JYU DISSERTATIONS 802

Carola Maria Wide

“Oh, how frightened I was”

The Kristevan Feminine, Narration, Initiation, and Intergeneration in Contemporary, Red-hooded Heroines’ Transformation of Fear-provoking Cultural Rape Trauma

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Helen Mäntymäki
Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä
Päivi Vuorio
Open Science Centre, University of Jyväskylä

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ABSTRACT

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"Oh, how frightened I was": The Kristevan Feminine, Narration, Initiation, and Intergeneration in Contemporary, Red-hooded Heroines' Transformation of Fear-provoking Cultural Rape Trauma
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The aim of this dissertation is to examine how female storytellers' contemporary versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" (LRRH) represent the Kristevan feminine in girl or woman through their young-adult (or adult) heroine and transform the cultural rape trauma embedded in Charles Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's renderings of the tale. In order to pursue this aim, the dissertation asks three questions, each discussed in the three separate articles, respectively: RQ1) How does the heroine overcome rape trauma through the feminine genius? RQ2) How does the heroine negotiate women's social identity through the feminine? RQ3) How does the heroine recreate her feminine and how does this change her grandmother relationship? Cultural sexual trauma has developed into a central topic after the completion of the articles although trauma is explicitly studied only in Article 1. The dissertation emphasizes that the female storytellers represent the heroine's feminine of girl or woman through three trauma-related themes: trauma narration, female initiation as a way to negotiate trauma, and intergenerational female relationships as a way to reorient trauma. The material of the dissertation consists of ten contemporary written and visual narratives on the topic of LRRH by female storytellers from North America, Britain, and Finland: Margaret Atwood, Kiki Smith, Francesca Lia Block, Paula Rego, Angela Carter, Tanith Lee, Gillian Cross, and Märta Tikkanen. The method used is multimodal thematic close-reading. Theoretically, the study draws on Julia Kristeva's theories of the genius, the subject, and the feminine with a particular focus on the latter, as well as on research on fairy tales, and, in Article 1, it draws also on trauma studies. Each article's analysis deepens the dissertation through visual results in the form of artwork created by the author that adds to the written results. Article 1 shows that the heroine overcomes rape trauma by narrating it. Trauma narration discloses the feminine through female bonding, productive imagination, the girl genius—the article's interpretation of the Kristevan genius—and concluded by the dissertation, narrated life. The dissertation relates these results to the three qualities of the feminine: reliance, relationality, and the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. Article 2 argues that the heroine negotiates women's social identity through female initiation, which also reveals the feminine in the form of the girl genius and the three qualities of the feminine, seen in Article 1. Article 3 demonstrates that the heroine recreates her feminine and changes her grandmother relationship in this relationship through the two feminine qualities of reliance and relationality. The dissertation results show how the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood is transformed, arguing for the emergence of a new trend of women's narratives on LRRH. The new trend is of value to fairy-tale audiences and storytellers, who can envision forgiveness, peace, and new horizons for red-hooded heroines after cultural rape trauma, and also offers support for victims of completed or attempted rape. Providing a role model of the heroine's transformation of cultural rape trauma by reaching feminine psychosexual maturity, the dissertation benefits ordinary girls who seek freedom and healing from rape trauma victimization and want to discover the extraordinary in them, as well as contributes to the understanding of the girl to Kristevan scholarship.

Keywords: cultural rape trauma, intergenerational female relationships, fairy tale, the feminine genius, female initiation, the girl genius, the Kristevan feminine, Little Red Riding Hood, transformation, trauma narration

TIIVISTELMÄ (ABSTRACT IN FINNISH)

Wide, Carola Maria
"Oi, kuinka pelkäsin": Kristevan feminiini, kerronta, initiaatio ja sukupolvienvälisyys aikamme punahilkkaisten sankarittarien muuntamassa, pelkoa herättävässä kulttuurisessa raiskaustraumassa
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Tämän väitöskirjan tarkoituksena on tutkia, miten aikamme naispuolisten kertojien Punahilkka-tarinan versiot representoivat naissankariutta työssä ja naisessa Kristevan feminiinisen käsitteen avulla ja uudistavat Charles Perraultin ja Grimmin veljesten tarinoissa painottuvaa kulttuurista raiskaustraumaa. Väitöskirja keskittyy kolmeen kysymykseen, joista jokaista käsitellään erikseen omassa artikkelissaan. Tutkimuskysymys 1: Miten naispuolinen sankari selviytyy raiskaustraumasta naisnerouden avulla? Tutkimuskysymys 2: Miten naispuolinen sankari neuvottelee naisen sosiaalista identiteettiä feminiinisen avulla? Tutkimuskysymys 3: Miten naispuolinen sankari uudelleenrakentaa feminiinisen, ja miten prosessi muuttaa hänen suhdettaan isoäitiin? Seksuaalisuuteen liittyvä kulttuurinen trauma on keskeinen tutkimusaihe, jota Artikkeli 1 erityisesti tarkastelee. Tutkimus kuvaa, miten naispuolisten kertojien esitykset naispuolisten sankarien feminiinistä tytössä ja naisessa nivoutuvat kolmeen traumaan liittyvään teemaan: traumakerronta, initiaatio naiseuteen keinona selviytyä traumasta ja naissukupolvien väliset suhteet keinona uudelleensuunata trauma. Tutkimuksen aineisto muodostuu kymmenestä Punahilkka-teemaan perustuvasta kirjallisesta ja visuaalisesta narratiivista, joiden tekijät ovat amerikkalaiset Margaret Atwood, Kiki Smith ja Francesca Lia Block, brittiläiset Paula Rego, Angela Carter, Tanith Lee ja Gillian Cross, sekä suomenruotsalainen Märta Tikkanen. Tutkimusmenetelmä on multimodaalinen, temaattinen lähiluku. Tutkimus hyödyntää Julia Kristevan teorioita nerosta, subjektista ja feminiinisestä, joista jälkimäisin painottuu erityisesti. Lisäksi keskeisiä ovat satututkimus ja ensimmäisessä artikkelissa traumateoria. Jokaisen artikkelin analyysia syvennetään lisäksi tutkimuksen kirjoittajan luomilla visuaalisilla tuloksilla. Artikkeli 1 osoittaa, että sankari vapautuu traumasta kertomalla sen. Traumakerronta tuo esiin feminiinin naisten välisen sitoutumisen, produktiivisen mielikuvituksen, Kristevan nerosta johdetun tyttöneron käsitteen sekä kerrotun elämän avulla. Nämä tulokset liittyvät feminiinisen kolmeen ominaisuuteen, jotka ovat riippuvuus, suhteiden sisältö sekä elämän kokonaisuus ja ajattelu/kerrottu elämä. Artikkeli 2 väittää, että naispuolisen sankari rakentaa sosiaalista identiteettiään muotoutuu naisen initiaation kautta, mikä tekee feminiinisen näkyväksi tyttöneron muodossa, sekä artikkelissa 1 mainitut feminiinisen piirteet. Artikkeli 3 osoittaa, että sankari uudelleenrakentaa feminiinisen ja muuttaa isoäitisuhdettaan mitä tulee riippuvuuteen ja suhteen sisältöön. Tutkimuksen tulos osoittaa muutoksen ja uuden trendin kulttuurisen raiskaustrauman kuvauksissa naispuolisten kertojien Punahilkka-tarinoissa. Tämä trendi on arvokas satujen kertojille ja lukijoille, jotka voivat visioida anteeksiantoa, rauhaa ja uusia mahdollisuuksia kulttuurisen raiskaustrauman jälkeisille punahilkkaisille sankareille. Lisäksi tarinat tarjoavat tukea raiskauksen uhreille. Tarjoamalla erimerkin siitä, miten naispuolinen sankari muuttaa kulttuurista raiskaustraumaa saavuttamalla feminiinisen psykoseksuaalisen kypsyyden, tutkimus hyödyttää tavallisia tyttöjä, jotka tavoittelevat vapautumista raiskaustraumasta kyetäkseen kokemaan itsensä erityisiksi. Lisäksi tutkimus laajentaa Kristevan tyttöihin liittyvää teoriaa.

Avainsanat: kulttuurinen raiskaustrauma, naissukupolvien väliset suhteet, satu, feminiininen nero, naisen initiaatio, tyttönero, Kristevan feminiininen, Punahilkka, transformaatio, traumakerronta

Author

Carola Maria Wide
Department of Language and Communication Studies
University of Jyväskylä
carola.m.wide@student.jyu.fi
ORCID: 0000-0002-4738-8837

Supervisors

Helen Mäntymäki
Department of Language and Communication Studies
University of Jyväskylä

Marinella Rodi-Risberg
Department of Language and Communication Studies
University of Jyväskylä

Reviewers

Carol Mastrangelo Bové
Department of English
University of Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Päivi Lappalainen
Department of Finnish Literature
University of Turku

Opponent

Carol Mastrangelo Bové
Department of English
University of Pittsburgh, PA, USA

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing this dissertation has not only been a long and challenging process but also a wonderful and rewarding journey during which time I have grown immensely, for which I am grateful. Once upon a time, my dissertation began with Julia Kristeva's notion of maternal abjection but transformed into the concept of genius and finally crystallized into the idea of the feminine as a means to transform the cultural rape trauma in contemporary "Little Red Riding Hood" fairy tales. In this respect, my writing process resembles a transition from Doctoral Student to Doctor that I have worked through to transform, as the heroines whom I study work through and transform. For writing the dissertation, I have mainly relied on the APA style seventh edition for the references and structured the dissertation according to the guidelines provided by the doctoral program at the Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Finland, which follows a linguistic approach to writing theses that may slightly differ from literature dissertations. During this time, I have received support, guidance, and mentoring from many people and places, contributing to the making of this thesis.

I would like to thank my two supervisors, my fairy godmothers Helen Mäntymäki and Marinella Rodi-Risberg. Helen, my first supervisor, I thank you for your consistent support and feedback, and for always seeing the larger story. Your advice of killing my darlings which did not serve my stories has helped me to stay on the right path (which is not easy for someone who can get lost in details). Thanks for co-writing my first article, even if it did not make it to this thesis. I have learned so much from you. Marinella, I want to thank you, my second supervisor, for always being so encouraging and positive about my endeavors and for reading nearly all my writing (even during the summer holidays). It was a great pleasure to co-write Article 1 on trauma narration with you. Your expertise in the scholarship of trauma helped me develop trauma narration and cultural rape trauma (although I arrived at these two independently from you) because I could always trust your comments on my writing. With your kind help, Helen and Marinella, I have made it to the finishing line.

I want to thank the evaluators and the thesis checker for giving their time to my dissertation. Päivi Lappalainen, thank you for your thoughtful feedback and positive comments. Päivi's recommendation that my dissertation "meets excellently the general requirements set for a high-level dissertation" was most encouraging. We also have a common interest in girlhood. Carol Mastrangelo Bové, I am much obliged to you for your astute, detailed, and thought-provoking commentary that has helped to advance my dissertation and also my thinking regarding Kristeva's theories. Carol is an expert in Kristevan scholarship, and I hope I have been able to do her suggestions justice while foregrounding trauma and the feminine. Thank you kindly, Carol, for promising to act as my opponent, too. I feel lucky to get a chance to further discuss the feedback with you. I also owe my thanks to Roger Noël Smith. I am glad that you are checking my

language (I'm not sure if you remember, but you were one of the first people I talked to in Jyväskylä and now you're one of the last to look at my dissertation before publication). Finally, thanks to the Assessment Board members Judith Hahn and Anne Kosonen. I appreciate that you are doing this in late June (although you should have been on vacation already).

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I want to express my gratitude to the staff and colleagues at the Centre for Language and Communication Studies, Hanken School of Economics and Wasa Sports Club, where I work today. Special thanks to Dino Cascarino and Caroline Enberg for advancing this new journey and my colleagues in the English team, Marisun Gajitos, Martti Mäkinen, and Taija Townsend. Marina Bergström, Margit Breckle, Johanna Dahlin, and Marit Nilsson-Väre, I am grateful for having you as my colleagues. A big thank you also to my friends and colleagues at Wasa Sports Club. Exercising and yoga have helped me focus on my writing.

I want to extend my thanks to all the people who facilitated my publications and conference presentations. Thank you, journal editors, anonymous reviewers, conference organizers, and participants. I would particularly like to express my gratitude to the academic organization The Kristeva Circle for accepting my conference papers for the 2017 and 2018 Kristeva Circle meetings arranged by the University of Pittsburgh, PA, USA, and Cal State Northridge, CA, USA, respectively. These conferences were crucial in advancing my knowledge of Kristevan studies, and it was a delight to present my research and to network with you.

I must also thank the many institutions that made this thesis possible. I thank the Department of Language and Communication Studies at the Faculty of

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Vaasa—Vasa, May 5, 2024
Carola Maria Wide

FIGURE

TABLE

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

"Little Red Riding Hood" (LRRH)[1] is the well-known story about the red-hooded girl and her grandmother who encounter a wolf. The story was popularized by Charles Perrault's "Le petit chaperon rouge" (1697/1993) and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "Rotkäppchen" (1812/1987a) that together form the canonical versions of LRRH, based on the two tales' classification as tale number 333 in the Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index. The canon of LRRH exists today in countless languages and on all continents in the world (Orenstein, 2002, p. 3). It has been adapted for the screen many times, for example, by Walt Disney in 1922. Another film version, *The Dangerous Christmas of Little Red Riding*, released in 1965 and directed by Sid Smith (2020), stars Liza Minnelli as the protagonist. A third example is *Red Riding Hood* (2011) which was directed by Catherine Hardwicke with Amanda Seyfried cast in the role of Little Red Riding Hood. What is lesser known is that the canonical tales that these adaptations are based on derive from an oral folktale "*Le Conte de la mère-grand*" [The Story of Grandmother], which has been collected by Paul Delaure[2] (1956). "The Story of Grandmother" has been interpreted as an initiation story that celebrates girls' coming-of-age and was transferred from women to girls in Europe before the Brothers Grimm and even before Perrault (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Verdier, 1997). The oral story displays female generational progression through a girl who eats her grandmother and then she becomes a woman (Delarue, 1956, pp. 230–232). Quite different from the oral narrative, both Perrault's (1697/1993) and the Brothers Grimm's (1812/1987a) LRRH end with a wolf that eats both the girl and her grandmother, although, in the Brothers Grimm's version, a huntsman saves them.

Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's fairy-tale versions have for some time gained attention as narratives of sexual violence that disempower the protagonist. In their studies, Susan Brownmiller (1976), Jack Zipes (1993), Elizabeth Marshall (2018), and Sandra L. Beckett (2014) call Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's

[1] I abbreviate the name of the story but not the protagonist's name in the story.
[2] A. Millien noted down the tale in Nièvre in 1885, and it was included in Delarue's collection of oral versions of LRRH, collectively referred to as "The Story of Grandmother" and cited in Delarue's *The Borzoi Book of French Folk Tales* (1956).

versions of LRRH a traditional rape narrative, which, according to Robin E. Field (2020, pp. 10–11), is a story about rape that circulates in culture and adopts the perpetrator's point of view. Brownmiller (1976, p. 343) refers to LRRH as a "parable of rape" that defines female victimhood by spreading fear and teaching girls to take their place in society as potential rape victims. Correspondingly, Zipes (1993) argues that in Perrault's tale, even if no fault of hers, Little Red Riding Hood is blamed "for her own seduction and rape" (p. 55). Marshall (2018) furthermore situates LRRH, along with other children's books, in a large web of stories, structures, and social relationships that normalize and trivialize sexual violence conducted against girls. To illustrate the pervasiveness of rape in Western society, a survey *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release* (Smith et al., 2018), conducted in the United States, shows that one in five women have been exposed to completed or attempted rape. Nearly fifty percent of these exposures occurred before the age of seventeen. While Zipes (1993, p. xi) suggests that the widespread popularity of LRRH today lies in the centrality of violence, Beckett (2014, p. 5) notes that a number of storytellers have recently resorted to depicting this violence to disclose *trauma*.

Rape is a serious sexual offense involving penetration that in real life can result in trauma (e.g., Herman, 1994; Salmona, 2016; Mezey, 1997; Short et al., 2021; see also Eriksson, 2011, pp. 4–7, 37–51, on the rape definition). Judith Lewis Herman (1994, p. 2) and Cathy Caruth (2013, p. 4–6) describe trauma as an internal reaction to or reenactment of traumatic experiences that is experienced in the present but resists representation because its violence has not yet been grasped. Bulgarian-French linguist, psychoanalyst, literary critic, philosopher, and writer Julia Kristeva in an interview with Alison Rice (2002, p. 284) defines trauma as something that appears meaningless but is too strong to be described. These come near to Muriel Salmona's (2016) concept of traumatic memory which I find illustrative because it gives form to trauma (although my study is not informed by her theory). Salmona (2016) delineates traumatic memory as an emotional memory locked in the amygdala of the brain ready to explode. If untreated, the traumatic memory requires the victim to repeat it through the role of victim or victimizer (Salmona, 2016; Rose, 2018, pp. 7–8). As stated by Kate Rose (2020, p. 16), while both men and women can perform the victimizer role, male domination is perpetuated when traumatic memory ties into social norms of male power and female subjugation. This makes women and in particular girls more vulnerable to sexual violence in society (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). According to Salmona (2016), while victimizers are also victims of some trauma for which they are not responsible, they carry responsibility for the ways that they cope with it if it damages others' integrity.

By talking about rape, scholars and audiences alike are today increasingly aware of the LRRH canon as a continuum of trauma stories, and in my view that marks a shift from rape to *cultural rape trauma*. Although, as in Perrault's tale, Zipes's (1993, pp. 14–17) study argues that Little Red Riding Hood in the Brothers Grimm's (1812/1987a) version is blamed for showing her sensual side and

causing her own rape, the girl's captivity inside the wolf's body can also be interpreted as her trauma, suffering, and fear. According to the American Psychiatric Association (1994), fear is one of the most common responses to traumatic experiences. Fear is laid bare in the Brothers Grimm's version through the protagonist's exclamation to the hunter after having been rescued: "Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark in the wolf's body" (Grimm, 1812/1987a, p. 104). This is similar to Carola Maria Wide and Marinella Rodi-Risberg's (2021) interpretation of rape trauma in Portuguese-born British artist Dame Paula Rego's series of illustrations *Little Red Riding Hood Suite* (2003/2006), which forms part of the material in this dissertation, where the protagonist experiences and works through traumatic experience while confined in the wolf's belly. I also find support for this interpretation in Brownmiller's (1976) study that shows that through stories like LRRH little girls recognize and assimilate cultural patterns of rape and "a trauma back there somewhere" (p. 12), which indicates their awareness of a cultural trauma story.

Cultural trauma differs from individual trauma by being socially created and collectively experienced through narratives that begin to circulate in culture (Alexander, 2004b, pp. 2, 4; 2012, p. 10). According to Jeffrey C. Alexander (2004b, p. 1), cultural trauma ensues when a group of individuals feels injured by a real or "imagined" (2012, p. 7) horrendous incident that permanently marks their group consciousness, memories, and future identities (2004b, p. 1). Cultural trauma narratives are "symbolic representations" of pain that must be imagined into existence (Alexander, 2012, p. 2). Among their creators are scholars and storytellers, who begin by imagining the suffering of cultural trauma on an individual level. Through their construction of narratives and characters about traumatic experiences, cultural trauma then moves towards being collectively felt (Alexander, 2012, pp. 2, 5). The carrier group of cultural trauma communicates the trauma to a wider audience, who ideally are convinced that they, too, are traumatized by the incident (2012, p. 10). Examples of Western cultural traumas that have gained ground are the Holocaust of the Nazi massacre of Jews during the Second World War, which, after the war, was followed by the ethnic cleansing of two million Germans including the rape of German women and girls, in the Soviet occupation zone of Germany (Alexander, 2004a; 2004b; Naimark 1995, pp. 133, 148). One of cultural trauma's larger purposes is to heal the psyche on a collective level by undoing societal repression through memory restoration and mourning (Alexander, 2012, pp. 6, 10). As such, cultural traumas can work as a powerful metaphor for disclosing a particular group's suffering which yet needs acknowledgment (Rodi-Risberg, 2018a, p. 117) such as the rape narrative in the canon of LRRH.

