous wretch, who officiated as priestess." (5)

Water legends have been used to preserve ideas and values which were shifted out of official public life. We have looked at this process in mediaeval Wales, a time when official Christianisation had already been going on for centuries. This was a slow process during which elements of the tales that belonged to pre-Christian cultures were submerged more and more deeply, while the Christian aspects were increasingly emphasised. Thus it was established that the more obvious the pagan elements were, the older the respective traditions could be assumed to be.

A drastic development like this change-over from one form of society to another, however slow and gradual it might have been, could not take place without major conflicts. The investigation of the tale

about Llyncllys Pool near Oswestry (6) and, in particular, the figure 'Clerk Willin' led to a detailed discussion about the issue of celibacy within the early Christian church. During the detailed investigations in chapter II a further example became apparent where, in symbolic language, an important aspect of reality was portrayed that was faced by people during mediaeval times or even before that period. These were the clashes between ethical systems; for example, between Christian norms and the Germanic/Celtic code of honour. We looked at a tale about Kenfig Pool as a representative of a group of stories that deal with the 'vengeance' motif. This investigation gave a direct inroad into the complicated concept of honour that existed in Celtic and Germanic cultures. The way in which the Celtic legal system tried to remove the need for revenge by establishing a detailed system of reparation payments was also discussed.

Even if not all tales discussed in chapter II had at their centre-point a female character, the dwellings under a lake and submerged cities could be identified to represent similar values to the Lady of the Lake. There were also tales combining two cycles directly, where land and dwellings were submerged as a result of the well guardian, who was often a woman, forgetting to close the well. Apart from the already mentioned tale about Grassi, (7) see also the



tale about Lough Sheelin, discussed in chapter II.(8) Chapter II gave a brief outlook onto the variety that exists in Welsh folk tradition with regards to lake and water legends. It became apparent that even tales that are closely related with each other have their own individual characteristics and aspects, and that they contribute to the rich tapestry of motif combination in folk tradition, that enables the complexity of human experience to be expressed in symbolic language.

The detailed investigation of the legend of Llyn y Fan Fach in chapter III was used to confirm previous statements in general and to expand details. Emphasis was put on her close connection to the animal kingdom. Horses as well as cattle were identified as being her animal attributes. The tale expressed a special caring relationship between the Lady of the Lake and her animals. In this connection we discussed the meaning of the beautiful and wealth-bringing fairy cattle in Welsh folk tales and it was also established that old Welsh Law texts revealed the importance of cattle in early and mediaeval Welsh society. It has been stated that, in its present form, the main function of the Legend's formulation was to explain the historic Physicians of Myddfai's extraordinary fame and knowledge through the claim that they originated from a supernatural mother, the Lady of the Lake.

During the investigations of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach the emphasis was (again) put, in the first instance, on the female main protagonist. It has to remain a speculation whether a different starting point to the thesis - as, for example, tales of otherworld journeys of a mortal man - would have resulted in radically different outcomes. Investigations with a male protagonist, a hero figure, at the centre point would perhaps have somewhat shifted the weight of the tales' core statements. The conclusions of this thesis could not be expected to be fundamentally different if they were studies mainly from the point of view of the male protagonist. This approach from the other side of a dualistic principle, would give a not too dissimilar account of great sociological, historic, and psychological conflicts while expressing hope of a final unification. It has been shown that male and female elements should not be seen as a dividing factor, but should be perceived as different aspects within one personality that need to be brought together. All the works discussed had an inherent dualism, and throughout an attempt was made to approach both sides of the dualism rather than to emphasise the dividing points.

In Gerhart Hauptmann we looked at an author who has been at the root of much controversy because of the

apparent contradiction that we found in his works. The question was asked how an author who had portrayed the deplorable state of social affairs of his time and country and the incredible suffering resulting from it with so much realism and sensitivity suddenly started to produce works that had to be classified as surrealistic. We have seen that while most of the naturalistic pieces are amongst his earlier works both elements, the naturalistic and the surrealistic one, existed parallel and could even be found within one drama. For example, in Und Pippa Tanzt the first act describes in an almost pure naturalistic style the atmosphere of a tavern in an economically deprived area of Silesia at the turn of the century.

The difficulty of combining the naturalistic with the symbolic style of writing by one and the same author arises out of the assumption that surrealism and symbolic language cannot be used to make statements about the real world. With the interpretation of the two dramas of Gerhart Hauptmann we looked at symbolic tales which were created by one author rather than evolving through many generations. Hauptmann has used the symbols in order to make intricate statements. Thus the change from naturalistic to symbolic works does not really mean that Hauptmann has, at a later stage in his career, denied the sociological component. He incorporated



it in an expression of his own personal concern.

The individual element was further elaborated in the investigation of Walt Disney's The Little Mermaid. This cartoon film was interpreted with the help of Bruno Bettelheim's psychological approach to symbolic tales. Bruno Bettelheim's explanations are on a very practicable level when he describes the effects fairy tales can have on the individual in helping to bring contradicting and conflicting sides of a personality together.

"Das Märchen ist deshalb therapeutisch, weil der Patient zu Lösungen kommt, wenn er darüber nachdenkt, was die Geschichte über ihn und seine inneren Konflikte zu diesem bestimmten Zeitpunkt in seinem Leben enthält." (9)

He also explains how the fairy tale came to be capable of containing such a potential.

"Das Märchen dagegen ist im großen Maß das Ergebnis allgemeiner bewußter und unbewußter Inhalte, geformt vom Bewußtsein nicht eines bestimmten Menschen, sondern vieler Menschen, die darin übereinstimmen, was sie als universelle menschliche Probleme und als wünschenswerte Lösung sehen. Wären diese Elemente in einem Märchen nicht vorhanden so würde es nicht von einer Generationen nach der anderen weiter erzählt. Nur wenn ein Märchen das bewußte und unbewußte Verlangen vieler Menschen enthielt, wurde es immer wieder erzählt und mit großem Interesse aufgenommen. Kein Traum eines einzelnen konnte ein so beständiges Interesse wecken, es sei denn er wurde zum Mythos umgestaltet wie die in der Bibel geschilderten Träume Pharaos, die Joseph deutete." (10)

It was stressed that a psychological interpretation of symbolic tales has to consider two levels, the area of the individual consciousness as well as the collective subconscious. The importance of a

harmonic co-operation between both spheres was emphasised in order to sustain a healthy personality.

C.G. Jung defined mythology with a view of this twofold dimension of the human psyche.(11) He interpreted the dualism inherent in mankind's spirit by making a strict differentiation between the personal and the non-personal. He also acknowledged the effective existence of the collective subconscious in every person's personality. According to C.G. Jung the naïve mind did not distinguish between the content of the collective psyche and the individual consciousness, since all gods, demons and spirits were not seen as spiritual projections and as part of the subconscious, but were seen as part of reality. Only the decline of religious beliefs, when the psychological functions that had been hitherto fulfilled by religion were repressed into the subconscious, was the human mind poisoned and disturbed, through an excess of libido.(12) The effects can be catastrophic for an individual as well as for society.

"Seine [des Unbewußten] Position war vorher maßlos verstärkt worden durch den Rationalismus des modernen Lebens, der alles Irrationale entwertet und dadurch die Funktionen des Irrationalen im Unbewußten versenken. Befindet sich diese Funktion aber einmal im Unbewußten, so wirkt sie von dortaus verheerend und unaufhaltsam, wie eine unheilbare Krankheit, deren Herd nicht ausgerottet werden kann, weil er unsichtbar ist.



Auch gegenwärtig erleben wir wieder diese Empörung der unbewußten destruktiven Kräfte der Kollektivpsyche. Der Effekt war ein Massenmord sondergleichen." (13)

According to this theory the wrong treatment of the mythological sphere has thus had a catastrophic influence on the real world. Because it was not given its rightful place in the real world, the archaic way of thinking could take over more than its fair share of people's personality. As has been shown, The Little Mermaid dealt with this topic extensively: The Sea Witch 'Ursula' was seen to represent a previous layer of consciousness which had been suppressed and because it had been neglected turned to evil.

#### VI.1 A New Understanding of Reality

The theory shall be posed - and here lies perhaps the real drive and the motivation behind the choice of theme for this thesis - that far from being just present and in some ways relevant in present day society, archetypes and the use of symbolic language are crucial factors in today's busy reality. At first sight critics could state that the only role folk tales and fairy tales have to play today is to aid relaxation and recovery from the demands real life make on us. One could put forward that a 'realistic' view is necessary to cope with the twentieth century's immense problems. The traditional dualistic concept would allocate to the 'real' world terms like 'rationalism', 'logic',



'problem solving', etc.

The following paragraphs shall follow Vester's argumentation. He deals with the question how successful human kind has been in applying these 'realistic' criteria, in order to deal with reality in an effective way. Frederic Vester demonstrates the shortfalls of the 'modern' linear mode of thought which operates on a simple cause-consequence basis, and he promotes a new kybernetical way of thinking. He analyses present day society in all its aspects, from an individual, social, economic and, most of all, environmental point of view. Looking at possible ways of solving today's most pressing problems he states:

"Die Wirklichkeit wird nicht verstanden oder sie wird falsch verstanden - sonst würde sie nicht immer wieder so völlig anders reagieren, als wir es erwartet hatten. (14)"

According to Vester, human beings interact with the world by manipulating its processes and influencing the laws and regulations according to which it functions. Individuals - and society as a whole - are, in the first instance, concerned with the direct effects their actions have. For example, the extraction of raw materials has been promoted and carried out for the sake of short-term profit - which it has successfully achieved - without considering any wider-reaching effects on the environment

or the social structures of communities in home and third world countries. The same mechanisms apply when decisions about, for example, the building of new roads, new factories etc., have to be made. There is always a good reason for carrying out these actions, a dam is built to provide fresh drinking water, and without doubt the action of building the dam will have the desired effect - there will be more water for people to drink. Apart from this desired effect, however, there will be many others. If not taken into consideration, those can have adverse consequences: the building of a dam may mean the creation of an artificial ecological system which will influence the surrounding fauna and flora and might disturb its original delicate balance, which again, in the end, will have an impact on the living conditions of human communities. This mode of thought can be applied on an economic level, where decisions taken in one large company do not only affect this company, but also the social structure and the cultural development of the surrounding community. On an individual basis, Vester says 'that everything we do has an influence on our surroundings and the better we understand these dynamic processes that are involved in our interaction with the environment, the easier it will be to predict how a person or environmental phenomena will react to a particular sequence of actions. (15)