In this dissertation, I argue that the narrative of cultural rape trauma has recently gained ground in female storytellers' versions of LRRH in ways that quell the violence of the rape of Little Red Riding Hood in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions. For instance, American writer Francesca Lia Block's young adult short story "Wolf" (2009b, p. 124) exemplifies cultural rape trauma in the story of LRRH, with the audience being led to sympathize with the

protagonist's traumatic reactions to incestuous abuse through her suffering of sickness and vomiting every night. According to Herman (1994, p. 34), intense emotional reactions are common among real victims of individual trauma together with the flipside of not showing emotion and disassociating from the traumatic incident. This type of reaction that changes between emotion, non-emotion, and dissociation is displayed by Offred, a victim of sexual trauma in Canadian writer Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986), another narrative examined in my study. Through the fictional character, Little Red Riding Hood, Rego, Block, and Atwood return to the canonical tales of LRRH to raise awareness about real rape survivors' traumatic experiences by visualizing, writing, and thereby verbalizing what is unspoken. Similarly, although not studied here, Claude Clément and Isabelle Forestier's children's book *Un petit chaperon rouge [A little Red Riding Hood]* (2000/2014) foregrounds the unspeakability of trauma where the protagonist after experiencing rape "lost the power of speech and didn't even want to return to school" (p. 38).

One could argue that there is a movement of solidarity with the victim, Little Red Riding Hood, in these contemporary tales. At least, I certainly stand in solidarity with Little Red Riding Hood's rape trauma and have always felt inclined to do so; even as a child, I found the story of LRRH unsettling for reasons I could not explain until now. Therefore, I find it important to study the story. From my perspective, cultural rape trauma is one explanation, among others, for the vogue of LRRH today. Since trauma demands repetition of what is repressed and cannot easily be recalled, returning to the rape in the canonical versions by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm may be interpreted as an instance of cultural recollection and acting out traumatic experience (see Rodi-Risberg, 2010, pp. 58–59 and Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021, p. 9, on sexual trauma re-enactment in culture). There is more, however, to be explored since the versions that I study do not simply reenact the event of rape trauma.

Instead, they actively seek to transform the violence caused by rape trauma. The "genius" of these tales is that they reorient rape trauma in ways that change the perspective of female victimization and bestow on the central heroine growth, agency, and healing. While violence and rape trauma pervade Block's (2009b) and Atwood's (1986) narratives, their stories also depict the protagonist's overcoming of trauma. Other stories that respond to the cultural rape trauma in LRRH and change it for the better are British writer Angela Carter's short story "In Company of the Wolf" (1979/2006b) and American artist Kiki Smith's visual essay "Bedlam" (2001). Whereas Carter's narrative reorients the rape trauma story through a return to female initiation, Smith's story centralizes the protagonist's relationship with her grandmother. These written and visual fairy tales are included in the material of this study, which altogether consists of ten contemporary LRRH fairy tales by female storytellers mainly from North America and Britain. By transforming the heroine's suffering into a process for gaining awareness and healing from the safe place of fiction and the arts, these versions also comment on the problem of sexual violence in Western society. I situate these versions within a larger body of feminist fairy tales that engage with

literary and visual traditions and societal concerns from a female point of view, and thus serve as an alternative tradition to the patriarchal viewpoint offered by the fairy-tale canon (see Zipes, 2015, pp. xi–xii; Jarvis, 2000, p. 155, on feminist fairy tales). Moreover, they are evidence of cultural rape trauma that joins a larger repertoire of stories on rape and sexual trauma in Western culture. For example, Starhawk's novel *City of Refuge* (2016) showcases, in Rose's (2020) view, the repercussions of rape victims' traumatic memories caused by sexual slavery. Another example is Betty Louise Bell's novel *Faces in the Moon* (1994), which, as stated by Rodi-Risberg (2018b), deals with rape trauma against Native American women. According to Rose (2018), Stieg Larsson similarly depicts the consequences of traumatic memories through the protagonist Lisbeth Salander in the crime novel series *The Millenium Trilogy* (2016, originally written in Swedish).

I have highlighted three trauma-related themes in the material: *trauma narration*, *female initiation as a way to negotiate trauma*, and *intergenerational female relationships as a way to reorient trauma*. First, the novel by Atwood thematizes the question of how the story of violence in LRRH changes into Little Red Riding Hood's trauma narration. Atwood shifts the narrative of rape into rape trauma storytelling through the protagonist's narration of trauma, a recalling of traumatic events to overcome them, resulting in change, personal growth, and a powerful shift of perspective from perpetrator to victim-survivor (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021, p. 10). I emphasize the term victim-survivor, like Field (2020, p. 19), to highlight the victims' traumatic experience that is known only to them and, drawing on Herman (1994, pp. 97, 204), their journey from traumatized victims to survivors of trauma. Second, the short story by Carter presents female initiation in the fairy tale—a traditional way of assigning social identities to individuals (Vaz Da Silva, 2008b, pp. 487–8)—as a theme to portray how the cultural trauma narrative changes. This change in Carter's narrative results from the negotiation of women's social identity. Third, Smith's visual fairy tale centers on the intergenerational female relationship, as in "The Story of Grandmother." Smith's tale reorients violence by centralizing Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother relationship, causing Little Red Riding Hood to transform the old story about herself, as it has been retold by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, through personal change and growth. From these thematic transformations of trauma, I bring out two larger topics of cultural rape trauma and Kristeva's representation of *the feminine* in the thesis. The Kristevan (2019, pp. 1–2) feminine describes individuals' feminine psychosexuality that can transform their psychic life.

Held together by three themes, the narratives that I study form a new trend in women's LRRH tales that all represent the larger topics of cultural trauma and the Kristevan feminine. The themes have resulted in three articles. Although only Article 1 examines trauma, after having looked at the articles together through my new understanding of the LRRH tradition as a cultural rape trauma, cultural trauma has surfaced as one of the thesis's central topics. Moreover, having slightly different theoretical frameworks, each article deals

with one specific theme but shares the central theory of the Kristevan feminine and research on fairy tales. In each article, the written findings are accompanied by visual results through artwork that I have created. By incorporating a practice-based approach to research, which, according to Estelle Barrett (2011, pp. 121–2) forges a relationship between theory and practice, I merge the researcher and the artist. Since the artworks are also narratives of LRRH in their own right, I walk the same path as the storytellers that I study. The women's tales studied constitute what I see as a new trend of women's LRRH tales, to which my artwork may be added, because they break with the traumatic violence in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales in ways that promote the heroines' recovery, growth, and strive for harmony through the feminine.

Theorized by Kristeva (e.g., 2004c; 2019), the feminine is a Western socio-cultural representation that stands for the feminine aspect of psychosexuality. Psychosexuality pertains to internal factors that affect individuals' sexual identity (Sam, 2013). More specifically, the feminine is one aspect of individuals' psychosexual identity, entangled with the masculine, the other aspect of the psychosexual concept (Kristeva 2004b, pp. 409–414). In Western human sexual development, the core of psychosexuality is traditionally described in terms of gender, individuals' feeling of identity as man or woman; gender role behaviors, characteristics associated with and giving rise to the identities of man and woman or male and female gender; and sexual orientation, the direction of individuals' erotic desire towards the same, the other gender, or both (Hines et al., 2004). While gender, gender role behaviors, and sexual orientation play a role and will figure here too, since they are part of Western representation, the Kristevan feminine is more specialized. By conceptualizing the feminine psychosexuality of woman, which relates to the mother-daughter relationship, Kristeva uncovers the feminine beneath other aspects that have in traditional Western representation been associated with feminine psychosexuality: femininity, female gender, and woman. Similar to Kelly Oliver (2016), I see femininity as attributes and characteristics that are associated with but not limited to the female gender, which in turn traditionally describes woman. Furthermore, feminine psychosexual development collocates with language and *the maternal*, which are key to the Kristevan *subject*, a speaking being and its place in the social realm (Kristeva, 2019, pp. 3–5; Oliver, 1993a, pp. 3–5, 10, 22 –23). As I will show in Section 3, *the maternal*[3] or *maternal function* holds a special place in Kristeva's theory. It describes individuals' first self-concept relating to the mother, to which a subject is bound to return in borderline situations such as trauma (e.g. Kristeva 1982; 1989; 2010; Barrett, 2011; see also Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021). Kristeva's (1982) subject is foremost a "speaking subject" with some sense of autonomy (p. 69). Similarly, Oliver (2004) describes subjectivity as "one's sense of oneself as a self with agency" (p. xiv).

In writing this dissertation, I have sought inspiration from Kristeva's (2004c) question "what is the 'feminine'" of woman (p. 408)? I have expanded the question to include girls because all heroines here represent in some way girls in

[3] Kristeva begins to separate the notions of the maternal and the feminine in the 1980s, for example, in "Stabat Mater" (1987c).

the Western part of the world (importantly, my approach does not seek to exclude boys, men, non-binary, or non-Western individuals but rather encourages them to find the feminine in them). Kristeva poses the question in the concluding essay "Is There a Feminine Genius?" about her women or female geniuses: Hanna Arendt, Melanie Klein, and Colette. The female genius describes the extraordinary in ordinary, singular women, who rise to change collective victimization through singular extraordinariness and exemplary creativity and thus set an example for others to follow (Kristeva, 2004a, p. 174; see also Jefferson, 2015, pp. 1–8). In line with Kristeva's theory (e.g., 2004c; 2019), I relate the female genius to women who have been called a genius and *the feminine genius* to psychosexuality. The feminine has through the female genius been presented in Kristeva's (2004c) work in three volumes: *Hanna Arendt* (2001a), *Melanie Klein* (2001b), and *Colette* (2004a). What is often overlooked in the discussion, however, is Kristeva's emphasis on the feminine aspect of the genius. In her search for "what … might fall to the *feminine*," Kristeva (2004c, p. 408, original emphasis) identifies feminine psychosexuality as binding the women geniuses together. More explicitly, they cohere through transformation about three qualities that are specific to feminine psychosexuality that I will introduce next.

Central to the Kristevan feminine in this dissertation is its transformative capability concerning the three qualities: *reliance*, psychosexual energy sublimated into mothering and opening to cyclical time*; relationality*, an individual's interdependence on core relationship(s); and *a unity of living and thinking*, a working together of an individual's psychic life and thought (Kristeva, 2004b, pp. 419–425; 2011, pp. 44–46; 2019, p. 5). Here, I rely on the Irish newspaper the *Irish Times*'s (2004, June 5) interpretation, a unity of living and thinking, which stems from Kristeva's address at University College, Dublin on June 1, 2004, and which in the Integrating Chapter will expand into *narrated life*. I have collected these three qualities in **Figure 1** and, together with central Kristevan terms that I use, in the Glossary of Central Kristevan Terms. With **Figure 1,** which is illustrated by me, I visualize what the three qualities in relation to the transformative capability of the feminine look and feel like through the senses. The three qualities form *the genius in the feminine*, which together hold the capacity to creatively transform individuals' subjectivity. I have here adopted Anne-Marie Smith's (1998, p. 86) translation of Kristeva's *le génie féminin* as *the genius in the feminine* which I use interchangeably with *the feminine genius* to feature the feminine in the genius concept, which I have appropriated as the girl genius in Articles 1 and 2 to foreground girls.

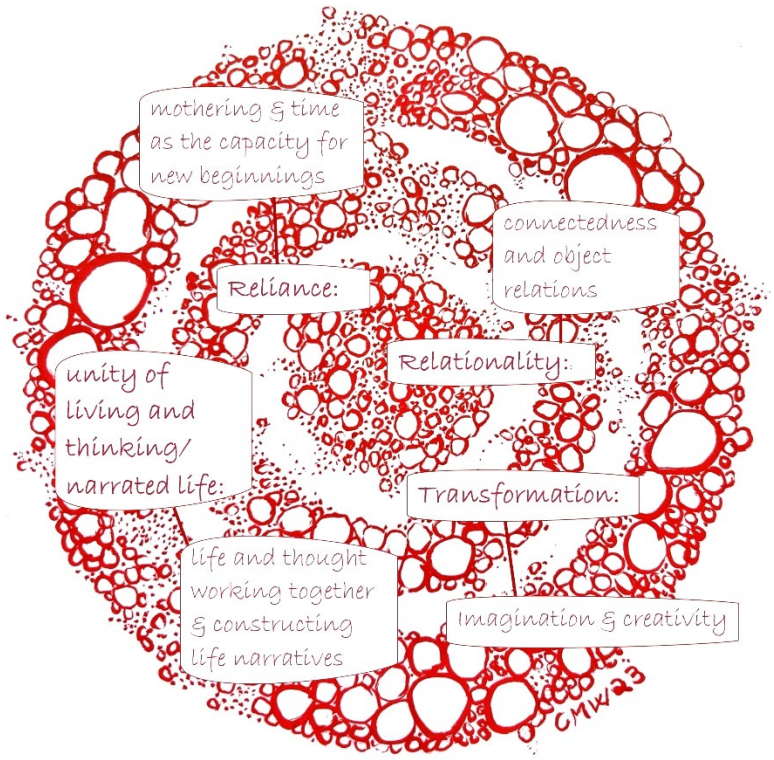

FIGURE 1 The Kristevan feminine (Wide's own drawing)

Very little is known today about female representations of the feminine. Kristeva (2000; 2010) states that what is known mostly relies on male representations. For example, Sigmund Freud's (1931) scholarship on the feminine has been called a masculinization of the feminine by Oliver (2016). Kristeva (2010) views men's projections of the feminine as transfers of male desire onto women's bodies that support "sadistic" expressions of male power and female victimization. This reminds me of the traditional rape narrative in the canon of LRRH. Oliver (2016) expresses similar ideas by describing an absent feminine that pivots on violence to become known in Western texts ranging from Friedrich Nietzsche to Jacques Derrida. Comparably, Luce Irigaray's (1992) and Hélène Cixous's (1976) studies raise concern regarding the absence of the feminine in Western representation by proposing writing that is specific to women, although their approach is markedly different from Kristeva. Besides Kristeva's genius trilogy, only a few literary studies deal with the feminine from a female perspective concerning the three qualities in relation to the transformative capability. One exception is Kristeva's practice-based research novel *Teresa, my Love: An Imagined Life of the Saint of Avila* (2015), although it approaches the feminine from a different view than I do by exploring the feminine as a mystical force through the genius of the Christian Saint Teresa of Avila. If the feminine is mentioned in studies, there is often no differentiation between the feminine and the female genius (e.g., Oliver, 2007; Jasper, 2011; Verma & Singh, 2017). While Archana Verma and Rajni Singh's (2017) study on the genius in the life and work of Susan Sontag does not mention

the psychosexual aspect of the feminine, Oliver's and Alison Jasper's studies of the genius of Julia Alvarez and Michèle Roberts, respectively, emphasize both the female genius and feminine psychosexuality. Different from Kristeva (2001a; 2001b; 2004a; 2015) and others (Oliver, 2007; Jasper, 2011; Verma & Singh, 2017), rather than the female storytellers themselves, I look at the girl in the female storytellers' narratives. Although Kristeva does not study girls, her geniuses are sometimes daughters, like the girls that I study are daughters and granddaughters. Neither has the feminine of girls from a female perspective previously gained attention in scholarship on literature or fairy tales, including LRRH. This dissertation is, therefore, filling a research gap.

The fictional Little Red Riding Hood's transformation of cultural rape trauma through the feminine may inspire ordinary individuals and particularly ordinary girls to rise from ingrained issues of cultural rape trauma hampering their agency and sexuality as subjects in the social domain. The heroine's role modeling of recovery from and forgiveness of cultural rape trauma also speaks for victims of completed or attempted rapes in society. Through the heroine's reaching feminine psychosexual maturity in the narratives here, girls can discover the extraordinary of the ordinary in their lives—the feminine genius in them. As I will demonstrate, the feminine of the protagonist, Little Red Riding Hood, is at the heart of this new trend of women's LRRH, transforming her, and as she changes, the story changes with her.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to examine how contemporary versions of LRRH by female storytellers represent the Kristevan feminine in girl or woman through the young-adult (or adult) heroine in a quest to transform cultural rape trauma. This focus excludes versions of LRRH from the past and versions by male tellers. I use *contemporary* in two senses. First, in the sense of coeval time that begins in 1945 and continues to the present (Maier, 2001) to cover the period 1979–2009 of the material in this thesis. Second, contemporary relates to the past in terms of how the contemporary versions return to the old story of LRRH and by telling stories of their own create metanarratives or meta fairy tales of Delarue's, Perrault's, and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH texts through *intertextuality*, or textual interrelationships (see Kristeva, 1980, p. 66, on intertextuality). A metanarrative depends on intertextuality and is a narrative about narratives (Stephens & McCallum, 1998, pp. 3–4). According to Gillian Rose (2016, p. 2), representation can be understood as "made meanings" of social life, constructing how individuals behave. Whether conscious or unconscious, seen or felt, explicit or implicit, real or fantasy, written or visual, these meanings are open for reading by people at different comprehension levels (Hall, 1997, pp. 2–3; Rose, 2016, p. 2).

This thesis pursues three research questions (RQs). Of these, I undertake one research question for each of the three articles of the dissertation. The research questions are as follows:

RQ1) How does the heroine overcome rape trauma through the feminine genius?

RQ2) How does the heroine negotiate women's social identity through the feminine?

RQ3) How does the heroine recreate her feminine and how does this change her grandmother relationship?

Four general points arise from the research questions. First, even though each research question is grounded in Kristevan theory on the feminine and research on fairy tales, each has a specific focus. Thus, each question approaches the aim of the thesis—how the Kristevan feminine in girl or woman is represented through the young-adult (or adult) heroine in contemporary LRRH versions to transform cultural sexual trauma—from a different angle in the theoretical framework and scholarship on LRRH: trauma narration, female initiation, and intergenerational female relationships. Second, the activities suggested by the verbs, *overcome, negotiate*, and *recreate,* in the research questions demonstrate a transformation of LRRH through the feminine in the contemporary focal tales. RQ1 that this study seeks to answer is how the heroine in the contemporary tales *overcomes* the rape, whereas RQ2 enquires into how she *negotiates* girls' and women's social identity, and RQ3, the ways in which she *recreates* the intergenerational female relationship embedded in LRRH and her own feminine through the feminine.

Third, the feminine is entangled with the young-adult (or adult) heroine of the contemporary narratives and particularly with her initiation into adulthood. In older times, as mentioned earlier, this passage or transition took place socially through initiation rites and tales. Contemporary transitions are less formal and more individual (e.g., Furlong, 2009), describing a phase in psychosexual development where an individual transits from childhood to adulthood or from innocence to maturity (e.g., Kristeva, 2007). The heroine's adult transition is central to the thesis because of the transformation in girls' feminine identity during this psychosexual phase in life. Girls' transition has been likened to a second birth (Markstrom, 2008, p. 8) owing to the massive changes in girls' bodies, minds, and psyches, the latter creating an ideal self, having idealized relationships (Kristeva, 2007, p. 716).

In the thesis, all but two focal heroines are adolescents or pre-adolescents. The two women heroines nevertheless display an awakening later in life that is comparable with girls' awakening. Unlike male awakening which is bound to adolescence, female awakening may occur during both adolescence and adulthood. It is rather common for heroines in literature to awaken and transform later in life (Abel et al., 1983, p. 12). For example, the protagonist in Atwood's novel is an adult, who, forced to act as a girl to give children to Gilead's commanders, returns to her adolescence to transform, in her case, through rape trauma. Like adolescence, trauma recovery resembles a second birth (Herman, 1994, p. 202)—what Kristeva calls rebirth in the Rice interview (2002)—where the traumatized victim recreates an ideal self through trauma narration (Herman, 1994, p. 202), which is comparable to adolescents' recreation of the self (see Kristeva, 2007).