The reality we experience, i.e., the environment we live in and with which we interact, has become quite threatening and many of those threats and dangers - in particular with regards to the environment - are a direct result of mankind's intervention with a certain reality. Frederic Vester believes the reason for this dilemma is that we have a false conception of reality. According to Vester we look upon the world as the sum of many single phenomena without taking into consideration that all things are connected and form systems with each other. Those systems in turn interact again with each other and form larger systems, while becoming themselves subsystems. So while we collect increasingly more and more single facts about the world, we move further away from predicting future developments accurately, because we are unable to solve the problems which arise out of new constellations and complex interactions.(16) In our problem solving on a personal, social, political and environmental basis we are merely dealing with the symptoms because we cannot understand the complexity of the causes of a problem.(17)

Perhaps the present way of thinking - the process of the linear, logical, structured thinking that operates on a relatively simple principle of cause-effect connection between all phenomena - is no longer appropriate for today's complex world. Peter



Rojcewicz suggests that in order to deal with the big issues and problems human kind is faced with, it might well be possible to look towards a mode of thought that offers another dimension.

"...Our knowledge of reality only emerges through mind's full participation in the unfolding process of nature's evolving spirit." (18)

The attempt to comprehend and express this complexity purely with the linear, logical mind has led to an omission of certain factors. Reality seems to be ruled by the cause-effect relationship and is not seen as a network of interdependent phenomena, a world where all things influence each other and where prediction is very difficult since it is almost impossible to establish in advance all the different consequences our actions might have, all effects of every individual interference with the environment.

Vester postulates that the development of a new mode of thought is required that will help us to better understand and deal with reality.

"Die Realität, in der sich alles Leben abspielt, ist ... ein vernetztes System, in dem es oft weniger auf jene Einzelbereiche ankommt, als auf die Beziehung zwischen ihnen," ... Die natürlichen Zusammenhänge und Wechselwirkungen eines Systems werden durch künstliche Einteilung in Fachresorts durchtrennt. Wir erfahren nichts mehr über die Wirklichkeit, nur noch über ihre Teile." (19)

Vester refers to the reciprocity within all areas of the industrial society, for example, technical development, the commercial area, the political

area, conservation, production, marketing, infrastructure, energy politics, etc. Here decisions are made in an isolated way based on this sectioning off of reality. The decision-making process does not take into consideration the interconnection of all the systems at different levels - the social, economic, environmental and psychological levels - and the processes involved, which leads to great mistakes. (20)

It has been stated that there has been a chronological sequence from archaic mythological thinking to present day logical rationalism. In an ideal situation the latter would evolve and develop out of the former, thus incorporating and finally transcending the earlier stages of development. What probably really happened was that, rather than achieving full participation between two modes of thought, a separation took place whereby the earlier mythological dimension of thought was lost, or at least suppressed. Perhaps it even had to be neglected for a period of time - we are thinking of only a few thousand years out of the whole of the human development - in order to give the rationalism a chance to emerge. The proposition could be made that human kind found in mythological tales and symbolic language a way to conserve the values and ideas of this early mode of thought until such time as when it would be possible and necessary to resurrect them.

We have encountered a neglected dimension of thought and human experience in the form of the Lady of the Lake, the otherworld and all the symbols that stood for the values they represented. In this thesis I have looked at what happened in a person's mind as well as at the historic and sociological dimension, as a consequence of misunderstanding old lost values and ideas which could not be combined with the achievements of rationalism.

After exploring Vester's quite practical approach to the idea of a new concept of reality I would finally like to return to Ken Wilber. In his book Halbzeit der Evolution he proposes that the logical mind developed from the mythical one, which still forms its basis. Ken Wilber believes, like Frederic Vester, that what is required today is the evolving of a new kind of thought, a combination of senses and mind that will reach beyond the sensual world, which will constitute a new stage of development of mankind.

"Sobald wir die Ebenen erreicht haben, die über das sinnlich Erfassbare hinausgehen ... haben wir es mit Bedeutungsstrukturen zu tun, für die kein empirischer, auf Sinneswahrnehmungen beruhender Beweis mehr möglich ist. Deshalb sind wir genötigt (oder vielmehr dazu privilegiert), uns symbolischer, mentaler und kommunikativer Diskussion und 'Deutung' zu bedienen, um uns über die wesentlichen Dinge klar zu werden ..." (21)

The development of a symbolic language was seen as an important acquisition of the time of mythology



which, according to Wilber, was an important period in the development of human history during which classical cultures flourished in Egypt, Babylon, Sumer, the Mexico of the Aztecs and Mayas, Mycene, Crete and early Greece. (22)

"Symbole stellen etwas vor oder schaffen etwas (konstituieren eine höhere Ebene der Wirklichkeit an sich), reflektieren und repräsentieren aber auch (sind imstande, niedere Ebenen der Wirklichkeit begrifflich darzustellen oder zu reflektieren)" (23)

The development of a symbolic language created an ideal opportunity to combine the experience of the pure empirical world with a newly emerging mental sphere. We have looked at Welsh lake tales and the use of symbolic language as an expression of different levels of consciousness.