Fourth, since this dissertation only concerns the *feminine of girl or woman*, defined as transformation in relation to the three qualities of feminine psychosexuality— reliance, relationality, and a unity of living and thinking/narrated life—and not the feminine of boy, man, or non-binary individuals, the focus is on the heroine's feminine in the narratives studied here. This excludes the male and non-binary hero's feminine, even if boys, men, and non-binary individuals could profit from an understanding of the feminine in them. According to Kristeva (2004a), the three qualities of boys' and men's feminine differ from those of girls and women by being less pronounced. For example, girls and women are usually more relational than boys and men (Kristeva, 2004a, pp. 413, 420–421). In an interview with Françoise Collin (1996), Kristeva elaborates on this by explaining that women depend more on the other in romantic relationships.

1.2 Material

The material analyzed in this thesis consists of ten contemporary women's tales on LRRH. The tales are primarily chosen because of LRRH and the Kristevan feminine. All are contemporary versions of LRRH with a female heroine, Little Red Riding Hood. All represent the feminine. Furthermore, to facilitate the reader's experience, I have created a table, **TABLE 1**, which gives an overview of the research questions and the key material. In the two columns to the left in **TABLE 1**, the research questions and the articles are presented in the order in which they were written or edited to display the development of my critical thinking from a genius subject to the feminine. When I started this study, my perception of the feminine was still entangled with the female genius, and it was not until the writing of Article 2 that I began to view these as distinct, although related. In the next column, *Tales*, the tales are introduced in the order they appear in the articles. The following column, *Genre/Style*, shows that the written focal narratives are eight, whereas two are visual.

TABLE 1 Overview of research questions, articles, and key material

RQs	*Articles*	*Tales*	*Genre/Style*	*Storytellers*
1. How does the heroine overcome rape trauma through the feminine genius?	Article 1: "From Rape Trauma to Genius through Narration in Contemporary Little Red Riding Hood Tales" (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021)	*Little Red Riding Hood suite* (2003/2006)	illustration series	Paula Rego
		The Handmaid's Tale (1985)	novel	Margaret Atwood
		"Wolfland" (1983b)	short story	Tanith Lee
		"Wolf" (2009b)	young adult short story	Francesca Lia Block
2. How does the heroine negotiate women's social identity through the feminine?	Article 2: "Wooing Werewolves: Girls' Genius, Feminine, and Initiation in Angela Carter's and Märta Tikkanen's Versions of Little Red Riding Hood" (Wide, 2024)	"The Company of Wolves" (1979/2006b)	short story	Angela Carter
		"Wolf-Alice" (1979/2006d)	short story	Angela Carter
		Rödluvan (1986)	novel	Märta Tikkanen
3. How does the heroine recreate her feminine and how does this change her grandmother relationship?	Article 3: "'Grandmas Do Worse:' The Kristevan Feminine in Contemporary Versions of Little Red Riding Hood" (Wide, 2023)	"The Werewolf," (1979/2006c)	short story	Angela Carter
		"Bedlam" (2001)	visual essay	Kiki Smith
		Wolf (1990)	young adult novel	Gillian Cross

While the topic of LRRR and theories by Kristeva were clear from the beginning, my artistic background led me to examine narratives in visual as well as written forms. Narratives tell stories through one or several events and different forms or modes (Abbott, 2008, pp. 1–13). A mode is the specific semiotic form through which a text is represented, such as written or visual (Kress, 2010, p. 10–11). The visual narratives here consist of several linked images which, as in the written narratives, construct coherent narratives with beginnings and ends. I purposefully selected visual narratives with many images and events, thereby excluding single-image narratives. This selection was important because the events in single-image narratives tend to be limited and chronologically more fluid compared to multiple-image narratives that are fuller, fitting better in my case with the written narratives.

The last column to the right in **TABLE 1** presents the storytellers. Of the eight storytellers, seven are North American and British, and one Swedo-Finnish[4]. This limits the study to Western fairy tales with a particular focus on North America and Britain. They are made the central focus because women's fairy tales are abundant today in North America and Britain thanks to the strong women's movement that started in the 1960s (e.g., Zipes, 1989, p. xii; Jarvis, 2000, p. 158; Seifert, 2008, p. 339). In Zipes's (1989, p. xii) view, the women's movement in these countries has engendered the most interesting and experimental women tales today. Adding a Swedo-Finnish tale to the Anglophone tales gives a Nordic edge to the study as it shows that the trend of women's tales centralizing the feminine extends beyond North America and Britain. Below is a presentation of the material for each RQ and article. The reader may use **TABLE 1** as a map to navigate the color-coded articles: Article 1 is displayed in white, Article 2 in red, and Article 3 in black.

Article 1 provides an answer to RQ1. The article shows how the rape trauma embedded in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales can be worked through using narration. The theoretical framework comprises research on fairy tales (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Warner, 1995) and theories on the Kristevan subject and genius (e.g., Kristeva, 1982; 1987a; 1987c; 1989; 2004b: 2004c), which are combined with Herman's (1994) study on trauma and recovery. The material for Article 1 comprises *Little Red Riding Hood Suite* (2003/2006) by Rego, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) by Atwood, the short story "Wolfland" (1983b) by British writer Tanith Lee, and "Wolf" (2009b) by Block.

The material for Article 1 was selected on the grounds of rape trauma and trauma narration in contemporary women's LRRH tales. Rego's *Little Red Riding Hood Suite*, comprising six illustrations done in pastel, imagines the impossible through rape, alluding to the rape in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH. Similarly, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, about Offred, who is compelled to work as a Handmaid in Gilead, deals with rape and rape trauma. Atwood's novel was filmed in 1990 and released as a graphic novel in 2019 with comics by Renee Nault that pictures rape but without the original's trauma narration. It has been

[4] I rely on Swedish Finn Historical Society's (2024, February 1) term Swedo-Finn throughout to describe Finns who have Swedish as their first language.

most popularized through the television series *The Handmaid's Tale* (Miller, 2017–present). Rape and domestic abuse are also present in Lee's "Wolfland" through the protagonist Lisel's grandmother Anna and in Block's "Wolf" through a stepfather who sexually abuses his stepdaughter. "Wolfland" was published in Lee's collection *Red as Blood: Or Tales from the Sisters Grimm* (1983a), whereas "Wolf" was published in Block's short-tale collection *The Rose and the Beast: Fairy Tales Retold* (2009a). The focal tales of Article 1 centralize the protagonists' traumatic experiences and show how trauma can be worked through via trauma narration.

Article 2 was written in response to RQ2 and looks at how girls' and women's social identity is negotiated through female initiation, awakening the heroines' feminine psychosexuality, and transforming the LRRH story. As in Article 1, Article 2 applies Kristeva's theories of subjectivity and the feminine genius in combination with female initiation in the fairy tale. Bold romantic relationships with active heroines, intertextual ties to Delarue's LRRH, and girls' initiation were selection criteria for Article 2. Three narratives fulfill the criteria: the two short stories "The Company of Wolves" (1979/2006b) and "Wolf-Alice" (1979/2006d) by Carter and the novel *Rödluvan* (Little Red Riding Hood, 1986[5]) by Swedo-Finnish author Märta Tikkanen, who writes in her first language, Swedish.

In "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice," the young heroines develop feelings for dangerous male werewolves, whereas the protagonist Märta in *Rödluvan* falls for a wolf called Henrik. Tikkanen's novel has been translated into Finnish as *Punahilkka* (1986) and into French as *Chaperon rouge* (2000) but as yet lacks an English translation. Carter published "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice" in the collection *The Bloody Chamber: And Other Stories* (1979/2006a) together with "The Werewolf" (1979/2006c), which is, as in the other two, a short story on LRRH. Together, Carter's three narratives compose a trilogy on LRRH. Of these, "The Company of Wolves" was the most successful and was adapted into a radio play in 1980 and filmed in 1984 by Carter and Neil Jordan (in Carter, 1996). The written and radio versions display bolder sexual endings than the film. All three tales examined in Article 2 return to Delarue's tale and display the theme of female initiation.

I answer RQ3 in Article 3, which studies intergenerational female relationships in LRRH through the theory of the Kristevan feminine. In order to study the theory of the feminine in Article 3, I purposefully selected contemporary LRRH tales with specific attention to the relationship between adolescent granddaughters and their grandmothers. The narratives chosen for a closer analysis are "The Werewolf" by Carter, "Bedlam" (2001) by Smith—who has created a great deal of art on the topic of LRRH besides ''Bedlam''—and the young adult novel *Wolf* (1990) by British writer Gillian Cross. "The Werewolf" presents a girl's initiation visit to her grandmother's house. A female werewolf attacks the heroine in the forest, and she is about to discover that her grandmother is a witch, who can transform herself into a werewolf. As in Carter's tale, Smith's "Bedlam"

[5] My own translation.

revolves around the heroine Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother. "Bedlam" is a unique visual fairy tale, composed of photographs by Smith and published in Smith's *Telling Tales* (2001). Smith's tale reads like an initiation tale, where the viewer follows Little Red Riding Hood's pains and joys in growing up. Cross's novel *Wolf* similarly focuses on the heroine, Cassy Phelan's becoming an adult and her relationship with her grandmother.

1.3 Methods

In this qualitative study, I analyze the material in the articles through the method of multimodal thematic close-reading. In what follows, I will explain what close reading is, why it remains widely approved of, and its benefits as a dissertation method, including how I use close reading for meta-narrativity and identifying themes and how it opens to multimodality and representation. I will also show how I adapt the method to fit a practice-based approach to research by synthesizing the written findings of each article with visual results through artwork created by me. Close reading describes proximity in the reading of textual (DuBois, 2003; Culler, 2010, p. 23) and, more recently, also visual material through systematic observation and interpretation (Barrett, 2011; Cunningham, 2015). In the dissertation, I view both written and visual materials as texts that I read. Because of its wide and also long use—the formalist New Criticism approach popularized the method already in the 1930s—close-reading skills are often taken for granted. Concurrently, it remains a traditional skill requirement of students and educators of literature today (Culler, 2010, p. 20). Close reading has also been criticized for heterogeneity and disorganization (Moretti, 2013, pp. 5, 60).

However, the method remains widely approved because of its accuracy and adaptability. As Paul De Man (1986) puts it concerning the method's accuracy, close reading, if seriously conducted, "cannot fail to respond to structures of language which is more or less the secret aim of literary teaching" (p. 24). Close reading adapts easily to different types of texts and ways of reading a text systematically. One of the newest adaptations of the method is surface reading which has recently gained currency in literature studies. According to Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus (2009, p. 13), surface reading studies what is visible in a text but escapes attention. I find their definition interesting from the perspective of trauma. Although Best and Marcus (2009, p. 1) distance surface reading from close reading by not looking very deeply into texts with the help of psychoanalytic scholarship into trauma, for example, their definition of surface reading comes close to how Herman (1994), Caruth (2013), and Kristeva (in Rice 2002) understand trauma as present yet resisting representation. Jonathan Culler (2010) further argues that even if the method is used differently by different scholars, "we all seem to subscribe … to the idea that close reading is important to what we do" (p. 20). Because the method adapts and responds easily to texts, it has been used in different scholarships.

One of the many benefits of having close reading as my dissertation method is precisely that it has been applied as a research method in the diverse scholarships that form the basis of my theoretical scholarship. It has been applied to reading artworks visually in Kristevan scholarship (Barrett, 2011), to reading a diverse number of tales in fairy-tale scholarship (e.g., Tatar, 1987; Warner, 1995), and to readings of scholarly work in trauma scholarship (Caruth, 1996; Leys, 2000). The implementation of the method in the context of my theoretical scholarship creates bridges between the different scholarships and demonstrates a level of methodological relationality.

Another benefit is that close reading also works well for analyzing "metalanguage" (De Man, 1986, p. 24), a language about language (Jakobson & Halle, 1956, pp. 67, 81), which may be expanded into intertextuality and, thus, meta-narrativity. Meta-narrativity is at the core of Cristina Bacchilega's (1997, pp. 19, 146) close reading of contemporary feminist fairy tales and the multiplication of narrative possibilities offered them by intertextuality. Contemporary fairy tales are metatexts, not only because they intertextually refer to canonical and alternative tales but because they critically engage with feminist fairy-tale scholarship, resulting in a remaking of canonical tales in ways that force the audience to reimagine them (Zipes, 2012, pp. 136–143). As stated by Haase (2004, p. 30), close reading is a requirement for handling the complexity posed by interpreting canonical and contemporary versions of fairy tales. In Marina Warner's (2014) view, contemporary tales' involvement with feminist fairy-tale scholarship has equipped the heroine with "different knowledge and expectations than before" (p. 145). Moreover, there is a familiarity felt in contemporary tales through the intertextual presence of canonical tales—be they wonder tales (e.g., Zipes, 2000, p. xvi), written fairy tales, spoken myths, or folktales—which bring together the past and the present (Warner, 2014, pp. xvii –xviii). This metatextual familiarity mixes the present with the past, fiction with criticism, offering a richer and more complex reading than before.

My close reading has a thematic approach. A theme is a text's main idea or insight that summarizes the text and unifies its thematic elements, which may agree on one or several themes in a text (Tomashevsky, 1965, p. 67; Perrine & Arp, 1993, p. 92). It is "a construct" assembled by discontinuous units in a text, which is "implicitly" rather than explicitly expressed in the text (Rimmon-Kenan, 1995, p. 11). Already I. A. Richards (1930), who coined the term "close reading" (p. 203) in *Practical Criticism*, while he also used other categories, turned to themes to go beyond words and systematically reflect on the deeper purpose of a text. Similarly, Zipes (2001, p. 14) favors thematic reading as a methodological approach when tracing the history of fairy tales in *The Great Fairy Tale Tradition*. The theme of a story closely relates to the author's purpose of the story (Goodman & Burke, 1980, p. 227). According to Zipes (2000, p. xix; 2001, p. 849), although a storyteller's ideological intentions can be difficult to establish in hindsight (particularly for very old tales), fairy tales' larger purpose is to transform. The storytellers' main purpose in my interpretation of the material that I study is similarly to depict transformation, which more accurately reorients

cultural rape trauma through the feminine. In order to arrive at this interpretation, I have read the material systematically in reference to theories on the Kristevan feminine genius and subject with special attention to Kristeva's theory of the feminine together with research on fairy tales and trauma.

My systematic reading of the material in accordance with the theoretical frameworks broadly follows Yetta M. Goodman's and Carolyn Burke's (1980, pp. 3–10) model of prediction, confirmation, and integration, resulting in the themes and topics of this thesis. Prediction entails anticipating what the text will be about. For example, will the text answer the research question that has been contextualized within the specific theoretical framework at hand? Confirmation, then, deals with approval or disapproval of the prediction, whereas integration relates to the reading purpose and selecting the units in the text that correspond to it. That is, which units in the meta fairy tales studied in the dissertation articles answer the research question asked? The deductive thematic analysis that was conducted within the specific theoretical framework for each research question engendered three themes, one for each article: trauma narration, female initiation, and intergenerational female relationships. After the articles were written, I gathered them in the central topics of cultural rape trauma and the Kristevan feminine, the first representing the cause and the second the transformation of Little Red Riding Hood's trauma.

As an instrument for thematic close-reading, I rely on multimodal representation theory. With the help of multimodal theory (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2021), I describe the textures of the written and visual fairy-tale modes that I study. Multimodality was a useful instrument here because it combines all types of modes that have previously been examined separately by different fields, for instance, gesture in psychology, image in art history, and literature in literary criticism (Kress 2010, p. 5). This is in line with Zipes's (2000, p. xvi; 2012, pp. 136–8) and Warner's (2014, pp. xiv–xvii) description of the contemporary fairy tale as increasingly multimodal. The same tale may be reimagined through different modes, such as gestural, oral, written, and visual. Multimodality deals with modes that individuals use for meaning-making, or representation, to communicate with others (Kress, 2010, pp. 1–2, 79; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2021, pp. xiii–xiv). Since modes describe only the vehicles for representation (Kress, 2010, p. 11), representation theory (Hall, 1997) was an effective instrument for conducting thematic reading in search of the larger purpose of the narratives. Individuals represent things in the world around and within them and share them with others, and others read according to their own abilities (Hall, 1997, pp. 4–5). For example, concepts such as woman, the maternal, and the feminine are important representations for Kristeva (1982, p. 173; see also Oliver, 1993a, p. 157). Both modes and their resources—how they are coded to represent—are shaped and reshaped by the individuals who use them in relation to culture, society, and history (Kress, 2010, p. 5–8). Modes seldom work alone but co-exist and collaborate (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2021, p. xiv). As an example, the written narratives in my thesis can be viewed as comprising writing and layout modes, although the central mode is writing. Similarly, while the image mode dominates

the visual narratives that I study, they also contain modes of photography, illustration, color, gesture, and writing, which affect the reading.

Ultimately, I have expanded the multimodal contextualization of the themes and topics into practice-based research that, Barrett explains (2007, p. 9), emerges via practice. This means that in addition to presenting the findings in written form, I come in as an artist to make contact with cultural rape trauma and the feminine in the form of artwork, viewable in the articles and in **Figures 1–5** of the Integrating Chapter. In creating these, I relied on a combination of multimodal representation, Barrett's (2011) method of practice-based research, and my formal background in the fine arts. According to Tom Barone and Elliot W. Eisner (2012), practice-based research relies on a combination of art-making and research skills. Thus, in order to be successful, a practice-based researcher needs skills in the processes of both the arts and science. In *Kristeva Reframed*, Barrett (2011, p. 33) expands her approach to practice-based research into Kristevan theory[6], proposing that the practices of interpretation in research and artmaking are alike because they use similar registers of communication and, thus, representation.

One query about practice-based research is whether it is research or art. In order to address this question, it is important to consider what research means. Research Services (2024) at the University of Oxford defines research as systematic and creative work executed "to increase the stock of knowledge." This definition shows that research can be conducted both systematically and creatively to expand knowledge, and, thus, fits a practice-based approach to research. Barone and Eisner (2012) similarly demonstrate in their study that both science and the arts rely on questioning and knowing processes: While these processes are systematically conducted in science, they are often fluidly applied in the arts. Finally, it is worth claiming that science, too, can be an art. Barone and Eisner (2012) make such a claim when asserting that what ultimately matters is that the research is well-designed, elegant, and subtle in the sense that it offers meaning through both "its literal or discursive features" and "its metaphorical and qualitative features."

As an example, Kristeva sometimes uses a practice-based literary approach to research in her work. In the essay "Stabat Mater" published in *Tales of Love* (1987c), two stories run next to each other, Kristeva's account of motherhood and her study of the Christian Virgin Mary. Kristeva and Catherine Clément similarly make use of practice-based literary research in the collection of letters *The Feminine and the Sacred* (2001c) that explores women's notions of a sacred feminine in a plethora of world religions, ranging from Christianity and Judaism to Buddhism and animist religions of Africa. While approaching the feminine from a somewhat different view than I do here (as transformation in relation to the three feminine psychosexual qualities), Kristeva (2001c; 2015) expands the sacred feminine into the mystical in her research novel on Saint

[6] While I make use of Barrett's approach to Kristeva in practice-based research, I do not treat the text as a subject but rather look at Kristevan subjectivity from the point of the authors' and artists' portrayal of the protagonist in the texts in question.

Teresa of Avila's genius. In a dialogue with Sylvia Leclercq, Kristeva (2015) combines history and psychoanalysis with personal reflections to comment on notions of the genius and the feminine in terms of Christian mysticism, sexuality, transcendence, and even yogic mediation. This research novel also interestingly suggests that, when practiced seriously, meditation can return a subject to trauma and the maternal in ways that are not only therapeutic and, thus, similar to psychotherapy and the arts that I present next, but help the subject reach some level of feminine psychosexual maturity (see Kristeva, 2015).

In the context of trauma, both psychotherapy and the arts can be highly therapeutic[7]. In her talk with Rice (2002) about trauma, Kristeva makes a comparison between the processes of psychoanalytical listening and artmaking. According to her, both are therapeutic in the sense that they return an individual affected by trauma to both the traumatic memory and the maternal in order to process the former and reprocess the latter (I will expand on this in Section 3). However, they do so in different ways. For Kristeva (in Rice, 2002), the relationship that forms between analyst and analysand in psychoanalysis enables a symbolization of the traumatic memory. This is different from artists and writers who, in Kristeva's view (in Rice, 2002), process trauma on their own through confrontations with artistic and cultural intertexts and codes. Kristeva (2010) even claims to have worked through her own "traumas" such as the losses of Bulgaria and her parents with the help of writing.

The artistic process of working through can be viewed as a passage comparable to the heroine's passage into adulthood in the narratives that I study here. In Barrett's (2011, p. 65) reading of Kristeva, practicing art displays the artist subject's struggle with speaking so that new meanings are created out of the very struggle itself. In this process, the material, the tools, and the practice itself witness affect and may help the art practitioner work through "real or imagined traumas" in ways that renew the symbolic and imaginary[8] capacities of the practitioner, for example, by expressing grief (Barrett 2011, p. 76). As an example, Smith, whose visual fairy tale "Bedlam" is studied in Article 3, explains to Christian Lund (2020) in an interview that the creative process—relying on the material, different techniques, and tools together with the artist's motivation and concern—allows her to externalize and synthesize her internal experiences into something physical that "reflects some feeling back" to her. As Oliver (2013) states in another context on trauma, the process "transforms the artist from a passive victim of trauma into an active agent of creativity" (p. 20). Oliver (2013) continues that this process allows both the artist and the subject matter to transform, insofar as the artwork is "a passage, a transition" (p. 21). If both the

[7] Not all artistic processes are necessarily therapeutic because art can be created and looked at for other reasons such as pleasure (see Nadal & Skov, 2018, on pleasure). As an example, in an interview with Christian Lund (2020), Smith states that while much of her art is self-reflective and holds meaning to her, sometimes she creates without any particular reason other than wanting something that nevertheless can be interpreted as therapeutic by others.
[8] The imaginary is a Lacanian term. Although one cannot compare different scholars' theories, Kristeva suggests in an interview with Ina Lipkowitz and Andrea Loselle (1996, pp. 22–23) that the combination of Lacan's imaginary and real are similar to her maternal function, but, for her, the real is not blank or empty but filled with internal representations.

artistic and the adolescent passages transform by returning the subject to the maternal, as I understand it, their subconscious mechanics are comparable to each other.

Similar to the processes of arts and literature, practice-based research can to some extent function as a form of trauma therapy. According to Barrett (2011, p. 136), practice-based researchers repeatedly demonstrate in their self-reflections that the process of making allows them to resolve traumatic memory through recuperation and meaning-making. For example, Katherine MacLean reflects on and processes childhood trauma relating to her grief of her father and sister through practice-based research in *Midnight Water: A Psychedelic Memoir* (2023). Essentially, besides combining science and the arts, practice-based research can be viewed as a therapeutic practice that enables healing if the practitioner engages in self-analysis and interpretation of their own processes and work. While writing this, I began to wonder to what degree the process of creating visual results (**Figures 3–5**) is therapeutic and will address this when reflecting on my artwork in Section 5.

In addition to this, the benefits of using creative practice in this thesis are multimodal understanding, metalanguage, and storytelling. First, creative practice offers multimodal research results. Because meaning is layered and the written mode only provides partial truths of realities, practice-based research forms an alternative logic that can be viewed as completing the written mode of understanding (Barrett, 2011, p. 133). In this logic, the practice itself, the tools, and the material give way to the accidental and unpredictable, relying on internal representations, such as affect and drives (Barrett, 2011, p. 125). Since the binding of affect is different in the written and image modes and because the image mode transgresses the established written form of scientific meaning-making, images can produce something new that the written mode cannot (Barrett, 2011, pp. 128, 133). According to Barrett (2011, p. 128), the new subject matter that practice-based research creates will require "new forms of language to make or process the aesthetic encounter." Second, multimodal understanding results in a plurality of meanings that form a metalanguage through which the meanings of the artwork are made available (Barrett, 2011, p. 148).

Third, the combination of "objective enquiry" (Barrett, 2011, p. 139) and "personally situated knowledge" (Barrett, 2007, p. 2) that creative practice offers calls forth storytelling. As Donna Haraway (1988) similarly argues in the context of visualizing science, "situated knowledges" bring together the rational and the imaginary, "the objective vision" and "the visionary" (p. 585). Barrett (2011) views art and rituals—the latter possibly extending to initiatory rituals, the theme in Article 2—as a "repetition or a return to language with difference" (p. 135), which through sublimation retrieves memory which has been lost, as in trauma narration that I study in Article 1 of this thesis. This allows the narrative that my artwork creates to unfold in the theorization of cultural trauma and the feminine. Distributed over three articles through three series of photographs or illustrations, the artwork is my personal way of adding to the understanding of the narratives that I study and to the contemporary LRRH tradition.

1.4 Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is divided into five sections, proceeding as follows. The first section introduces the research (1–1.3). Section 2, *Contextualizing Little Red Riding Hood*, provides the context for the study and has two subsections, which cover the LRRH canon through cultural trauma, violence, and transformation (2.1) and the new trend of contemporary female storytellers' LRRH tales (2.2). Section 3, *Theorizing the Feminine Genius Subject and Trauma* introduces the theoretical framework of the dissertation through girls' subjectivity and feminine (3.1), the three qualities of the feminine genius (3.2), and trauma narration (3.3). Section 4, *Summaries of Articles*, provides a summary of each article (4.1–4.3). Section 5, *Discussion*, discusses the significance of the dissertation through the evaluation of the results (5.1), and the implications of the results (5.2) and ends the dissertation with some concluding words and thoughts for future research (5.3).

2 CONTEXTUALIZING "LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD"

Here, I will contextualize LRRH, beginning with the definitions of fairy-tale-related terms. Unlike some schools in the field of folkloristics, for instance, the Aarne-Thompson-Uther classification index of folktales, I do not make sharp distinctions between myth, wonder, folk, and fairy tales. The Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index bases the 333-classification of LRRH on the wolf's magical gluttony in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions (Uther, 2004). This classification lends itself to a comparison with Zipes's (2001, pp. 744–745) categorization of Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions as literary fairy tales on the theme of dangerous wolves and naive girls that sets the literary versions apart as rape narratives from the oral version, "The Story of Grandmother." Nor do the female storytellers, whose tales I study, clearly distinguish between various types of folklore even if, like me, they are aware that there are overlaps and differences. For example, when interviewed by Karla Hammond (1990), Atwood claims that "*Grimm's Fairy Tales* are just as much myth or story as anything else" (p. 114, original emphasis).

Nevertheless, some differences need clarification. While myth in common usage explains popular but "false" beliefs or stories that circulate among people today ("myth", n, sense 2.a, July 2023), myths describe in folklore traditional stories that explain or justify beliefs and rituals about societal creation or nature in the culture to which they belong (Valk, 2008, p. 652). They are considered sacred, or religious, and are enacted orally in rituals such as initiation rituals, although what has often happened is that when a ceremony dwindled, its myth survived (Raglan, 1936/2003, pp. 117, 125; Valk, 2008, p. 652). It is widely held that many tales may have started as myths (e.g., Grimm, 1882–8; Propp, 1958/2015; Raglan, 1936/2003; Eliade, 1963). As in myths, wonder tales are considered in folkloristic (Propp, 1958/2015, 1984; Vaz Da Silva, 2008a) and literary-critical scholarship (Zipes, 2000) alike as oral, transformative, and initiatory by nature, whereas folktales apply to all kinds of oral tales that circulate among common folk (e.g., Conrad, 2008). Moreover, the term folktale is often used synonymously with wonder and fairy tales (Zipes, 2000, pp. xvi–xvii;

Conrad, 2008, p. 363; Warner, 2014, pp. xvi–xvii) although fairy tales are literary appropriations of wonder tales (Zipes, 2000; Vaz Da Silva, 2008a), which in contemporary times have been adapted to artwork and film (Zipes, 2012; Warner, 2014). Now that the major differences and similarities have been clarified, I will continue by contextualizing the canon of LRRH (2.1) and the new trend of contemporary LRRH tales by women (2.2).

2.1 The Canon: Cultural Rape Trauma, Violence, and Transformation

This subsection sets the stage for LRRH in terms of cultural trauma, violence, and transformation. I show how cultural rape trauma, rather than rape narrative that connects LRRH with rape culture, is the preferred term for describing the need for transformation of and healing from trauma in contemporary LRRH. I also connect LRRH with the fairy-tale genre and indicate that while violence and abuse are part of the history of fairy tales, the genre itself is today in transformation. As stated in the introduction, while LRRH may have started as an oral initiation tale (e.g., Verdier, 1997), Perrault and the Brothers Grimm adapted the oral story from what they had heard from women to suit their own time's values, which resulted in the canonical versions of LRRH (Zipes, 1993; Verdier, 1997; Tatar, 1999). It is on Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions that countless male and female storytellers have modeled their rewritings and reworkings in ways which, according to Zipes (2015), amplify, distort, or dispute "the fact about the little girl's rape" (p. 230). Whereas there are certainly other ways to approach the tale than through rape, such as a coming-of-age tale for girls and a cultural trauma narrative, Zipes (2015) suspects that "the sexual motif has been dominant in the minds of most writers" (p. 230). Although feminist literary-critical studies on fairy tales (e.g., Lieberman, 1972/1986: Stone, 1979; Kolbenschlag, 1979) have done important work in disclosing patriarchal constraints resulting from the socialization process of children through fairy tales, according to Zipes (2015, p. 230), most have been silent about the idea of rape, if they even mention LRRH at all. As Alexander (2004b) puts it in the context of cultural trauma, "the truth" about what happened is there but remains unconscious (p. 5).

LRRH has come to represent Western rape culture. As exemplified also in the introduction, fairy tales are only one part of culture where ingrained practices of rape circulate and become part of Western cultural consciousness. Zipes's (1993, p. 8) study of different representations of LRRH, such as folk and fairy tales, films, plays, cartoons, greeting cards, and advertisements discloses a curbing of girls' sexuality and social space in all sectors of Western society, what he refers to as the "Little Red Riding Hood Syndrome" (1993, p. 66) because of the tale's prominent role in the socialization process of children to caution about the consequences of rape (1993, pp. 7–14, 65–67). Natalie Hayton (2011) similarly

argues that LRRH which informs about rape is today a constituent of the Western cultural collective. Through representations of rape that circulate in different social domains, women are socialized to be fearful, weak, and vulnerable to rape (e.g., Hall, 2002; Ortega & Busch Armendariz, 2016). Dianne F. Herman (1984) introduced the term rape culture to explain this type of systematic violence that is directed against girls and women and that is caused by the social structures and institutions that uphold it. As in Zipes's (1993, p. 66) study, Sara M. Walsh's (2015, p. 128) study turns to LRRH to illustrate the idea of women's place in rape culture in the context of women's safety on American college campuses today. Walsh (2015) criticizes campus safety warnings for constructing public space as menacing through a reproduction of "traditional imaginings of women and women's place in the world" (p. 128), which according to her "amounts to a collegiate retelling of Little Red Riding Hood: a girl shouldn't go out in the dark scary world alone or a strange scary man will attack her." Ashawnta Jackson's (2021) comments in a news article "Little Red Riding Hood on Campus" for *JSTOR Daily* concerning Walsh's study that current safety advice is misdirected and results in less enjoyment of public space for women. In an effort to treat the Little Red Riding Hood Syndrome, I see a need for acknowledging the cultural trauma of rape in LRRH.

As previously mentioned, a growing number of today's literary-critical scholars, not to mention storytellers, show awareness of people's experiences of the culturally ingrained practice of rape in the canon of LRRH, which shifts the attitude from rape story to cultural trauma narrative in a way that can also be empowering. As Brownmiller (1976) argues, rape reveals "the power relationship between males and females" that controls girls and women in society through fear (p. 343). In Zipes's view (1993), being part of the Western cultural heritage, LRRH holds a "hidden power" that people forget and repress because of its ordinariness as a children's tale (p. 14). With the new perception of LRRH as a cultural trauma of rape, a sense of forgiveness, healing, and inclusion is within reach, which is what the tales that I study here aspire to accomplish.

In order to be called a cultural trauma, described as lay or people's trauma, the cause and the relationship between victim and audience must be established and solidarity must be accepted by a group of individuals—in the sense of their common acceptance that the incident is traumatic (Alexander, 2004b, p. 1). First, individuals who feel traumatized by horrendous experiences, shocking events, violent wrongdoings, or even social changes, begin by identifying the root of trauma and suffering (Alexander, 2004b, p. 1). The same individuals establish the identity of the victim and the victimizer, as well as their own and their audience's relationships with the victim (Alexander, 2004b, p. 11). Cultural trauma hinges on shared activities of "cultural interpretation," reconstruction, and imagination of suffering, which frames the cause (Alexander, 2012, p. 5).

I see this framing of traumatic experience in the fairy tales I study (discussed in Subsection 2.2.) and in scholarly work. Cultural trauma is caused by the rape of Little Red Riding Hood carried out by the wolf, as it has been constructed by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm in their versions and criticized

by contemporary feminist writers, artists, and scholars, who draw significant parallels between the rape of Little Red Riding Hood and Western rape culture in both fiction and real life to bring awareness to, challenge, and change the traditional rape narrative. Zipes's *The Trials & Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood* (1993), and Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1976) were the first studies on rape in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH. Their studies identify the ingrained rape narrative that centers on the male perpetrator's perspective, punishes, and victimizes the girl for her own rape. Zipes's and Brownmiller's argument of rape has recently gained ground with more and more scholars accepting LRRH as a rape narrative; for example, the studies of both Sandra L Beckett (2014, p. 5) and Elizabeth Marshall (2015, p. 164) refer to LRRH as an "archetypal tale of child abuse and rape." All these studies recognize the cause of trauma in LRRH. As Herman (1994, p. 1) points out in the context of real trauma victims, it is only after the truth—the victim's truth or capabilities to recall traumatic experience—has been spoken and acknowledged that recovery may begin.

Second, solidarity must be accepted, and I hear solidarity in these scholars' sympathetic voices toward the traumatized Little Red Riding Hood. Both Zipes (1993, p. 24; 2015, p. 227) and Brownmiller (1976) write in their studies about the traumatic implications of rape in LRRH in a compassionate manner, with the aim to free Little Red Riding Hood from blame. Like Zipes's and Brownmiller's work, Beckett's (2014) study empathizes with Little Red Riding Hood's suffering from "trauma after the terrifying event" (p. 5). In my opinion, their sympathies voice solidarity with Little Red Riding Hood and the traumatic event of rape, which is comparable to the aspect of solidarity in cultural trauma. According to Alexander (2004b), accepting solidarity for a traumatic event allows individuals to become morally better when they rise in "moral responsibility" for the harm done and share others' suffering (p. 1). This ultimately bonds them together.

It is noteworthy that Little Red Riding Hood is not alone since many other fairy-tale heroines have also encountered traumatic experiences, as in the larger repertoire of cultural sexual trauma narratives established in the introduction. Warner's (1995, pp. 18, 241–4, 310–2) *From the Beast to the Blonde*, moreover, identifies rape in many of the most beloved fairy tales today, for example, "Sleeping Beauty," "Bluebeard," and "Beauty and the Beast," In addition to LRRH, Perrault also popularized "Sleeping Beauty" and "Bluebeard," which, according to Warner (1995), "dramatizes the abuse of male privilege" but unlike Perrault's LRRH, these end happily for the heroine (p. 244). Warner (1995, p. 310) goes on to argue that the beast in Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot De Villeneuve's *Beauty and the Beast* (1740/2014), before he transforms into a prince, similarly stirs up fantasies of "sadism and rape." Furthermore, Warner (1995) recognizes father-daughter incest in Perrault's "Donkeyskin" and the Brothers Grimm's "Maiden without Hands." In both, a king desires his own daughter, causing the princess in the former to cover herself in a donkey skin, while in the latter, the king cuts off her hands (in Warner, 1995, pp. 221–2, 342–8). These two are, however, less popular among contemporary audiences, and Warner (1995, pp. 347–9) suggests

that this is mainly because of the incest theme. As, for instance, Warner (1995, pp. 147–8) proposes, violations in fairy tales can be traced to and connected with rape in Greek myths such as the rape of Pomona in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8 A.D/1955, p. 371), where Vertumnus disguises himself as a crone, an old woman, like the wolf in LRRH. Ovid romanticizes rape, which, Field (2020, pp. 1–4) states, is an important strategy of the traditional rape narrative. The rape narrative also moves within a larger framework of fairy-tale violence.

As in LRRH, violence abounds in the history of folk and fairy tales. Italo Calvino (1956) argues that violence and injustice are the very "stuff" that folk and fairy tales are made of (p. xxix). On the one hand, fairy-tale violence has been viewed as a means to caution particularly children and women against violence (e.g., Zipes, 1993). On the other hand, it has been explained as compensating for harm done (Warner, 1995, p. 27) or as indulging in the violence itself promoting more violence (Tatar, 1987; 1999). Either way, violence is ably introduced in many of Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales (see, e.g., Tatar, 1987: Zipes, 2014). In Zipes's (2001, p. 954) view, the violence in Perrault's tales, as in his LRRH, symptomizes socio-historical changes of and views on women's sexuality in Renaissance France: rape, incest, and painful childbirth describe gendered violence, which, according to Zipes (2001, p. 955), aims to dominate, regulate, and control the female gender. Cruelty, punishment, and revenge are also present in fairy tales by contemporaries of Perrault and Barbot De Villeneuve, such as in Marie-Catherine D'Aulnoy's fairy tales that also seek to free women from patriarchal constraints (Warner, 1995, p. 284; Zipes, 2001, p. 823). Lewis C. Seifert (2008) notes in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales* that Barbot De Villeneuve and D'Aulnoy belonged to a small group of privileged women writers called *conteuses* (female fairy-tale tellers) in seventeen and eighteen century France who in their fairy tales "glorified female power" to criticize French patriarchy (p. 338). Warner (1995, p. 232) states that in Barbot De Villeneuve's version of *Beauty and the Beast* (1740/2014), this glorification took the form of female abuse of male characters, where a fairy condemns the Beast to animal form for refusing her propositions. Like in French tales, Tatar (1987, p. 10) argues that sex and violence are staple themes in the Brothers Grimm's fairy tale collection (1812).[9] Here is a quotation from Tatar on the matter of violence in the Brothers Grimm's collection:

> "He [Wilhelm Grimm] rarely let slip the opportunity to have someone burned at the stake, drowned, forced to dance in red-hot shoes, torn to pieces, or stripped naked and put in a barrel studded with nails and harnessed to a horse." (Tatar 1987, p. 181)

As seen in the quote, Grimm's description of violence is inspired by torture conducted in real witch trials (see Walker, 1983, on witch trials). Tatar's (1987, pp. 20, 30, 181–184) study shows that references to women's power, reproduction, and blood have lessened in the Brothers Grimm's collection, which they edited all together seven times. In Tatar's view (1987, pp. 20, 30, 181–184), violence,

[9] I am here relying on Zipes's (1987) translation of the Brothers Grimm's (1812/1987b) first edition.

cruelty, and punishment increased with every new edition. As in French and German tales, Warner (2014, p. 52) detects horror and cruelty in Italian fairy tales, albeit with touches of humor and sweetness, whereas Tatar (1987, p. 187) pays attention to violence in English tales such as "Jack the Beanstalk" where an ogre has little boys for supper.