In the development of his theories Wilber goes beyond the point where empirical proof is possible. He proceeds from the observation that human speech reflects thought and how reality - the world outside of and apart from a human being's mind - is experienced. At the same time reality is reflected in the way we think and express ourselves. The human mind refers to the empirical world with words like, for example, 'rock', 'mountain', 'lake' or 'rose'. Wilber points out that these things do exist independently, whether they are named by humans or not. On the other hand, words like 'pride', 'envy', 'ambition', 'love', 'guilt', etc. hint at phenomena

that exist in the mental sphere and cannot be experienced with the senses in the physical world. According to Wilber, they are created in a higher mental sphere.(24) Wilber poses the theory: if phenomena like flowers, sky or rocks exist independently of whether they are named or not, abstractions like love, hate, hope, ideas, etc. also reflect a part of reality that exists independently and outside of the human mind. Here, Wilber has now finally reached the realm of belief and religion. Reality is thought of as an all-embracing phenomenon which can be experienced in stages, depending on the stage of development of the human mind. According to this theory, every step that is made in evolution enables the mind to penetrate another level on the way to eventually be totally integrated into an all-embracing consciousness.

There are many expressions for the omnipotent supra-conscious. Wilber refers to it as the 'Atman', others call it God. This presentiment, that we all belong to and are part of 'Atman' is, according to Wilber, the subconscious magnet, the drive behind the evolution that motivates mankind to move forward. It is hoped that, step by step, mankind will go the way to achieve final freedom and satisfaction and happiness in becoming one with the supra-conscious universe. Wilber says that until such time the tension is too great to bear between reality and

longing for salvation and thus people create temporary substitutes for the real Atman. Wilber calls this creation of substitutes that can be the major drives in people's lives the "Atman Projects". Those substitutes can be of a religious nature, they can be in form of sacrifices, they can also express themselves in materialism or be expressed in personal relationships. (25) Because they stand for such an important thing - the primeval longing for unity with the rest of the universe - those drives and urges are strong and powerful. This can also have dangerous effects, for example, in the move towards an oppressive kind of nationalism.

According to Wilber there are only two conditions in which human kind can be totally satisfied and happy. The first is "der Schlummer im Unbewußten", (the slumber in the unconscious), and tales from human life in paradise remind us of this phase during the development of the human mind, when man did not see himself separate from the rest of the animal kingdom. The other condition for men to live totally satisfied lives will come with the awakening of the supra-consciousness, when humans will recognise that the individual Ego is not only a part of a never-ending spirit, but will unite with it. Wilber states the dilemma of the human race is that a few hundred thousand years ago human kind was brave enough and took the courage to escape out of the



slumber of Eden, lost its brutish innocence and started the long journey forward to return to the supra-conscious universe.

"Der Mensch löste sich aus dem mit der übrigen Natur gemeinsamen vorpersonalen Zustand und wurde als einziges unter allen Tieren zum in der Wildnis verlorenen Sohn." (26)

Wilber goes as far as to say that mankind has always felt that it originally belonged to the omnipotent supra-consciousness: the intensity of this feeling and the urgency with which the re-unification with the omnipotent supra-consciousness is sought, depends on the individual. This mental journey that has to be undertaken by humans is not without dangers:

"Er muß nicht nur mit der Anziehungskraft des Magneten Zukunft ringen, dem Ruf des Überbewußten, sondern auch gegen die Überbleibsel von gestern ankämpfen. Vor ihm liegt die Verheißung dessen, was er werden könnte, auf ihm aber auch die Bürde dessen, was er bisher war. Da sich jede Bewußtseinsstruktur über die vorhergehende schiebt, hat der Mensch die Aufgabe, die verschiedenen Strukturen zu integrieren und miteinander zu versöhnen. Kommt es nicht zur Transformation und Integration, dann wird die untere Stufe mit Sicherheit dazu beitragen, die höhere krank zu machen und ganz allgemein zu stören. Das geschieht, weil das, was auf der einen Stufe das ganze Bewußtsein ist, auf der folgenden nur ein Teil ist, der in das neue Ganze integriert werden muß, wenn der Mensch nicht erkranken soll. Die zunehmende Komplexität des Bewußtseins bringt also nicht nur neue Möglichkeiten, sondern auch schwere Verantwortung." (27)

The step between the archaic way of thinking and the logical rational mind was probably not much bigger than the step the human mind has to undertake in order to understand spiritual reality.