The institutionalization of fairy tales in European and North American culture led to a decrease in fairy-tale violence. Fairy tales were gradually established in European and North American culture such as in the school system while their audience also shifted from adults to children (Zipes, 2000, pp. xxviii–xxix). This caused literary critics and educators in the early twentieth century to raise criticism against violent and sexual immoralities in tales such as "Donkeyskin" that were deemed unsuitable for children (Zipes, 2000, p. xxvii; 2014, pp. xxix–xxx). As noted earlier, however, the rape of Little Red Riding Hood slipped through. By contrast, storytellers have been more sensitive to the rape of Little Red Riding Hood. For example, in many contemporary versions, Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother are not eaten (Zipes, 2014, p. xxx). One example of this is Roald Dahl's (1983/2002) poem *Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf*, where the girl "whips a pistol from her knickers" and shoots the wolf before it can eat her (p. 159). Gianni Rodari's (1974/1993) children's story "Little Green Riding Hood" is another example: the wolf metamorphoses into both a giraffe and a horse while helping the green-hooded girl find her way out of the woods. Neither girl nor grandmother is eaten (Rodari, 1974/1993, pp. 256–7).

A third interesting example is LRRH by Walt Disney (1922/2011), who would greatly impact the fairy-tale genre. Disney created his first animated film *Little Red Riding Hood*, a silent six-minute commercial, in 1922. This was one year before he founded the film company The Walt Disney Company, which would go on to revolutionize and commercialize the fairy-tale genre by adapting it to color film. Applying a standard formula of good morals in combination with the spectacular and predictable, Disney movies, known for their happy endings, have added to the institutionalization of the fairy tale in European and North American culture if not all over the world (Bacchilega, 2000, pp. 345-6). Criticism of gender stereotyping in many Disney movies, such as *Snow White* and *Cinderella* has led to more gender awareness in both contemporary Disney films and the fairy-tale genre in general (Bacchilega, 2000, p. 346). Compared to his later films, however, the female characters in Disney's LRRH are remarkably strong: a sturdy mother bakes doughnuts, while the grandmother has gone to the movies, and when Little Red Riding Hood is harassed by a male wolf she puts up a good fight until her dog and a pilot rescue her, a storyline similar to the rescue in the Brothers Grimm's LRRH (Disney, 1922/2011). These three examples illustrate what I consider can now safely be called a cultural trauma of rape in LRRH. While Rodari sensitively leaves it out, Dahl's and Disney's Little Red Riding Hood fight back. With more and more storytellers rising to change the cultural trauma of rape in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH, the contemporary LRRH narrative is in transformation.

Fairy tales are a good starting place for storytellers such as those whose narratives are studied here who seek to change violence since the genre offers transformation. As Warner (2014) comments, "Fairy tales evoke every kind of violence, injustice, and mischance, but to declare it need not continue" (p. xxiii). Not only is transformation possible in the fairy tale but it is–through imagination, magic, wonder, and a happy ending (Warner, 2014, pp. xix–xxiii)—a central characteristic of the genre. As in Zipes (2001, p. 849), according to Warner (1995), the greater purpose of fairy tales is "to reveal possibilities, to map out a different way and a new perception" (p. 24), through which the protagonist may escape and transform imposed violence and restraints. This theory also underlies her novels *Indigo or Mapping the Waters* (1992) and *The Leto Bundle* (2001), which, according to Lisa G. Propst (2008), explore sexual violence against the heroine, provoking her to transform. To conclude, while there is violence in fairy tales because the genre itself is transformative, violence can be transformed. This kindles hope for a more peaceful and harmonious future for fairy tales, which takes me to the new trend of women's LRRH tales.

2.2 Women's Tales, a new Trend

When looking at all the tales and articles after publication, I noticed, as previously mentioned, that besides the three themes of trauma narration, female initiation, and female intergenerational relationships, they share two other central topics, namely cultural rape trauma and the feminine. First, the female storytellers' metanarratives studied here address the cultural rape trauma narrative. Second, they are brought together by feminine psychosexuality, which will be discussed in Section 3. These topics bind them together as a novel trend of women's LRRH tales. Here, I present the storytellers' acknowledgment of cultural sexual trauma in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions and the return to female initiation in Delarue's version, expanding into female werewolf stories. I also elaborate on the new trend of women's LRRH tales and its place in feminist literary fairy-tale scholarship and fairy tales.

All storytellers in the material confirm the cultural trauma of rape in LRRH. Like the scholars on LRRH, the storytellers express support for the protagonist Little Red Riding Hood. While rape trauma is visible in the stories analyzed in Article 1 and will be considered in Subsection 2.2.1, the other stories or their tellers also deal with rape trauma. Carter's fairy tales on LRRH and particularly "The Company of Wolves" have been accused by Patricia Duncken (1986, pp. 223, 226–229) of being a rape narrative under patriarchy, as in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions: "Red Riding Hood sees that rape is inevitable … and decides to strip off, lie back and enjoy it. She wants it really. They all do" (p. 228). Like Carter, Tikkanen has a connection with rape in one of her earlier novels, *Män kan inte våldtas* (Men cannot be raped[10], 1976), which has

[10] My own translation.

been published in English as *Manrape* (1979). *Manrape* (1979) is about a woman who is raped but takes revenge on the perpetrator through rape. Furthermore, although rape is not explicit in Smith's artwork, in Wendy Weitman's (2003, p. 37) view, Smith consciously reorients issues of rape and power in the familiar tale through the experience of the girl's passage into adulthood.

Rape is not represented in Cross's novel either other than through allusions to LRRH by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. On several occasions in *Wolf*, the boyfriend of Cassy's mother, Lyall calls Cassy Little Red Riding Hood and threatens to eat her, in a similar way as the wolf ate Little Red Riding Hood in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions (Cross, pp. 15–16, 62, 88, 110–112). Cassy is afraid of Lyall. Some readers may interpret Cassy's fear and Lyall's conduct in terms of the traditional rape narrative of Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH and the cultural rape trauma presented here. Cross's awareness of the rape narrative in LRRH became clear in an email discussion that I had with her (C. M. Wide, personal communication, April 1, 2023) where she referred to using Zipes's study, which contributes to LRRH scholarship by disclosing the rape narrative, as background material for writing *Wolf*.

In addition to Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales, all storytellers that I study allude to Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother." In Delarue's initiation tale, the protagonist is portrayed as a girl who has just come of age and who meets her grandmother in the form of a werewolf in her forest dwelling. In order to replace her grandmother and receive her wisdom, the girl first eats her, after which she tricks the werewolf grandmother in order to escape from her house.

While lacking the initiatory theme and exchange between grandmother and granddaughter found in "The Story of Grandmother," women turning into werewolves is present in both British and Finnish literature with connections to folklore. In the novel *The Were-wolf* (1896), Clemence Housman describes a woman who can turn into a werewolf at will and whom the countryfolks call White Fell because of her white dress and fur. Similarly, Aino Kallas writes about female werewolves concerning women's sexuality in *Wolf Bride* (1928/2012, Sudenmorsian) in ways that remind me of the protagonists' pursuit of werewolves in Article 2 which I discuss in Subsection 2.2.2., although Kallas makes no mention of the canonical LRRH versions by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm.

Delarue's girl has been viewed as a positive role model and an alternative to the passive and pitiful Little Red Riding Hood described by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Verdier, 1997). By being active and intelligent, Delarue's heroine appeals to contemporary storytellers, including the female storytellers studied in this thesis. While references to Delarue's tale are most explicit in Article 2, which studies female initiation, and in Article 3, which focuses on the focal protagonists' passage and grandmother relationship (coming in Subsections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, respectively), the focal tales of Article 1 also intertextually return to Delarue's tale and may, therefore, be viewed as tales of initiation, although with traumatic implications. As an example, Sharon Rose Wilson (1993, pp. 278–281) confirms Atwood's allusions to oral versions and

female initiation in *The Handmaid's Tale*, although for Wilson, Atwood's "image of female initiation has … been violated" through patriarchal exploitation (p. 281).

Together, the focal tales here form a new trend. This trend seeks to break with the cultural trauma of rape in LRRH and creatively transform it through trauma narration, female initiation, or grandmother relationships concerning the feminine, thereby enabling a sense of harmony, complexity, growth, and even forgiveness, instead of vengeance. The heroines in these tales seldom resort to violence for other reasons than self-defense and protection. Promoting harmonious values, the new trend connects with a larger repertoire of contemporary feminist fairy tales and scholarship in North America and Europe.

I locate the new trend presented here in the context of feminist literary fairy-tale collections and scholarships. Zipes's (2015) collection of feminist fairy-tale revisions, including Lee's "Wolfland," features protagonists who take a stride with dominant male-female arrangements under patriarchy. For example, Anne Sexton's "Briar Rose (Sleeping Beaty)" (1971/2015) connects with the topic of cultural rape trauma through the protagonist's memory of incest. Similarly, Bacchilega's (1997) feminist literary-critical work on well-known fairy tales, such as LRRH and "Beauty and the Beast" relates to cultural rape trauma presented here. Bachhilega's (1997) book chapter "In the eye of the beholder: Where is the beast?" on girls' transition and sexuality traces Angela Carter's "The Tiger's Bride," published together with the LRRH trilogy in *The Bloody Chamber: And Other Stories* (1979/2006a), back to Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont's version of "Beauty and the Beast" (1756/1994) and Apuleius's "Cupid and Psyche" (ca. 200 A.D./1903). According to Bacchilega, (1997) female initiation is in Leprince de Beaumont's and Apuleius's tales revealed through a girl who sets out to rescue and restore her lost animal lover to human shape in order to comment on and affirm women's place in "the patriarchal exchange of women" (p. 76). Bacchilega (1997) continues that Carter's "The Tiger's Bride" rearranges this place through a protagonist who turns into a (sexual) beast, as in the tales studied in Article 2 here.

This discussion is also interesting in the view of consent in Barbot De Villeneuve's version of *Beauty and the Beast* (1740/2014). According to Virginia E. Swain (2008: p. 1013) in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales*, the Beast's question to the heroine "Do you want to sleep with me?" in Barbot De Villeneuve's original version may be considered as a reference to marital rape. This question has in English versions been translated as: do you want to marry me? Regardless of how the question is formulated, in all versions, Beauty rejects the offer. Jennifer Tamas in a conversation with Emelie Biggs (2023; see also Tamas, 2023) interprets Beauty's rejection, her lack of consent to sex with the Beast in Barbot De Villeneuve's version, as an account of female agency that, according to her, goes unrepresented in contemporary culture. Tamas (2023) similarly interprets the girl's escape from her grandmother's cottage in Delaure's "The Story of Grandmother" as the girl's saying no to sex. Tamas (in Biggs, 2023; see also Tamas, 2023) builds this claim on a comparison that she makes between Delarue's (1956) and Barbot De Villeneuve's (1740/2014) tales and movie

versions of "Beauty and the Beast" produced by, for example, Walt Disney Company in 1991 and Bill Condon in 2017. While Tamas's (2023; see also Biggs, 2023) point needs consideration, Rebecca Wilkin (2024) asserts that Tamas (2023) must better ground her claim both in the socio-historical context of peasant women, slavery, and the abuse of women in seventeen-century France and in contemporary feminist scholarship. Without this, Wilkin (2024) contends that Tamas's work (2023) may hamper rather than help the "feminist movement" (p. 6). I would also like to add that even if keeping the discussion on consent to a French context, Tamas's (2023) work neglects the many contemporary feminist versions of LRRH in France. For example, in Bruno De La Salle's *La petit fille qui savat voler [The Little Girl Who Knew How to Fly]* (1996/2014), Pierrette Feutiaux's *Petit Pantalon Rouge, Barbe-Bleue et Notules [Little Red Pants, Bluebeard, and Wee Notes]* (1984/2014), and *Mina, je t'aime [Mina, I Love You]* by Patricia Joiret and Xavier Bruyère (1991/2014), the protagonist displays female valor, vengeance, and agency, as well as rejecting the male wolf.

Finally, the trend connects with other feminist fairy tales on the theme of LRRH. Notable in the Anglophone context on LRRH are, for example, Ann Sexton's poem "Red Riding Hood" (1971/2002), and British Merseyside Fairy Tale Collective's short story "Little Red Riding Hood" (1972/1993). While Haase (2004) notes that Sexton's (1971/2002) poem is realistic about women's (and men's) sexual arrangements and struggles under patriarchy, the British Merseyside Fairy Tale Collective's story that concerns all three themes of this dissertation—trauma narration, female initiation, and the intergenerational—changes the protagonist from a scared little girl into a brave young woman, who saves other little girls afraid of the wolf in LRRH. Sexton's and British Merseyside Fairy Tale Collective's pioneering LRRH narratives were soon followed by the LRRH tales that I study. Last but not least, I want to mention Barbara G. Walker's "Little White Riding Hood," published in her fairy-tale collection *Feminist Fairy Tales* (2013). In Walker's fairy tale, a young girl is assaulted by two hunters in the forest but saved by her grandmother, who teaches the hunters a lesson by killing one of them with an ax. Together, these feminist fairy tales provide an alternative to the canonical LRRH versions by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm.

After having introduced the first topic of cultural rape trauma and the contemporary women's LRRH trend, I will now provide a background to trauma and trauma narration (Article 1; Subsection 2.2.1), female initiation (Article 2; Subsection 2.2.2), and grandmothers (Article 3; Subsection 2.2.3).

2.2.1 Trauma Narration

While many studies discuss rape and revenge, trauma and its narration constitute a relatively new theme in fairy-tale and LRRH scholarship, making Article 1 of this dissertation the first study on Herman's trauma narration concerning the Kristevan genius in the fairy tale. I present in this subsection previous studies on the focal narratives, the connection between them and the contemporary rape narrative, how this study differs from previous studies by

applying Herman's model of trauma narration, and how the focal authors approach rape and trauma also outside their narratives studied here.

Previous studies on the narratives examined in Article 1 mostly advert to rape and revenge. The rape of Offred has in Atwood's novel gained plenty of scholarly attention (Wilson, 1993; Macpherson, 2010). The narratives by Block (Marshall, 2009; Moore, 2018), Lee (Gutenberg, 2007), and Rego (Beckett, 2014; Zipes, 2012) on rape and vengeance and specifically returning violence with violence have also been mentioned in scholarly contexts. These studies link with Zipes's (1993) study of LRRH as a rape narrative and with the study by Wide and Tiina Mäntymäki (2016) of the traumatic consequences of incest and rape, from the viewpoint of a revengeful protagonist who identifies with Little Red Riding Hood, in Unni Lindell's crime novel *Rødhette* (2008). They also approach Hayton's study of David Slade's movie *Hard Candy* (2005) which presents a contemporary Little Red Riding Hood who murders rapists. However, little attention has been paid to rape trauma in the focal tales with one exception.

Only Marie Emilie Walz's (2021) recent study, published at the same time as Article 1, recognizes rape as rape trauma in Block's tales and connects with a number of other fairy-tale studies on trauma. According to Walz (2021, p. 3), Block often combines realities that are violent and painful to teenagers with the fairy tale, which provides Block with a safe space for discussing violence, trauma, and recovery with a teenage audience in mind. Beckett (2014, pp. 30–31) sees the potential of trauma in fairy tales as acting as a warning to children about the consequences of rape trauma and breaking the silence surrounding them. Because the fairy tale can imagine better futures, Haase (2000, p. 361) contends that the fairy tale is a powerful device for helping traumatized victims cope emotionally. For example, trauma has figured in the framework of real Jewish Holocaust victims' telling of traumatic events through the fairy tale (e.g., Haase, 2000; De la Rochère & Viret, 2011). Martine De la Rochère and Géraldine Viret (2011) view the fairy tale as a site for hope and displacing "the horror of lived experience," when direct confrontation with traumatic memory is unavailable (p. 402). Besides Warner's (1995, pp. 349–350) brief mention of the potentiality of Freudian trauma narration—a theory which Sigmund Freud did not complete—for ventilating the issue of incest trauma in the tale "Donkeyskin" by Perrault, Article 1 is the first study on trauma narration in the tales studied therein.

Through trauma narration, the focal tales of Article 1 link with the contemporary rape narrative. Sharon E. Stockton (2006) and Robin E. Field (2020) show in their studies that, emerging in North America in the 1970s, the contemporary rape story breaks with the traditional rape narrative. While the traditional rape story stresses the perpetrator, the contemporary rape narrative takes the victim's perspective by highlighting the traumatic impacts of rape and showing "rape *as* rape" (Field, 2020, p. 11). One example of the contemporary rape story and cultural trauma in the context of fairy tales and LRRH that also depicts trauma narration, is Maria Adelmann's recent adult novel *How to Be Eaten* (2022), released a year after Article 1 was published. In *How to Be Eaten* (Adelmann, 2022), fairy-tale heroines from different tales, including LRRH, come

together as a group to talk about and recover from traumatic events. As in Adelmann's (2022) novel, the tales discussed in Article 1 depict what Field (2020) calls "traumatic realism," narrating traumatic experiences through a protagonist or a focalizer (p. 14). According to Field (2020, pp. 11, 15), disclosing traumatic experiences increases the victim's sense of agency and outgrows the traditional rape story and notions of rape culture, as happens with the protagonists in the tales studied in Article 1.

Article 1 is the first study, however, to apply Herman's work in combination with posttraumatic growth (PTG) and the feminine (discussed in Section 3) in the focal tales. Neither Stockton (2006) nor Field (2020) examines trauma recovery in literature using Herman's (1994) theory on trauma narration in *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* in relation to mainly war and sexual trauma in real life. In Herman's (1994) model for recovery, by narrating traumatic events, the trauma survivor may achieve healing in the form of healthy psychological growth, which has also been referred to as PTG, describing a positive shift in the victim-survivor's state of being (see, e.g., LaLonde, 2018, on PTG), seen in the focal protagonists of Article 1.

The storytellers in Article 1 relate to rape and trauma also outside their tales studied here. Rego has created two complex illustrations that depict rape as rape, *Rape* (2009a) and *Small Rape* (2009b). *Rape* (Rego, 2009a) pictures the rapist as a giant dark-clad figure, who menacingly crouches over his victim, who does her best to resist. Atwood has similarly turned to rape in the novel *Bodily Harm* (1981). Wilson (1993, pp. 210–215) recognizes the rape of the protagonist in *Bodily Harm*, while Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson (2010, pp. 50–51) acknowledges sexual trauma. In an interview with Atwood, Jim Davidson (1990) points out the "traumatic implications" forced upon her heroines in her fiction (p.93). Atwood (in the Davidson interview, 1990, p. 93) comments that she finds them necessary for the protagonists' transformation, or should one say initiation, to help them free themselves from societal values that have been internalized. Atwood (1972, pp. 209-210) calls this internalization the Rapunzel Syndrome, viewable in Offred's struggle to free herself from entrapment in the patriarchal society of Gilead in *The Handmaid's Tale*. In the short story "Bloodmantle," published in *Forests of the Night* (1989), Lee returns to the subject of rape in LRRH which she started in "Wolfland", picturing a red-clad heroine's merciful killing of a serial rapist without the brutality seen in "Wolfland." As in Lee's stories, Block's (2009a) short stories "Charm" and "Bones," published in the same collection as "Wolf," deal with rape. Whereas "Charm" takes up the traumatic impacts of incest and rape on the victim, "Bones" tackles the murder committed by a teen girl of a serial rapist and killer, (Block, 2009a, pp. 73–100, 153–168). To summarize, rape trauma and healing are a concern of the female storytellers whose tales I examine with Rodi-Risberg in Article 1. I will now turn to female initiation in Article 2.

2.2.2 Female Initiation as Negotiating Trauma

Fairy-tale transformation that was discussed earlier in this section is also the essence of female initiation. In Article 2 of this dissertation, transformation and initiation expand into the representation of the Kristevan feminine as a sexual force in heterosexual romance that negotiates social identity and cultural trauma. In this subsection, I connect transformation with initiation together with considering the roles of romance for contemporary initiation and matriarchy for both the fairy tale and the Kristevan feminine. Next, I introduce research on female initiation and its three representations in the fairy tale. I will also outline what previous studies say about Carter's and Tikkanen's handling of intertextuality in their narratives to map out their take on female initiation and heterosexual romancing in the fairy tale. This outline will show that my study is the first to discuss the Kristevan feminine.