"In diesem Sinne ist Geschichte ein langsamer

und mühsamer Pfad zur Transzendenz." (28)

Wilber thinks that the long path will be traversed by the whole of human kind, and that throughout history there have been certain enlightened individuals - usually looked upon as being gods by their fellow men - who have been able to reach the next level of consciousness. Eventually, however, there will be for the whole of mankind a worthwhile reward which will free the human soul:

"Die Erkenntnis, daß das Selbst und das andere eins sind, befreit von der Lebensangst. Die Einsicht, daß Sein und Nichtsein eins sind, befreit von der Todesangst." (29)

Ken Wilber sees, as Vester does, man like nature as a system of processes, while most humans want to emphasise the element of duration in order to overcome their anxiety when faced with their own mortality. (30) Wilber explains this basic human crisis with the following dualistic principle:

"Das auf die Natur als Ganzes ausgerichtete Verhalten des primitiven Menschen und des Menschen der Antike spaltete sich schließlich in zwei miteinander unvereinbare Systeme auf, von denen keines das ganze menschliche Wesen erfaßte." (31)

One of those systems was the system of spontaneous behaviour, that is immediate reactions to a given situation, it was relatively uninfluenced by rational thoughts which considered past events. The second was the system of rational thought, a way of behaving which was based on systematical experiences in the past, but which tended to neglect spontaneous stimuli. (32)

"Das Bewußtsein und das Unbewußte, Vernunft und Instinkt sind geschieden, und dadurch verzerren sie einander gegenseitig." (33)

Wilber explains the reason for this split in human nature by the fact that at a certain point in human evolutionary development instinctive and traditional reactions to the environment were no longer sufficient to organise and determine human behaviour, and decisions had to be made on an individual basis. Thus humans became conscious of their own individuality.

"Auf der Flucht vor dem Tode gab die Ich-Empfindung ihren Körper auf, diesen allzu sterblichen Körper, und fand in der Welt der Gedanken ein Ersatzrefugium. Und da verstecken wir uns noch heute.

...  
Nachdem wir das Denken gebraucht haben, um den Körper zu transzendieren, haben wir noch nicht gelernt, das Denken durch Bewußtheit zu transzendieren. Darin wird, meines Erachtens, der nächste evolutionäre Schritt des Menschen bestehen." (34)

Symbolic language might help the integration of different levels of consciousness. It enables people to express and combine experiences that belong to more than one of these levels, for example, the mental, empirical, emotional and intuitive sphere. In order to do this the symbolic language uses archetypes.

"Archetypes possess 'transgressivity', or the ability to cross over from the psychic to the physical realm. Because of their psychoid or psychophysical nature archetypes honour no ultimate separation between matter and spirit, since each transgresses the other." (35)

It could be that symbols are our presently available tool to express reality in an as complex a way as



possible, incorporating past stages of development and also containing future possibilities of understanding human reality.

When we speak about the transcendental characteristics of symbolic language, we have to remember that there are two sides to transcendentals, one delivers a new and higher spiritual potential, while the second side has regressive aspects, pointing backwards. With the further development of the human mind it has been equipped with new powers belonging to the new levels of spiritual capacity. This involves not only greater possibilities: the dark aspect of the human mind can also become very destructive. (36) The mix-up between the two sides of transcendentals was seen as being at the root of misunderstandings between our tales' protagonists, in particular between Rautendelein and Heinrich in The Sunken Bell, and the misery that resulted out of it for both, the male and the female character.

The step between archaic and logical thinking and then entering the next stage into the spiritual sphere has been looked upon as a mental journey. We have seen that this theme is particularly at the root of Hauptmann's drama Und Pippa Tanzt, which tells the story of Hellriegel's journey. Also the Ladies of the Lake undertake mental journeys and undergo an inner transformation that enables them to

live in their husband's world. This need of the female, to come closer to the male's world, probably lies at the base of the irresistible mutual attraction the male and the female protagonists feel for each other. The two sides want to come together, not only to exist in combination and harmony, but to create something new, a new mental existence. Ken Wilber explains this process. (37)

#### IV.2 The Mental Helix

Wilber's theories were built on the proposition that in the development of human society there was a period of mankind's history where a mental split took place that divided possible human experience into male and female principles and characteristics, where the male took the lead while at the same time feeling the urge to re-unite with the female aspects to form a complete unit. According to Wilber, this development was part of the evolution of the human race and it took place in form of a helix. It went through the stages of animism, matriarchate and patriarchate. Wilber proposes that even if it cannot be stated that religion always evolves from a female goddess to a father god and then to an omnipotent deity, observation of human history can allow us to see this development as a general guideline. (38) In any case it can be safely stated that this development is a possibility and has happened in a number of societies all over the globe. (39)

Wilber talks about a movement from "chthonischen Matriarchat" (chthonian matriarchy) to the "Sonnen-Patriarchat" (sun patriarchy) whereby the strict differentiation between the masculine and feminine seems to be just one aspect of the dualism and does not necessarily have to be a dividing factor for human kind.

"Es gibt nämlich keinen überragenden, strukturellen Grund, warum die neue Mentalität, das heroische Ego, nicht ebenso feminin wie maskulin sein könnte, keinen Grund, warum der Himmel nicht ebenso von mentaler oder solarer Femininität wie von solarer Maskulinität regiert werden könnte. Es kommt ja nur darauf an, daß das Feminine ebenso wie das Maskuline aus der Einbettung in die chthonische Erdmutter besteht und dem mentalen Himmel geöffnet wird." (40)

These ideas are backed by all those tales where the kingdom to be won or the treasures to be found are connected to a beautiful princess. She is in need of salvation while the male cannot find peace and happiness without her.

On the basis of an individual's personality it becomes evident that a split into masculine - feminine element is too simple and it is essential to establish more clearly what those terms represent. In the first instance they are major aspects of human life, constants that were symbolised by primeval first dualisms, that must have sprung to human mind, where they formed archetypes. Primeval dualisms as, for example, the differentiation between man-woman, day-night etc., later on might have come to represent other phenomena, as, for example,



light-dark, rich-poor, happy-desperate, etc.

The coming together of all aspects of human life will lead to the achievement of the next step in the chain of the (spiritual) evolution of mankind. This is what stands behind the idea of a 'hieros gammos'. It acknowledges the ambiguous nature of humans, the fact that they are material and spiritual beings, with the capability of being masculine, feminine, good, evil, light, dark, conscious, unconscious, concrete and abstract.

According to Wilber, first man has to acknowledge the existing contrasts, the contradicting sides; then he has to combine and integrate them into his personality. This will enable a human being to be a whole and complete person who can strive for further development, which can be expressed in symbolic tales through the marriage with a superior being or a deity. Out of this union comes the special child, the demigod, a human being on the next stage of the evolutionary helix.

Fromm also sees mythological tales as a means to remember valuable experiences from the past and as expressions and promise of the hope for the development of human kind into a better, wholer and truer existence:

"Was also ist - in prophetischer Sicht - das Ziel des Menschen? Sein Ziel ist, wieder in

Frieden und Harmonie mit seinen Mitmenschen, mit den Tieren und dem Boden zu leben. Die neue Harmonie unterscheidet sich von der des Paradieses. Sie ist nur zu erreichen, wenn der Mensch sich voll entwickelt, um wahrhaft menschlich zu werden, wenn er die Wahrheit erkennt und Gerechtigkeit übt, wenn er die Kraft seiner Vernunft soweit entwickelt, daß er von menschlichen Fesseln und von den Fesseln irrationaler Leidenschaften frei wird." (41)

The concept, of a mental development that can be undergone by one individual or a society as a whole in the run of history, has become familiar in the course of this thesis. For example, in chapter III during the investigations of the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach tale, we have come across the idea of a spiritual journey to be undertaken by the human mind. The Lady of the Lake lived to begin with under the water surface, standing for the subconscious, she lived with her husband in the logical human world, and transferred eventually into a spiritual goddess symbolised by her return to the water in a new transcendent way; the unity with the world of nature was now a conscious one, symbolised in the fact that she uses her knowledge of plants and herbs for healing. This journey takes the form of a helix which will eventually lead back to the starting point - it begins and ends for the Lady of the Lake in the water world - on a higher level so to speak. The starting point of this journey is the water world as the origin of life, the common original source of all that exists, while in the end, the water world symbolises the spiritual otherworld, a higher mental and spiritual sphere. Two movements



started to crystallise. Firstly there were two contrasting points moving towards each other in an attempt to achieve unity - the union of man and woman. This union could also be interpreted as the united move towards another - deeper - psychological sphere, or higher level of consciousness. The principles of dualism and replication could be found in all the tales. Opposites would come together and reveal underlying common ground in apparent opposites. The Lady of the Lake and her suitor, Rautendelein and Heinrich, Ariel and Prince Eric, etc. are couples where men and women represented opposite worlds but also each contained elements of - and a longing for - another realm.

On the other hand, apparent identity can reveal inherent contrasts as, for example, in the case of the twin sisters in the Llyn y Fan Fach legend. The principle of two sides moving towards each other and striving to combine their contradicting elements can be applied to describe the formation and development of a single personality as well as the development of human society, that is history.

It was demonstrated in this thesis that it is possible to make engaged and powerful statements about reality by using symbolic language. We have seen that in the course of history, great sociological changes found their expression in tales using a



symbolic language. Symbolic language could also be an instrument to deal with controversial issues, to keep values and historical events alive within the oral tradition, under cover, so to speak.

In folk tradition symbolic tales can be interpreted on different levels. Apart from the historic-social level there was also the individual-psychological one. As far as symbolic tales were concerned, different levels of interpretation did not contradict each other but supplemented each other. Tales of the Lady of the Lake like, for example, the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach, are reminiscent of an old transformation from a matrilineal to patrilineal society, which might have taken place thousands of years ago. The Lady of the Lake tales also contained information about social and religious changes in mediaeval Wales which must have resulted in considerable psychological conflicts for the people living through these changes. Symbolic language helped people to approach these issues. It had also had a personal application: it could show the route to combine different and contradicting aspects of an individual into a whole and healthy personality which operates and interacts with other fellow human beings within the framework of a new, wider concept of reality:

"If matter, space-time, and mind form an unbroken continuous then thought is reality and all thinkable relationships exist." (42)

VI.3 Footnotes

(1) Hetman, Frederik; Keltische Märchen, Irland, Schottland, Wales, Bretagne (Frankfurt/Main, 1975) pp.13f.