Fairy-tale initiation hinges on transformation. Zipes (2000, p. xvii) argues that transformation is a structural and thematical constant that is transferred from wonder tales to fairy tales. The transformation is often miraculous or wondrous (Zipes, 2000, p. xvii). Transformation relates to acts of imagination and magic, but magical creatures such as fairies are not necessarily present, as is the case with LRRH, which is a fairy tale without fairies (Warner, 2014, pp. xix–xxii, 4). In *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales*, Francesco Vaz Da Silva (2008a; see also 2021) argues that inasmuch as fairy tales originate in wonder tales, they are tales of initiation, thematically and structurally. Being tales of initiation, they deal with the protagonist's transformation or awakening in adult life. In "The Wondertale as a Whole," Vladimir Propp[11] (1984) views "the rite of initiation" as the oldest structural basis for the wonder tale (p. 116). Propp's (1984) initiatory structure is similar to Arnold Van Gennep's (2004, pp. 18, 90–106) rite of passage, where transformation hinges on initiates' figurative death and rebirth that bridge the gap between children's innocence and adult maturity[12].

While collective initiation rites into adulthood, apart from in fairy tales, are no longer relevant for earning the status of adult in the eyes of society in most parts of the contemporary Western world, initiation has persisted on an individual level with a focus on romantic relationships. According to Andy Furlong (2009), in contemporary Western initiation individuals depend less on families and have more freedom to choose. This has resulted in more mobility in terms of what it means to be an adult when it comes to education, occupation, age, gender, and sexuality. Despite freedom and mobility, as argued by Inge Seiffge-Krenke and Shmuel Shulman (2011) and Wyndol Furman and Jessica K. Winkles (2011),

[11] Propp's work on initiation follows a simpler structure than his earlier conceptualization of Russian fairy tales in *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928/2015), which outlines thirty-one functions of what would come to be called the wonder tale (see, e.g., Voegelin, 2015, pp. v–vii).

[12] Of note, Van Gennep (2004) discusses different types of initiation rites, including initiation into the adult age group. This thesis only concerns female initiation into adulthood in fairy tales.

the capability of building romantic relationships remains a benchmark in contemporary initiation. In terms of female fairy-tale initiation, as Article 2 shows, the romantic relationship is also important in the tales of Tikkanen and Carter.

Several studies discuss female initiation in fairy tales, moving back into past matriarchal cultures. For example, Norman J. Girardot's (1977) and Vaz Da Silva's (2007) studies deal with initiation in the Brothers Grimm's "Snow White." The latter also mentions girls' passages in other tales such as "Sleeping Beauty." Swain (2008) in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales* outlines the transformative and initiatory theme and structure of "Beauty and the Beast," which she ties to Carter's (1979/2006a) initiatory version of the tale, "The Tiger's Bride," published in the same collection as her LRRH trilogy. Furthermore, Walker's (1983) and Judy Grahn's (1993) studies trace the Brothers Grimm's LRRH to ancient initiation rites. Walker (1983, p. 1070) takes the story back to prehistoric European and Near East societies that were predominantly matriarchal, meaning that their social systems were controlled by women.

Many scholars agree that European folk and fairy tales, Pagan myths, and old Christian texts contain traces or are rewritings of matriarchal myths, which have been adapted many times for patriarchal audiences (see, e.g., Neumann, 1955; Graves, 1960; Eliade, 1963; Walker, 1983; Davis et al., 2004). As an illustration, Haase (2004) argues that fairy tales are a history of "disguised matriarchal myths" (pp. 16–7). As another illustration, in "Stabat Mater" Kristeva (1987c) argues that the Western Christian cult of the Virgin Mary most likely derives from matriarchal worship of "the mother-goddess" that was incorporated into and subdued by Greek and Jewish societies (p. 237). Jacob Grimm (1882–8) makes a similar illustration in the *Teutonic Mythology, Volume 1* when stating that while women have no land or place in the history of man, what "women forfeit here, is amply made up to them in another sphere" that of wise women with magic in old folklore and myth (p. 396). Grimm (1882–8) finds wise women characters with extraordinary powers everywhere in European mythology and folklore. Grimm could not know that a few millennia before his time, according to Walker (1983) in *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* and Davis et al. (2004) in *The Bedford Anthology of World Literature*, women had ownership rights over land that were inherited by their daughters. To give an example, Walker (1983, p. 504) brings forward evidence that Bath-Sheba in the Hebrew Bible, who married King David, was a matriarchal Queen. Matriarchies were gradually absorbed and brought under control by patriarchies. While, as Mircea Eliade (1963, pp. 196–197) maintains, it is impossible to construct a master narrative of a particular culture and time through myths, folk, and fairy tales, their structures, as in initiation which has been experienced by different cultures during different times, can be studied.

In the discussion on the Kristevan feminine, it is important to note that Kristeva (1982) acknowledges familiarity with a feminine sexuality of past matriarchies in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* when stating that the feminine is "a survival of matrilineal society" (p. 70). Walker (1983) and Erich Neumann (1955) have expressed similar ideas about feminine sexuality in matriarchal

culture in contexts that are not informed by Kristeva's theory. While matriarchy has a role in feminine psychosexuality, Kristeva (e.g., 1982; 1987c; 2000; 2010) is never explicit about the role of matriarchy in her texts. For example, in a correspondence with Clément in *The Feminine and the Sacred,* it is mentioned in passing in connection with initiation rites as "a "return of witches, the moon, the tides, matriarchy" (p. 71). Oliver (2002b) seems to draw a similar conclusion regarding matriarchy and the feminine in *The Portable Kristeva* by claiming that for Kristeva "in the shift from matriarchy to patriarchy … the feminine is set up against the social." Over the years, the feminine has been subsumed under other representations. Kristeva (1987c; 2010; see also Oliver, 1993a; 2002b) argues that in traditional Western representation, the feminine and woman have been absorbed into the representations of motherhood, the maternal, and beauty in terms of female seduction, suffering, and cruelty. This absorption, in Kristeva's (1987c; 2010) and Oliver's (1993a, p. 6; 1993b) views, adds to Western women's oppression concerning the feminine and motherhood under patriarchy. Having connected the dots between matriarchy, the feminine, and initiation rites in terms of patriarchal oppression, which I will elaborate more on in relation to the grandmother in the next subsection, I will here continue with the topic of female initiation in the fairy tale.

In Article 2, I combine Vaz Da Silva's (e.g., 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; 2021), Yvonne Verdier's (1997), and Delaure's (1956) work on female initiation in folk and fairy tales. Vaz Da Silva (2008a; 2008b; 2008c; 2021) discusses fairy-tale initiation in both general terms and its application in, for instance, Delarue's and Carter's tales, whereas Verdier's (1997) study is limited to initiation in Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother" (1956). Verdier (1997) places the tale within women's sewing communities in parts of France and Italy, from where it was collected in the 1800s-1900s. Delaure (1956) collected altogether twenty versions of "The Story of Grandmother" which are independent of later written versions of LRRH. Oral folktales come in many local variants, meaning that there is no fixed or original tale: they are all retellings (Vaz Da Silva, 2016, p. 169). Dated variants hinge on "the happenstance of tale recording" (Vaz Da Silva, 2016, p. 169), and it is nearly impossible to know how old they are. Nevertheless, using a phylogenetic technique, Jamie Tehrani's (2013) study suggests that "The Story of Grandmother" dates to the eleventh century or earlier.

Drawing on studies by Delaure (1956), Verdier (1997), and Vaz Da Silva (2008a; 2008b; 2008c), in Article 2 I examine three representations of initiation that are specific to female initiation, where menstruation has a prominent role. These representations are found in Delarue's tale and extend into Carter's and Tikkanen's tales. I gather the first two representations of needles and pins, representing women's blood and work, and cannibalism, the eating of others, from Delarue's (1956) and Verdier's studies (1997). The third representation of skin-shifting, the final transformation into a woman through skin-swapping in which the girl assumes a wolf's pelt, is provided by Vaz Da Silva's (2008a; 2008b; 2008c) studies. The skin-shifting representation has in other tales taken the form of a dragon or a snake (Vaz Da Silva, 2008a; 2008b). Isabel Cardigos's (1996, pp. 128–9, 141–2) study on Portuguese tales concerning initiation, interestingly

connects several female protagonists' skin-changing into snakes to women's fertility and blood. The werewolf is also relatable to women's blood through bloodlust, cannibalism, and the moon, provoking it to shift shape (Vaz Da Silva, 2008c). As Wide (2024) demonstrates, menstruation is relevant to all three representations of female initiation in the fairy tale and also relates to social taboo. According to Jen Lewis (2020), menstruation has a long history as a social taboo that still contributes to negativity towards female blood and gender inequity in the Western world. Natalie Rose Dyer (2020) comparably argues that menstruation is today viewed as something painful that must be overcome. This is also relevant in Article 2, where the menstrual taboo as a form of social abjection (I will return to taboo and abjection in Section 3) is examined concerning the representation of needles and pins.

In Article 2, Carter and Tikkanen by examining intertextuality combine the different versions and functions of LRRH—oral and written, initiatory and cautionary—to tell their own stories from a woman's perspective. Bacchilega (1997, pp. 52–65) and Sara Gamble (2001, p. 8) take note of Carter's rich intertextual web, which in the LRRH trilogy includes references to Delarue's, Perrault's, and the Brothers Grimm's tales. Carter's "Wolf-Alice" additionally refers to Egbert Von Liège's poem "De puella a lupellis seruata" (1889), written in 1022-4 and translated as "About a Girl Saved from Wolf Cubs" by Jan M. Ziolkowski (2007). Liège's poem in which a girl's red hood saves her from wolves has been recognized as an alternative version of LRRH (e.g., Ziolkowski, 2007; Vaz Da Silva, 2016). Carter (1997a, p. 38) herself credits oral traditional tales in particular for inspiring her tales. Similar to her way of using intertextuality, Carter's commitment to female initiation has been acknowledged in several studies by, for example, Duncken (1986), Bacchilega (1997), and Vaz Da Silva (2008b, 2008c). While Duncken's (1986, p. 228) study confirms initiation only in passing, Bacchilega's (1997, p. 66) and Vaz Da Silva's (2008b) work view Carter's return to Delarue's initiation in her LRRH trilogy as a reclamation of women's generative power and blood, which Article 2 expands on. In Sinikka Tuohimaa's (1994, pp. 169–176) and Johanna Holmström's (2020, p. 338) studies, Tikkanen's novel has been parenthetically described only in terms of the girl/woman protagonist's coming-of-age. Article 2 is, thus, the first study on female initiation and Delarue's tale in Tikkanen's *Rödluvan*.

Both Tikkanen's and Carter's tales whetted curiosity for their erotic nature concerning romantic heterosexual relationships. Tikkanen's writing on sex has received only a little attention: Tuohimaa (1994, pp. 169–176) briefly comments on the lovemaking in Tikkanen's tale as being violent, whereas Holmström (2020, p. 100) finds Tikkanen's writing on sex self-revelatory of the author. By contrast, many scholars have commented on sex in Carter's tales, drawing references to Carter's own sexual orientation. Salman Rushdie (1995) states that "Carter's genius," her "predatory sexuality, her erotic wolfishness" was misrecognized during her own lifetime (p. xii) because, as Helen Simpson (2006) submits, Carter's "heterosexual female sexuality" did not appeal to some feminists (p. xviii). For instance, while acknowledging animality in Carter's tales, Duncken (1986, pp.

227–228) does not view Carter's fairy tales as an alternative erotic for women because Carter "*could never imagine Cinderella in bed with the Fairy Godmother*" (p. 229, original emphasis). By contrast, Kimberley J. Lau (2008, p. 77) defends Carter's fairy tales exactly as alternative erotica, to which Merja Makinen (1992, p. 9) adds that Carter's fairy tales visualize the complexity of "female psychosexuality" through sexually active heroines. Whereas these studies bear upon women's sexuality, they do not analyze the feminine, as such.

Article 2 is the first study on the genius in the feminine as theorized by Kristeva in relation to fairy-tale scholarship on female initiation and beastly romance in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales. In Carter's and Tikkanen's fairy tales, Little Red Riding Hood gets her wolf, following a romantic heterosexual pattern of initiation in which the prince saves and marries his princess, as seen in numerous classic fairy tales, such as "Sleeping Beauty" and "Snow White." Another example is "Beauty and the Beast" where the heroine changes the animal groom into a prince. Given this, Carter's and Tikkanen's fairy tales may be viewed as initiatory fairy-tale romances. Yet, both the heroine and her wolf-prince resemble fairy-tale beasts, drawing on Warner's (1995) "beast symbol," representing the heroine's expression of inner sexual desire and inventiveness (p. 384). Taken through Warner's (1995) beast symbol that I interpret in terms of the Kristevan feminine (discussed in Section 3), the rape trauma narrative transforms into a story of girls' sexuality. Like Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, the focal tales in Article 3 resemble initiation, although without romance.

2.2.3 Intergenerational Female Relationships as Reorienting Trauma

Article 3 continues with the theme of initiation and reclaims the grandmother of Delaure's LRRH by highlighting the grandmother relationship of the adolescent heroine in Carter's "The Werewolf," Smith's "Bedlam," and Cross's *Wolf*. In this subsection, I will introduce the grandmother as a crone or witch figure and changes in women characters from wise to wicked. I will also present previous literature on initiation and grandmothers in the focal tales and offer the Kristevan feminine as a new approach to studying them.

In the focal tales of Article 3, the grandmother plays the central role of a witch or crone. On the one hand, I see the grandmother as an extension of the heroine's mother because, as happens in the focal tales, mothers are sometimes unavailable for their daughters. By this, the tales represent the mother-daughter relationship that is central to the Kristevan feminine, which I will come back to in Section 3. On the other hand, the grandmother represents a crone or witch, popular in initiation tales of old folklore, who likely resembles elderly female initiators of rites in real life (see, e.g., Van Gennep, 2004, on initiation in real life). According to Girardot (1977, p. 291), her role was to challenge the heroine, often in unkind and mortal ways, to prove her worthiness and provoke transformation into an adult. Rima Staines (2010, p. 336), who views the grandmother in LRRH and the witch—who wants to eat Hansel in "Hansel and Gretel" by the Brothers Grimm—as crones, explains that the crone figure of old folklore was a source of women's wisdom, and who, according to Manuela Lópes-Ramírez (2022, pp.

102–3, see also Walker, 1983), originates in ancient matriarchies (Lópes-Ramírez, 2022, pp. 102–3, see also Walker, 1983). Eliade (1963, p. 196) similarly demonstrates that Propp's work on initiation emerges from pre-historic matriarchal culture. Correspondingly, feminist literary fairy-tale scholarship connects initiation to matriarchal fairy-tale themes (e.g., Zipes, 1986; Haase, 2004).

As noted earlier, patriarchies gradually suppressed women's wisdom by changing the overall perception of old women leaders in communities, for example, through witch hunts and associating old women in particular with wickedness (e.g., Walker, 1983; Saunders, 2010; Lópes-Ramírez, 2022). This change is also seen in folk and fairy tales where wise women changed into witches and stepmothers (Warner, 1985). Propp (1958/2015, pp. 117–8) confirms this change, too, in wonder tales when noting that noble and independent women such as the Slavic matriarch Baba Yaga, a popular character in many early wonder tales, changed into a beggarwoman in later tales. Likewise, Allison Lurie (1991, p. 35) notes that compared to later editions of the Brothers Grimm's *Children and Household Tales* which favor active heroes and passive heroines, powerful, magical, and wise heroines of all ages outnumbered heroes in the first edition of 1812. For instance, resourceful females are seen in LRRH of the 1812 edition, which has a different coda than later editions. Here, the girl and her grandmother conspire to eliminate a second wolf that the two females lure down the chimney into a large trough of boiling water (Grimm, 1812/1987a, pp. 104–5). As a result of this marginalization, the grandmother in LRRH and other fairy tales has recently gained attention as a research subject. For example, Sylvia Henneberg (2008) studies the marginalization of grandmothers and mothers in several classic fairy tales. These studies show a need for a reclamation of the strong and wise fairy-tale crone, which Article 3 seeks to meet.

The heroine's passage and grandmother relationship in the focal tales of Article 3 have been previously mentioned in literature. For example, Bacchilega's (1997) study finds Carter's re-examination of initiation in "The Werewolf" disturbing and violent because the grandmother dies. Warner (1995, p. 310) comments that Carter's fairy tales, as in Rego's visual tales, stir "contradictory and powerful feelings" because they challenge traditional notions of contempt for the female gender and girls as being cute. Unlike Bacchilega's (1997) research, Duncken's (1986) study notes that Carter never breaks "the bond between Mother and Daughter" (p. 235), as in Rose Ellen Cronan's (1983) study, which stresses "the mother daughter matrix" in Carter's LRRH tales (p. 227). Similarly, Lorna Sage (2007) and Edmund Gordon (2017) take note of the prevalence of impactful grandmothers in Carter's work, which they relate to Carter's own grandmother. Like her protagonist's grandmother relationship in "The Werewolf," Carter's (1997b, p. 3) relationship with her own grandmother was very special, and she describes her as a true matriarch in the essay "The Mother Lode." Carter (1997b) writes that "She came from a community where women rule the roost and she effortlessly imparted a sense of my sex's attendancy in schemes of things, every word and gesture of hers, displayed a natural dominance" (p. 6). Carter's grandmother was a good storyteller, too, and it seems that LRRH was probably

one of Carter's favorite bedtime stories she told her: "I'd beg her to relate the story [LRRH] to me just for the sake of this ecstatic moment when she jumped on me" (p. 83), Carter shares in an interview with John Haffenden (1985).

Grandmothers and intertextual references to Delaure's initiation tale have also received commentary in the fairy tales of Smith and Cross. As stated earlier, Weitman's (2003, p. 37) work recognizes Smith's moving away from rape in the heroine's passage. Like Weitman, Helaine Posner (2001) views Smith's "Bedlam" as Little Red Riding Hood's "initiation to attain the experience and knowledge necessary for individual growth" and healing (p. 6). The grandmother in "Bedlam" has only briefly been mentioned in terms of resembling the wicked witch and stepmother in "Snow White" and Smith herself, who models for the photographs of the grandmother in "Bedlam" (in Posner, 2001, pp. 16, 19). Furthermore, although not studying initiation but focusing on the grandmother figure in Cross's *Wolf*, Vanessa Joosen's (2021, pp. 174–5) study points out Cassy's "grow[ing] into a teenager" and new awareness and proposes that Cassy's grandmother is a marginalized character in *Wolf*, playing on assumptions of weakness, illness, and ineffectuality of female old age. What particularly interested Cross (C. M. Wide, personal communication, April 1, 2023) in Zipes's book was the oral past of LRRH. This has gained attention in Vanessa Joosen's (2021) and Wide's (2023) studies that remark on the intertext of "The Story of Grandmother" in *Wolf*.

While Article 3 makes use of previous scholarship on grandmothers and initiation, it has a different theoretical approach. Article 3 combines research on initiation with intergenerational female relationships and the theory of the Kristevan feminine. This results in a different outcome than the earlier scholarship that I will discuss in Section 5. By centralizing the heroine's coming-of-age and returning the crone figure of old lore through her grandmother relationship, the tales studied in Article 3 invoke initiation in a contemporary form, which decentralizes the male wolf and cultural trauma of rape in Perrault and the Brothers Grimm's versions.

3 THEORIZING THE FEMININE GENIUS SUBJECT AND TRAUMA

This section outlines the theoretical framework of the articles and so mainly deals with the second main topic, the Kristevan feminine. Kristeva began as a linguist within the school of French structuralism, earned a degree in psychology in 1979, and is also known as a philosopher and a writer of both fiction and nonfiction. Daniel Cohn-Bendit (2020, p. 376) proposes that Kristeva is a psychoanalyst who interprets social phenomena. Kristeva has been positioned among the leading "original thinkers" today (McAfee, 2004, p. 1). Her work has been regarded as thought-provoking and challenging to traditional ways of theorizing identity in ways that have been interpreted very differently (Oliver, 1993a, p. 3). Kristeva's early work on the subject has been criticized for heterosexuality and essentialism in studies by, for example, Judith Butler (1989) and Elizabeth Grosz (1989), who view Kristeva's subject as a fixed construct. While one could interpret Kristeva's early work in ways like this because its starting point is heterosexuality, by outlining Kristeva's subject in relation to the feminine, I hope to validate Kristeva's idea of the female subject as a fluid construct of sexual plurality. Oliver (1993a; 1993b) arrives at a similar conclusion regarding female subjects in her studies on the criticism of Kristeva's theories until the 1990s.

During her long career, Kristeva (1982; 1987a; 1987c; 1989; 2004) has worked through ideas such as abjection, love, and melancholia, which apply to borderline subjectivity, to arrive at feminine psychosexuality. While the feminine is present in all Kristeva's writing, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (1989) is the first study that centralizes the concept, in which women's feminine psychosexuality is described as melancholic and depressed in Western patriarchal societies. Kristeva has traversed from not naming the feminine in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982, pp. 58–9) to speaking of the feminine in *The Sense and Non-sense of Revolt* (2000, p. 120), and finally to representing and theorizing the feminine of woman in relation to her work on the genius trilogy (2001a; 2001b; 2004a; 2004b; 2004c). Her later work illuminates the feminine in terms of the sacred and the mystical (2001; 2010; 2015). This is somewhat different from her approach to the feminine in the genius trilogy as transformation in relation to the

three qualities that I focus on here. The next three subsections outline the Kristevan development model for girls' subjectivity and the transformative feminine (3.1), the feminine genius concerning reliance, relationality, and narrated life (3.2), and trauma narration (3.3).

3.1 The Kristevan Development Model for Girls' Subjectivity and the Transformative Feminine

Here, I investigate Kristeva's development model for girls' subjectivity and feminine psychosexuality. Already in the early dissertation stages, it was clear to me that the feminine genius works best if examined within Kristeva's subjective framework. It then discloses the transformative force of the feminine, which is necessary for accomplishing the aim of this thesis (of examining how contemporary versions of LRRH by female storytellers represent the feminine of girl or woman through the young-adult (or adult) heroine in order to transform cultural rape trauma). While all three articles move within the theoretical framework of Kristeva's feminine and subject because Articles 1 and 2 combine subjectivity with the feminine genius, the feminine as an independent concept appears most distinctly in Article 3. Kristeva's development model for girls' feminine psychosexuality and subjectivity serves as the theoretical basis for examining the intergenerational theme and the focal protagonists' feminine in Article 3, as well as the themes of trauma narration and female initiation in Articles 1 and 2, respectively. Since the articles could only briefly introduce the theory, I want to give a more detailed overview here of the transformative feminine as a psychosexual aspect of the subject. I will begin with the formation of girls' feminine through *maternal reliance* and *the oedipal dyad*[13], which gives way to their subject formation in the form of the *maternal object relation* and *maternal function, the chora, abjection, the imaginary father*, and the *symbolic/Symbolic* (see also Glossary for Central Kristevan Terms), and I conclude the discussion with the feminine as a transformative force, a problematization of the oedipal model, and an offering of the feminine as a solution to this problem.

For Kristeva (2019, p. 3), girls' feminine is constructed through a combination of *maternal reliance* and psychosexual development. Maternal reliance describes a mother's feminine psychosexual energy, which has been sublimated into mothering and enables her to attach to her little girl (Kristeva, 2019, p. 5). Girls' psychosexual developmental structure is called *the oedipal dyad* by Kristeva (e.g., 2004c; 2019). While Kristeva (2001b; 2004c; 2019, pp. 3–4, 7) recognizes Freud's (1931) and Jacques Lacan's (1988) approaches[14], whereby the

[13] In line with Kristeva's (2019) and Oliver's (1993a) studies, I capitalize Oedipus but not oedipal.

[14] Freud's Oedipus complex has been criticized for sexism and revised many times. For example, Luce Irigaray (1992) calls Freud's view on female sexuality "a male representation of female desire" (p. 30), and Kristeva (1987b, p. 75) proclaims that Freud's libido is male.

foundation of her *oedipal model* is the heterosexual couple, her approach is more in line with Klein's (1987, pp. 48–53) version, which begins at birth and stresses the maternal. Kristeva divides her oedipal model for girls into two phases, *primary Oedipus* and *secondary Oedipus*.

In the primary Oedipus, girls' *maternal object relation* sets in motion immediately after birth (Kristeva, 2004c, pp. 409–411; 2019, p. 3). The maternal object relation is an internal representation of the mother that enables the beginning of girls' psychic space, *the maternal function* or the maternal, which is the first sense that they have of themselves (Kristeva, 2004c, p. 411; 2019, p. 3), and their "need for psychic connection" (2004c, p. 413). Whereas Articles 1 and 2 take up the maternal function, the maternal object relation is highlighted in Article 3. Although this early sense of self is not yet a speaking subject, internal representations, such as echolalia, images, gestures, and affect—described by Kristeva (2019) as having "*sense* without having meaning" (p. 3, original emphasis)—encode the psychosexual interdependence of mothers and daughters and will later sustain the subject. The maternal is a complex function, also called the semiotic, which encompasses *the chora* that, for Kristeva (1989; see also Oliver, 1993, pp. 13–14, 48–49; McAfee, 2004, pp. 18–22), describes the post-natal relation of mother and child and extends into the processes of maternal abjection and the imaginary father that I discuss further down. Since I find the maternal function easier for nonspecialists to understand than the semiotic, I refer to it as the maternal function or simply as the maternal in all articles. Similarly, I include processes such as the chora and maternal abjection in the function of the maternal as a way to simplify complexity, enabling me to focus in the articles on the genius in the feminine and readers unfamiliar with Kristeva's theories to understand the articles more readily.

It may be argued that the two feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality are already present in the primary Oedipus, which, through the chora, is an arrangement of nurture. They present themselves, in my understanding, through the transference of the mother's reliance on her girl (see Kristeva, 2019, on feminine transference) and, enabled by the girl's maternal object relation, connectedness. Kristeva (1989) delineates the chora in the primary Oedipus in terms of nurture and mothering. Noëlle McAfee (2004) similarly views it as a vessel of plenitude that holds the infant, while, according to Oliver (2004b, p. 5), it is an infant's first fortification against trauma. When creating **Figure 1** in the introduction, I imagined these early points of reliance and relationality in the chora through the interconnected, red-colored circles that portray human cells. With these, I demonstrate the transformative capacity of the feminine (discussed further down in this section) by creating an impression of cells that expand and contract. In the illustration, the qualities of reliance and relationality are brought together in the third quality of a unity of living and thinking, which, as I perceive it, will gradually emerge with language and cognition in the secondary Oedipus.

Oliver (1993a) and Noëlle McAfee (2004) have written extensively on the differences between Freud's, Lacan's, and Kristeva's subjectivity and oedipal models.

The secondary Oedipus confirms girls' psychosexual identity and subjectivity. If girls conform to a heterosexual identity, they will change their love object from mother to father, while boys within heterosexuality stay with the mother object. If realized, this change of love object comes with difficulties for girls because they define themselves through sameness, separation from, and negation of the mother object, whereas boys' self-identification works through contrast (Kristeva, 2004c, pp. 408–413; 2019, pp. 3–7). Since the feminine coexists with the masculine[15], the psyche of both girls and boys is bisexual, but bisexuality is nevertheless, according to (Kristeva, 2004c, p. 414), increased in girls and women because of their need for relationality, relationality being one of the three qualities of the feminine genius, discussed in the articles and which I present in connection with the other two qualities in Subsection 3.2. Whether girls identify with the mother object anew or take up the father as a love object, they must first separate from her to become a subject proper.

This separation is facilitated by *maternal abjection* which is an important process of the Kristevan subject because one cannot have subjects without first having abjected the mother. Maternal abjection splits girls' psychic space from that of their mother (Kristeva, 2019, p. 3; Oliver, 1993a, pp. 4, 18, 43–4). Without this split, there would be neither a sense of self, nor a subject. Maternal abjection is, nonetheless, a traumatic process that constitutes a loss and separation from the plenitude felt together with the mother in the chora (Kristeva, 2010). There are many similarities between the processes of abjection and trauma. For example, Kristeva (1989) refers to disturbances in the process of abjecting and mourning the mother as "old traumas" in *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (p. 4). Meanwhile, Kristeva (2010) points out that abjection is not trauma because, in the primary Oedipus, the loss of the mother that is felt after having separated from her occurs before one becomes a subject and before she turns into an object (2010). In Kristeva's (1989; 2010) theory, maternal abjection is, nevertheless, relevant to trauma because, as in similar borderline situations, such as depression and melancholia, it returns a traumatized individual to the maternal. For example, Atwood's Offred in Article 1 depicts this return when encountering difficulties with speaking and also grieving for her mother (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021). Thus, for Kristeva in the Rice (2002) interview, working through trauma in both psychoanalytic listening and artmaking also means working through the maternal function. Similarly, Barrett (2011, pp. 64, 70-75, 77) argues that, as in psychoanalytic listening, by witnessing affect, artmaking can work through maternal abjection that has caused a subject's semiotic and symbolic to disconnect.

[15] In "Prelude to an Ethics of the Feminine" (Kristeva 2019), the masculine is invoked in terms of "power," "infantile macho," (p. 6) "domination," and "desire" (p. 1). In "Is there a feminine genius?" (2004, p. 409), it is mentioned in relation to the phallus. Kristeva (2004c, p. 415–6) describes the phallus (and phallic phase) as both sexual desire and a desire for signification that coalesce with a child's preoccupation with genitalia between the ages of three to five. It thus represents an exchange of pleasure (granted by the mother in infantility) for "a place as a speaking being" (Grosz, 1989, p. xx–xxi). According to Kristeva (2004c, pp. 415–6), Freud's phallus favors male genitalia, which, while it disadvantages girls, continues as a representation in the Western Symbolic.

Although abjected, the maternal constitutes a permanent companion of one's identity—a memory of maternal plenitude that is nevertheless perceived as threatening, fearful, and destructive (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 3–6; McAfee, 2004, p. 46). Through abjection, it threatens to disintegrate the self/subject and return it to the maternal womb (Oliver, 1993a, pp. 4, 55–56). In order to circumvent this threat, maternal abjection marks the border between one's notion of self/subject and mother/other. It additionally demarcates further borders between the self/subject and others (McAfee, 2004, pp. 45–48). While it has elements of negativity, Kristeva (2002; see also Oliver, 2004a) also views the maternal and its companion, abjection, as a regenerative force. As regeneration, the maternal questions the old, nurtures psychic space, and makes room for the new through the creativity of the genius of the feminine (Kristeva 2002; Oliver 2004a). I present this take on abjection in **Figure 4** of Article 2 which depicts female blood as an aesthetic experience concerning female initiation.

Through rituals and taboos, maternal abjection is a part of the theme of initiation. According to McAfee (2004, p. 49), in order to deal with maternal abjection, Western cultures have turned to rituals. When interviewed by Charles Penwarden (1995, p. 23), Kristeva confirms a likeness between the subconscious workings of abjection and rituals, including the rite of passage or initiation, which I investigate in Article 2. For Kristeva (1982), rites are social practices that control that which is considered threatening or taboo through purification, and which in the context of the Western social consensus foremost relates to the issues of mothers (p. 59) and "the power of the feminine" through female blood (Kristeva in the Penwarden interview, 1995, p. 24). Dyer (2020) points out that abjection takes the form of a rite of defilement in the taboo that excludes menstruation from the social, a point which I take up in Article 2. According to William E. Phipps (1989), menstrual taboo was normalized in early Christian and Jewish traditions where it continued to play a role in women's social abjection. As an example, according to Catholic Canonical Law that persisted until the twentieth century, women could not enter the altar in Catholic churches during menstruation. In the context of taboo, Oliver (2013) notes that because rituals return a subject to the maternal, they can act out violent drives in harmful ways or, paradoxically, work through them. In other words, insofar as initiation harks back to the maternal, it can transform subjectivity, as in other therapeutic practices such as psychoanalytic listening, literature, the arts, and even meditation (mentioned in Subsection 1.3), In terms of fairy-tale initiation, this is comparable to Eliade's (1963) suggestion that fairy tales still practice "'initiation' on the level of the imaginary" because "what is called 'initiation' coexists with the human condition" (p. 202).

Abjection gives way to language and cultural codes identifying the human subject in the secondary Oedipus. Even if the maternal cannot truly be lost, abjection results in the feeling of loss, which girls replace with language and cultural codes (Kristeva, 2019, p. 3; Oliver, 1993a, pp. 4, 18, 43–4). Carol Mastrangelo Bové (2020) describes this process as difficult if not impossible for

some people resulting in borderline states such as depression later in life[16]. In Kristeva's (1974/2002; see also McAfee 2004) view, the maternal function lays the foundation for language development in the primary Oedipus and continues to sustain language in the secondary Oedipus. I see this sustainability in Kristeva's description to me of the maternal or semiotic (C. M. Wide, personal question, October 28, 2017) as "pre-verbal, instinctual or sensorial or affected or directed to the instinctual drives" in an online session with Kristeva during the conference "The Kristeva Circle 2017 Meeting," University of Pittsburgh, USA. The acquisition and use of structured language and complex thinking in the secondary Oedipus mark *the symbolic* or *the symbolic function* that gives girls a place as subjects in *the Symbolic* (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 41, 108; 2004c, pp. 416–7; see also Oliver, 1993a, p. 39). The Symbolic describes historically governed sociocultural factors which enable a structured and ordered society[17] (Kristeva, 1981, p. 14; see also Oliver, 1993a, p. 39). Whereas for simplicity, Articles 1 and 2 refer to the symbolic and Symbolic as the symbolic, Article 3 calls the Symbolic the social or social realm.

There is, in any event, one more place, *the imaginary father* or *the imaginary third*, that a subject must pass through in Kristevan theory before it can speak and take up the position of a subject in the Symbolic. Subjecthood is facilitated by a third party, which Kristeva (2019, p. 4; see also Oliver, 1993a, pp. 4, 37–38, 73–77) calls the imaginary father. In Kristeva's oedipal narrative, the imaginary father forms "the basis of imagination" (Kristeva 1987a, p. 45). It is a fantasy of love (Kristea 1987a; see also Oliver, 2002a). In Oliver's (2002a) reading of Kristeva, because the child feels loved, it can abject the mother. Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) elaborate on the imaginary father's role in breaking traumatic repetition concerning the theme of trauma narration through the image of male pregnancy in illustration four, *Mother Takes Revenge*, of Rego's (2003) series in Article 1. The child must identify with the imaginary third to become a subject who has agency. As Oliver (2004b, p. 138) puts it in relation to the identification with the imaginary third, one puts oneself in the place of meaning. It must do so to name what it has lost through abjection, namely the maternal, to take or not to take the father as a love object, and to identify with the father subject in the symbolic/Symbolic (Kristeva, 1974/2002; 1982; 2019; Oliver, 1993a; Oliver, 2004a). These processes will always be more difficult for girls since, for them, it is based on contrast (Kristeva, 1987a, pp. 21–48; 2019).

In Kristeva's oedipal (1987a) narrative, the imaginary third combines a child's imagination of the mother and father. The imaginary third brings together nonrepresentation and representation: "maternal and paternal, need and demand," drives/affects, and law (Oliver, 2004b, p. 138). It does so not only as a means to represent drives and affects that are violent, causing a repetition, but to

[16] Mastrangelo Bové's (2020) study is informed by Kristeva's theories of motherhood and abjection but not trauma theory.

[17] In line with Oliver's (1993a, p. 39) work, I capitalize the Symbolic in the Integrating Chapter to display what Kristeva calls the sociosymbolic (1981, p. 14), social symbolic order, or social pact (2019, pp. 5, 7) to distinguish it from the symbolic function, what Kristeva (1981: 24) also refers to as the psychosymbolic.

discharge and transform them into representations by working through in order to create meaning and, thus, sublimate violence (Oliver, 2013). Since internal representations such as affects are considered not representable, Oliver (2004b) suggests that the imaginary father, or what she calls an "accepting third," rather than representing affects, drives, and sensations, supports them, gives them form, forgives them, and enables them to access the symbolic (p. 139). I will expand on nonrepresentation and forgiveness concerning trauma in Subsection 3.3. The imaginary third's love and support, moreover, enable a positive self-concept and agency (Oliver, 2004b). Without the loving third, individuals face "a narcissistic crisis," causing an identification with their own "meaninglessness or abjection" (Oliver, 2004b, p. 138). The loving third, thus, bestows on the subject a healthy sense of self and belief in one's own agency.

Kristeva's oedipal model is unfinished, thereby enabling the feminine to transform and subjectivity to progress. As the transformative capacity of fairy tales, Kristeva's (2019, p. 2) oedipal narrative that has no closure makes the feminine a transformative force. Alternating between girls' primary and secondary Oedipus, the feminine has a central role in "the transformability of *psychic* life" (Kristeva, 2019, p. 2, original emphasis) by allowing sexual fluidity and plurality (Kristeva, 2019, p. 4). Similarly, the subject is an open structure which oscillates between the maternal and the symbolic (Lipkowitz & Loselle, 1996, p. 26; McAfee, 2004, pp. 41–42). The transformative feminine and the open subject are particularly notable in the *adolescent Oedipus* because the border to the maternal is open, allowing for "a psychic reorganization of the individual," including the sexual (Kristeva, 1990, p. 8). All dissertation articles mention the opening towards the maternal during adolescence, but it is most notable in Articles 2 and 3 which deal more closely with the heroine's adult transition. For example, the condition of the adolescent Oedipus is likened to madness in relation to the heroine's change of love object in Smith's narrative in Article 3, as, according to Kristeva (2007, p. 719), the adolescent's strong belief in the love object is near madness. Since girls' sexual reorganization is increased during adolescence, involving their feminine, it was a deliberate choice to study adolescent protagonists, or a phase in life which resembles adolescence in this thesis. The adolescent Oedipus describes adolescents' transition to adulthood, where the parental love objects formed in the oedipal dyad are replaced by new and idealized models through a real or imagined love object (Kristeva, 2007). According to Kristeva (2007, p. 721), traditional initiation rites of the past constituted a form of Symbolic authority that controlled the outcome of the initiation process of adolescents. I investigate this in Articles 2 and 3. The former discusses a negotiation of traditional initiation in relation to girls' romance with werewolves, whereas the latter studies the grandmother-granddaughter relationship.

The oedipal model has some problems, and heterosexuality seems to be an issue in Kristeva's theorization. Kristeva (2004c, pp. 416–7; 2019, p. 7) admits that the oedipal model with its stress on heterosexuality, which results from sexual

difference[18] and the phallus, problematizes women's relationship with and place in the Symbolic. While this problem may be more of an issue in the Freudian and Lacanian models [19] because Kristeva's model offers a female take on psychosexual development, the heterosexual couple resembles the starting point also for her version. As a result, Kristeva's version has been criticized, for example, by Butler (1989) for dismissing "lesbian experience" in relation to the subject (p. 111).