'It is important that these tales were told in a Celtic language that was officially forbidden or suppressed, thus the matter contained also the aspect of a political and cultural fight.

...  
The connection between an elaborated tradition of oral transmission and the longing for the autonomy of the language and national independence will have played an important part for the popularity of fairy tales in the Celtic linguistic area.'

(2) Rhys, John, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx (London, 1983) pp.54f.

(3) Ibid. pp.368f.

(4) Roberts, Peter; The Cambrian Popular Antiquities or, an Account of Some Traditions, Customs and Superstitions of Wales with Observations as to their Origin (London, 1815) p.242. Peter Roberts mentions, for example, St. Tegla's at Llandegla, St. Elian's at Llanelian, St. Dwynwen's in Anglesey and St. Wenefrede's at Holywell in Flintshire.

(5) Ibid. p.245.

(6) Rhys, Celtic Folklore Welsh and Manx pp.410ff.

(7) Ibid. p.369.

(8) Ibid. p.395.

(9) Bettelheim, Bruno; Kinder brauchen Märchen. (München, 1980) p. 33.

'Fairy-tales are therapeutic, because the patient finds his own solution, through thinking about what a particular tale contains about him and his inner conflicts at this particular point in life.'

(10) Ibid. p.45.

'On a large scale fairy tales are the result of a general and subconscious content which has been formed by the consciousness not of one particular human being, but by many human beings who agree what they see as universal human problems and as desirable solutions. If those elements would not be present in a



fairy tale it would not be retold generation after generation. Only if a fairy tale contained the conscious and subconscious longings of many people, was it retold again and again and listened to with interest. No dream of a single person could evolve such a constant interest unless it was transformed into a myth like, for example, the dreams of Pharaoh in the bible which were interpreted by Joseph.'

(11) Jung, C.G, Über die Psychologie des Unbewußten. (Frankfurt/Main, 1980).

(12) Ibid. p.95.

(13) Ibid. p.95.

'The subconscious position has been strengthened through the rationalism of modern life, which devalued all irrational elements. Thus the function of the irrational is sunk into the subconscious from where it has a destructive and unstoppable effect, like an incurable disease, whose cause cannot be dealt with, because it is invisible

...

At present we again are experiencing the uproar of these subconscious destructive forces of the collective psyche. The effect has been an unprecedented massmurder.'

(The first edition of Jung's book was in 1916!)

(14) Vester, Neuland des Denkens. Vom technokratischen zum kybernetischen Zeitalter (München, 1984), p.18.

'We do not understand reality, or understand it wrongly, or it would not continuously react totally differently from the way in which we expected it to react.'

(15) Ibid. pp.20ff.

(16) Ibid. pp.17ff

(17) Ibid. p.18

(18) Rojcewicz, Peter, M., "Between One Eye Blink and the Next: Fairies, UFOS and Problems of Knowledge", Narváez, Peter (ed.), The Good People. New Fairylore Essays (New York - London, 1991) p.502.

(19) Vester, Neuland des Denkens. p.19.

'Reality, where all life takes place, is a network system, where often less emphasis needs to be placed on individual areas than on their relationship with one another. The natural connections and interrelations of a system have



been separated through artificial division into subject areas. We no longer obtain information about reality but only about parts of it.'

(20) Ibid. p.20)

(21) Wilber, Ken; Halbzeit der Evolution. Der Mensch auf dem Weg vom animalischen zum kosmischen Bewußtsein. Eine interdisziplinäre Darstellung der Entwicklung des menschlichen Geistes. (Bern - München - Wien, 1985) p.315

'As soon as we have reached the levels that go beyond what we can perceive with our senses ... we are dealing with structures of meaning for which empirical proof is impossible. Therefore we must make use of (or better, we have the privilege making use of ) symbolic, mental and of communicative discussion and 'interpretation' in order to understand the important matters...'

(22) Ibid. p.114.

(23) Ibid. p.118

'Symbols portray or create something (constitute a higher level of reality); at the same time they also represent or can represent lower levels of reality, that is, they can conceptually depict, or reflect lower levels of reality.'

(24) Ibid.

(25) Ibid. p.136

(26) Ibid. p.136.

'Man untied himself out of the pre-personal condition which he had hitherto in common with the rest of nature and as the only one amongst all the other animals he became the son lost in the desert.'

(27) Ibid. pp.136f.

'He (man) must not only struggle with the attraction of the 'magnet' future, i.e. the call of the supra-conscious, but he also has to fight against the remnants of the past. In front of him lies the promise of how he could be, but he also has to carry the burden of what he has been so far. The structure of every consciousness level is pushed on top of the previous one. It is a human's task to inte-

grate and reconcile the different structures. If no transformation or integration takes place the lower level will certainly contribute to generally disturb the higher level and make it sick. The reason for this is because what has been the whole consciousness on one level forms only a part of it on the next, which has to be integrated into the new structure to prevent the human being from falling ill. Thus the increasing complexity of the consciousness does not only bring new possibilities, but also great responsibilities.'

(28) Ibid. p.21

'In this sense history is a slow and arduous path to the transcendent.'

(29) Ibid. p.27.

'The knowledge that one's own personality is one with all other beings frees from the fear of living. The knowledge that existence is identical with non-existence frees from the fear of death.'

(30) Ibid. p.225.

(31) Ibid p.225

'The human behaviour of the primitive people and people living during the ancient world had been orientated towards nature as a whole. Eventually it split into two incompatible systems, none of which encompassed the whole of human nature.'

(32) Ibid. p.225.

(33) Ibid. p.226.

'The conscious and the subconscious, the rational and the instinct, have been separated and thus mutually distorted.'

(34) Ibid. p.230.

'Fleeing in the face of death, the Ego gave up the sensation of its mortal body and found in the world of thought a substitute refuge. This is where we still hide today.

...  
After we have used the process of thought to transcend the body, we have not yet learned to transcend thought by means of consciousness. This, in my opinion, will constitute the next evolutionary step of mankind.'



(35) Rojcewicz, Between One Eye Blink and the Next p.500

(36) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.120

(37) Ibid. p.136.

(38) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.290.

(39) See to this in particular the investigations of Bachofen, Johann, Jakob, Das Mutterrecht, eine Untersuchung über die Gynäkrokratie der alten Welt nach ihrer religiösen und rechtlichen Natur (Frankfurt/Main, 1980).

(40) Wilber, Halbzeit der Evolution p.263.

'There is no overriding, structural reason, why the new mentality, the heroic Ego could not be just as well feminine as masculine, no reason why the heaven could not be reigned from mental or solar femininity instead of solar masculinity. What is important is that the feminine element like the masculine element will be freed from being embedded in the chthonian mother earth and will be opened to the mental heavens.'

(41) Fromm, Erich, Märchen, Mythen, Träume. Eine Einführung in das Verständnis einer vergessenen Sprache (Hamburg, 1981) p.163.

'That is, from a prophetic point of view, the destination of the human race. It is the aim of mankind to live again in peace and harmony with all fellow men, with the animals and the earth. The new harmony is different from the one that existed in paradise. It can only be reached when mankind is fully developed in order to become fully human, when he will recognise truth and practise justice, when the power of the mind has been developed far enough, so that humans will be free of their chains, the chains of irrational passions.'

(42) Rojcewicz, Between One Eye Blink and the Next p.479.



VII ANNEX

The following titles have been taken from Simon and Schuster Young Books, Krisson Printing 1993.

- Dick, King-Smith (illustrator Frank Rodgers); The Jolly Witch.
- Tim Healey (Illustrator Charles Fuge); A Box of Ogres.
- Anne Forsyth; Mandy's Mermaid.
- Allan Frewin Jones; Wishing Bird.
- Margaret Ryan; Sir Chancelot and the Horrible Howling Monster.
- Michael Morpurgo; The King in the Forest.

Also for older children there have been a number of titles which show they have mythological motifs at their roots. There is the award winning

- Deptford Mice Trilogy, by Robin Jarvis whose contents are summarised in the following way:

"In the sewers of London there is a dark presence which fills the tunnels with fear. The rats worship it in the darkness and call it Jupiter, Lord of All. The Trilogy tells of an epic struggle against this terrifying force." (p.24)

The titles of individual books are equally revealing; The Dark Portal, The Crystal Prison, The Final Reckoning. Connected to this series of books are other titles by the same author. See, for example, the first volume of Robin Jarvis' The Deptford Histories (two volumes). The Whitby Witches, the first book of a series, won the Lancashire County Library/National Westminster Bank Children's Book of the year Award in 1992. (See p.24) Also to be mentioned is a "classic edition" of Norse Myths" by Kevin Crossley-Holland (illustrated by Gillian McClure which has been newly published in 1993. (p.25)

The following information has been taken from Andersen Press New Books 1993 and Complete Stock List, Andersen Press 1993.

- Allsburg, Chris van; The Widow's Broom (Stories about a witch and her magic broom)
- Willis Jeanne/Brown, Ruth; In Search of the Sleeping Giant.
- Leethan, Helen; Sir Percy and the Dragon.
- Carroll, Lewis; Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Abridged and illustrated by Tony Ross.
- Andersen, Hans Christian/Lynch, P.I.; The Snow

Queen.

- May, Kara (illustrator Doffy Weir); Cat's Witch and the Wizard.

The following picture books are in print at Andersen Press:

- Two Books of Andersen's Stories
- Goode Diane; The Andersen Book of American Folk-Tales and Songs.
- The Shining Princess and Other Japanese Legends.
- Goldilocks and the Three Bears.
- The Greedy Little Cobbler.
- Hänsel and Gretel.
- Lazy Jack .
- Mrs Goat and her Seven Little Kids.
  
- A Fairy Tale.

"Every child knows that fairies don't live next door - but Bessie's not so sure. 'One of the most original children's books for a long time.'" (Sunday Times). (p.25)

- Walker Barbara/Foreman, Michael; Teent-Tiny and the Witch Woman.

"A gripping variation of the Hänsel and Gretel story by an outstanding artist." (p.25)

In addition the Andersen Press offers four further books about witches and one about giants and UFO's. Just going by the title it turns out that about one out of seven books offered by the Andersen Press has some connection with traditional fairy or folk tales.



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