In an attempt to understand why, despite problems and criticism, Kristeva still upholds her version of the oedipal narrative, I want to point out that for her change begins from within. Whether change takes place on the level of society or the individual, creating change from within is a reoccurring theme in Kristeva's (e.g., 1974/2002; 1987b; 1982; 2000; 2004a; 2019) work that ultimately returns an individual subject to the maternal function. Oliver (1993b, 102) arrives at a similar conclusion when stating that the Kristevan Symbolic can be revolutionary. This is because, as the subject, the Symbolic is heterogeneous; it comprises both the symbolic and maternal. Thus, in Oliver's (1993b) view, Kristeva's revolution of the Symbolic and the subject begins from within Western representation and the maternal function. This is not to say that Kristeva is blind to alternatives. In an interview with Alice Jardine and Anne Menke (1996, p 126–127), Kristeva acknowledges in contemporary Western culture a blurring of sexual differences in couples and anticipates an increase in bisexuality for all genders in the future. She points out however that despite this blurring the problem of victimhood seems to persist. To clarify, as I understand it, the roles of victim and victimizer seen in trauma reproduce themselves in new families.

Moreover, despite new families such as same-sex partners and single mothers, the heterosexual couple continues as a central Western representation, which is fantasized about, romanticized, and idealized by both individual subjects and the Symbolic (Kristeva, 2007, pp. 718–9). For Kristeva (2007), adolescents are particularly vulnerable to central Western representations of heterosexuality such as the first Judeo-Christian couple Adam and Eve, whether they embrace or revolt against these representations. Article 3 exemplifies this through Smith's protagonist's idealization of Eve. The centrality of Eve in Smith's "Bedlam" through the protagonist's self-love as an aspect of the feminine quality of reliance (that I discuss in Subsection 3.2) also decentralizes the role of Adam, and thus heterosexuality, in ways that move beyond binary thinking of gender.

The oedipal model also complicates representations of parenting and the feminine. In Kristeva's (2000, p. 120; 2019, p. 7) view, women and men alike struggle with parenting and representing their feminine psychosexuality because of the oedipal model. In the material of the dissertation articles, this complication is seen in the protagonist's and other characters' difficulties with representing the feminine. For example, the feminine of Cassy's mother in Cross's *Wolf* studied in

[18] Kristeva (1981, p. 21) defines sexual difference as a relationship difference between subjects in the Symbolic in relation to meaning, language, and power that is relative to reproduction.
[19] Kristeva (2019, p. 4) has adopted the term kairos, which means encounter or severing and which in her theory replaces the phallus/phallic stage.

Article 3 appears less developed. I would here also like to draw attention to Warner's (1995, p. 384) statement on her own idea of the "beast motif" in the context of women's fairy tales and literature because it captures the feminine psychosexual struggle described by Kristeva and expressed by the characters in the dissertation material. As Warner (1995, p. 384) states on the matter, female self-expression, creativity, and erotica—her beast motif that Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) interpret as the girl genius or the feminine in the article—are often subdued by convention, which can be identified as Symbolic authority.

As Kristeva (2004c, pp. 426–7; see also Kristeva in Jardine & Menke, 1996) offers the feminine as a solution to heterosexuality, the transformative feminine in relation to its three qualities (discussed in the next subsection) offers a solution to cultural rape trauma in the Integrating Chapter of this dissertation. As Kristeva (2019) states on the matter of heterosexuality, the feminine is a participant in "the current overcoming and legitimization of sexed AND gendered identities" in individuals' "*singular/unique* and shareable future" (p. 6). If girls and women can work through the maternal function, their primary Oedipus—a process with many difficulties—they can reach feminine psychosexual maturity (Kristeva, 2004c, pp. 418–9). In Kristeva's (2004c, pp. 426–7) view, the feminine reveals everyone's singular sexuality, which is specific to them. According to Oliver (1993a), this opens up plural representations of "sexualities and sexed bodies" in Kristeva's theory, which, she argues, is similar to Butler's (1990) take on sexuality (although Kristeva's and Butler's theoretical frameworks are different) (p. 156). By reaching feminine psychosexual maturity, girls and women may transcend sexual differences and invent their own sexuality and gender—their own genius which, to put it simply, is their own creativity (Kristeva, 2004c, pp. 426–7). In an interview with Birgitte Hutfeldt Midttun (2006, p. 175), Kristeva opens this possibility to everyone because, for her, while there are dominant traits, sexual identities are not fixed but invented. Everyone can create their own. This enables transformation and creativity of the genius subject.

3.2 Feminine Genius: Reliance, Relationality, and Unity of Living and Thinking/Narrated Life

This subsection outlines Kristeva's feminine genius. It begins with an explanation of the role of the Kristevan genius for the girl genius in this thesis by describing the differences between the female and feminine genius. I also rely here on Oliver's (e.g., 1993a; 2004b) expansion of Kristeva's work and connect the girl genius with Oliver's (2007) and Jasper's (2011) literary studies on women geniuses. The subsection continues with the feminine as a creative and transformative force, as well as the three feminine psychosexual qualities of *reliance, relationality*, and *the unity of living and thinking*. After this, I introduce secondary literature that has influenced my understanding of the three feminine psychosexual qualities: Ann Jefferson's (2015) examination of *reliance*, Amanda Holmes's (2017) study on

transformation and *relationality*, Sara Beardsworth's (2004), and Birgit Schippers's (2011) explorations of *the unity of living and thinking* as *narrated life*. I combine these two in the Integrating Chapter as the third feminine quality, *the unity of living and thinking/narrated life.* Drawing on ideas by Schippers (2011), Oliver (2003a: 2004b), and Herman (1994),[20] the section ends with an expansion of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life into trauma narration that shows that the narration of trauma can be considered a form of the third feminine quality.

I want to begin by explaining the role of the Kristevan genius in my thesis. In Articles 1 and 2, I put forward the girl genius, as a younger and less experienced version of the Kristevan genius. As indicated before, I have while writing this thesis come to make a distinction in Kristeva's work between the feminine genius, as in the genius of the feminine—the transformative capability in relation to the three qualities of relationality, reliance, and the unity of living and thinking—and the female or woman genius, describing women who have been called geniuses by others owing to their creative exemplarity. By raising women to the status of genius, as Oliver (2004b) and Jefferson (2015) state, Kristeva fills a gap in Western cultural representation because, as Christine Battersby (1989) aptly points out, the concept of the genius has by tradition privileged male exemplarity over the creative feminine.[21] According to Battersby (1989), the genius was "a *feminine* male" (p. 7, original emphasis). Mastrangelo Bové (2013) puts forward a similar idea of the feminization of male partners concerning sainthood in her reading of Kristeva's work on the genius of Saint Teresa of Avila. On the one hand, the Kristevan genius describes women who have achieved exemplarity through optimal creativity and whom others look up to, including Kristeva herself (2004c). Given this, Oliver (2004b, pp. 160–2) argues that the female genius serves as a positive representation for women, and I would like to add girls, whose agency has traditionally been curbed within Western patriarchies.

On the other hand, the Kristevan genius describes ordinary women's and girls' (my addition) capacity to be extraordinary and create extraordinariness in their own lives (Oliver, 2004b, pp. 160–2). While women and girls may not accomplish genius status in the eyes of others, they can reach feminine psychosexual maturity through the three feminine qualities that accommodate everyday extraordinariness, transformation, and creativity. Through this, they can be everyday geniuses. This is the genius in the feminine. As I see it, while the feminine genius is open to everyone (including boys, men, and nonbinary individuals), the female genius is gendered. It is an offering of female exemplary creativity resulting from lifelong work to ordinary women, which, no doubt, can inspire them to change limiting circumstances and become extraordinary. Regarding this discussion, rather than lifelong extraordinary achievements, the girl genius depicts reaching feminine psychosexual maturity in Articles 1 and 2, functioning as a positive role model for ordinary girls.

[20] Unlike Schippers's and Oliver's studies, Herman's is not informed by Kristeva's work.
[21] Battersby's study (1989) refers to the feminine as both gendered and sexual, whereas the feminine in this dissertation appertains to the latter.

The girl genius and the feminine in Articles 1–3 relate to Jasper's (2011, p. 67) study on the female genius in Michèle Roberts's fiction and life and Oliver's study (2007) on the feminine/female genius in Julia Alvarez's novels. Similar to Articles 1 and 2, Jasper's (2011) and Oliver's (2007) studies conflate the two representations of the feminine and the female genius. Their women geniuses, Jasper's Michèle Roberts (2011) and Oliver's Julia Alvarez (2007), are political in the sense that they rely on creativity to defy patriarchal oppression against women. While Jasper's (2011) study mentions the genius's three feminine qualities concerning Roberts's person, it anchors Roberts's creative genius in a context of desire and embodiment as "to envisage an alternative" desire for women within masculine power (p. 67). In a similar manner, the dissertation articles here represent the three feminine qualities as an alternative erotic to normative heterosexuality; Article 3 even proffers the Kristevan feminine as an alternative approach to studying gender in fairy tales in order to illuminate mother-daughter dynamics from a different perspective than conventional gender. By contrast, Oliver's (2007, p. 54) study is about the everyday female genius. Oliver (2007, pp. 54–57) roots Alvarez's creative genius in imagination, which, she argues, may help ordinary women fight depression that is caused by oppression and maintain their psychic space/maternal function. As in Oliver's study, imagination that results in transformation is relevant to the girl genius in Article 1 within the context of trauma, and I will return to this soon. While this discussion has so far revolved around the genius, it is important to note that without the feminine, there is no genius; as also Oliver (2007, p. 53) states on Kristeva's theory of the female genius, it has not yet reached its full potential. One possible explanation among others for this is that the female genius and the feminine are not separated in Oliver's (2007) study.

The starting point for all extraordinary creativity is the feminine. Kristeva (2004c) says on the matter of the genius: "it took root in sexual experience" (p. 427). As noted before, in Kristeva's work on the genius trilogy (2001a; 2001b; 2004a; 2004b; 2004c), feminine psychosexuality emerges as a distinctly transformative concept and as a common denominator of the genius. Because, as Cohn-Bendit (2020, p. 376) notes, Kristeva detects sexuality in her explication of social phenomena, she obtains feminine psychosexuality from other categories such as mothers, who have given birth (Oliver, 1993a, p. 7), man and woman (although her focus is on woman's feminine), and gender role behaviors that have traditionally been bound up with psychosexuality. Kristeva (2004b; 2004c) outlines three qualities of the feminine—*reliance*, *relationality*, and *the unity of living and thinking*—which bind the women geniuses together as the genius in the feminine. Since the release of her genius trilogy, Kristeva has expanded on her own conceptualization of the feminine in several studies. During the International Psychoanalytical Association's 51st congress, London, Kristeva's (2019) keynote speech "Prelude to an Ethics of the Feminine" pursues the idea of feminine psychosexuality as a transformative force. Her article "Adolescence, a Syndrome of Ideality" (2007) examines adolescent psychosexual development, highlighting

the quality of increased relationality of the feminine. In two other studies (2011; 2014), Kristeva develops the quality of reliance to include maternal reliance.

I will now elaborate on the three qualities, reliance, relationality, and the unity of living and thinking in dialogue with Kristeva, Oliver, and my articles. First, *reliance* is the quality of the feminine that describes both the transformation of psychosexual energy into mothering capabilities, such as loving and caring feelings, and the notion of *time as the capacity for new beginnings* (Kristeva, 2019, pp. 5–6). One could argue that the former enables the latter. Described as a passion turned into "*reliant dispassionateness*," reliance is a psycho-somatic energy grounded in "tenderness," a basic affect that aims at preserving life (Kristeva, 2019, p. 5, original emphasis). Based on Kristeva's (2004c; 2014; 2019) examples of real experiences of motherhood to concretize reliance, reliance can, as in Article 3 (Wide, 2023), be viewed as individuals' mothering qualities, such as love, care, and tenderness towards others and oneself. As an illustration, Cassy's grandmother in Cross's *Wolf* demonstrates a well-balanced reliance through her good mothering abilities in her relationship with Cassy, whereas, at the beginning of the novel, Cassy's mother's capabilities to mother and maintain relationships are poor, indicating weaknesses in both her reliance and her relationality. Reliance thus maintains relationships, while keeping them open for change (Kristeva, 2019: 5). Reliance nevertheless expands beyond them to include notions such as trust, belonging, and sharing one's feelings and thoughts (Kristeva, 2014, p. 79; Wide, 2023). As I perceive it, reliance also comes close to Oliver's (2004, p. 138) expansion of Kristeva's imaginary third, as loving, accepting, and forgiving. In a context of love, trust, belongingness, acceptance, and forgiveness, reliance gives way to what Kristeva (2004c) refers to as "a psychic depth" (p. 419), moving beyond "the time of desire" and "death" (p. 418) to perceive time "as *beginning* and *beginning again*" (2019, p. 6, original emphasis). In line with Kristeva (2004c) and Schippers (2011), I call this depth of reliance *time as the capacity for new beginnings*. It corresponds to Kristeva's descriptions "the time of flowering and rebirth" (2004c, p. 424) and "the temporality of birth and rebirth" (2004b, p. 227) and Schippers's illustration "new beginnings or rebirth" (2011, p. 120).

As for the other two qualities, the second, *relationality*, describes a self that is inseparable from its relations with others and with the environment (Kristeva, 2004, p. 420; 2014, p. 71). It describes the need for real or imagined connectedness and object relations (Kristeva, 2004c, p. 413): Through the relationship, one seeks and cultivates one's own creativity and singular sexual identity (p. 420). The third, *the unity of living and thinking*, describes a conglomeration of life and thought of the self. Kristeva refers to the third quality as "life is thought" (p. 2004b, 227) because the subject identifies "life and thought with each other" (2004c, p. 422). As mentioned in the introduction, I rely on the *Irish Times*'s (2004, June 5) interpretation of the third quality as a unity of living and thinking, which Schippers (2011, p. 120) similarly calls an "intertwining of life and thought" and Oliver (2007, p. 57) refers to as an "imaginary revolt in the lives and thoughts of" Kristeva's geniuses. Article 1 also refers to the third quality as a unity of life and thought, while Article 2 relies on a unity of both life and thought and living and

thinking. According to Kristeva (2004c), this quality describes the conditions that enable psychic space and that engender "optimal creativity" (2004c, p. 421). I find a certain likeness between the third quality of the feminine and the imaginary third that was described in Subsection 3.1. While the former unites life and thought, in Oliver's (2004) words, the latter links "drives/affects and words/symbols" (p. 141).

This likeness concerning the genius is also pointed out in Article 1 (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021), what Suzanne Guerlac (1993) describes as "productive imagination," one's capacity for spontaneously creating something new, which moves beyond reproduction (p. 250). Just as Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) identify productive imagination as the essence of genius because it breaks traumatic repetition and transforms the subject, Oliver (2007, pp. 56–57) states that imagination by creating meaning and value in one's own life is perhaps the only way to overcome patriarchal oppression for women. Both Article 1 and Oliver's study (2007) focus on the imaginative and transformative capability of the genius rather than its qualities, but while Oliver deals with oppression, Article 1 tackles trauma narration. I will next cover secondary literature on the Kristevan genius concerning this thesis's perspective of the three feminine qualities in relation to transformation.

Even though making gendered assumptions, Jefferson's (2015) study was an inspirational for this dissertation because it centralizes the quality of reliance or what Jefferson specifically calls women's maternity. Jefferson (2015, p. 215) highlights maternity (or reliance, as I like to call it) as one of the defining qualities of the Kristevan genius. As seen before, Kristeva (e.g., 2004b; 2004c) turns to female corporeal experience, such as giving birth and menstruation in order to illustrate the workings of the genius's quality of time as the capacity for new beginnings. This could explain why Jefferson's (2015, pp. 215–217) study somewhat problematically interprets reliance in the sense of real mothers and motherhood. In Jefferson's (2015, pp. 212, 216–218) view, Kristeva's genius is also gendered. This excludes men. Another problem with Jefferson's (2015) study is that the feminine means the same as woman, female, and femininity, adding to the gendered view. On the contrary, as noted before, Kristeva (2004c; 2019) carefully separates the feminine from them. Moreover, although Kristeva certainly exemplifies reliance through female corporeality, she nevertheless states that she seeks to "appeal to the genius of every woman, of every man" (2004c, p. 407) and to define "a feminine specificity that is declined differently in each sex (the feminine of woman, the feminine of man) and in a singular manner for each subject" (408). Herein, reliance is available to men, too. Reliance, together with relationality, which I will discuss in relation to Holmes's study next, is analyzed in Article 3. Of the grandmothers in the tales studied in Article 3, Cassy's grandmother in *Wolf* most clearly models both reliance and relationality for her granddaughter.

Holmes's (2017) discussion on the transformative and relational forces of the feminine, which Holmes relates to Kant's work on the genius, also informed this dissertation. Holmes's (2017, p. 136) study views the feminine genius as transformative, transcending, and relational. According to Holmes (2017, p. 137),

Kristeva's genius is "a self that goes beyond itself through itself," which describes a transformation of one's own identity. Holmes (2017) argues that Kristeva's "genius transcends herself, her situation, and, most provocatively, the female genius transcends sexual difference" (p. 136). Holmes's (2017) study describes the genius as both "an exemplary originality" and as an "infusion of the feminine into the masculine" that allows for transformation and relationality (p. 137). While Holmes's (2017, p. 135) study acknowledges Kristeva's feminine as a cultural representation, it withholds from explaining what it means, so the reader must form their own understanding of the concept. Holmes's (2017, p. 136) study further enables a relation between the feminine and the masculine of the genius, which, according to Holmes (2017, p. 136), endows the genius's "special powers of creation and conception." Holmes's (2017, pp. 138–141) study builds this argument of relationality on Kristeva's open subject. Holmes (2017, p. 42) expands on this argument of the open subject to also include the Kantian genius, as in Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) in Article 1. According to Holmes (2017), "Both Kant and Kristeva articulate the movement of ideas beyond the determinate realm of language which we might link with the system of the symbolic" (p. 142). Here, Holmes locates the feminine as a transformative force within Kristevan subjectivity, which this dissertation also puts forward.

Combining Holm's (2017), Beardsworth's (2004), Schippers's (2011), and Oliver's (2003; 2004) ideas, I will now show how in this dissertation the two parts, the unity of living and thinking and narrated life, form the third feminine quality. Holmes's (2017) notion of self-transcendence relates to Beardsworth's (2004) and Schippers's (2011) ideas of the women geniuses' narration of life or specifically to Kristeva's accounts of her women geniuses' life narratives. In Beardsworth's (2004) view, Kristeva's achievement with the genius trilogy is that she narrates the geniuses' lives as "lives are made" (p. 274), which Schippers (2011) interprets in terms of "life and narrative," as a form of the genius's unity of living and thinking (p. 115). Creativity alone does not make geniuses but the combination of creative output and life, as individuals create their own life narratives (Schippers, 2011, p. 119). As Oliver (2003) notes in the frame of subjective inner space, "we have a sense of ourselves, through the narratives which we prepare to tell others about our experience … we live our experience through the stories that we construct in order to 'tell ourselves' to another, to a loved one" (p. 42). Here, Oliver accommodates narrated life through object relations. In the end, as Oliver (2004, pp. 148–9) has it, subjectivity and personal authority hinge on one's capability to find, create, and make meaning for oneself. While it happens that the lives that Kristeva (2004b; 2004c) uses to exemplify the connection between life and narrative are extraordinary, the process of narrated life, of constructing life narratives, is the same for everyone—everyone can be a genius. Although not presented as such in the articles, through my new understanding of the third quality of the unity of living and thinking as narrated life, both Articles 1 and 2 can be seen as highlighting narrated life: the girl geniuses are geniuses because they make meaning of their lives through the processes of working through rape trauma in Article 1 and the adolescent passage in Article. 2.

I want to conclude this discussion on the genius in the feminine with the capacity to heal through telling stories which brings trauma narration, the topic of Article 1, to the table. While trauma narration might seem like stepping away from the genius, the processes of trauma narration and narrated life are similar to each other, although the cause of narration is different: the former type of narration begins in traumatic experiences and the latter in a trial, challenge, or disappointment of some kind, which could be trauma related such as the cultural trauma of rape in LRRH. As Kristeva tells Hutfeldt Midttun (2006, p. 168) in an interview, all imagination begins as a wound. Such wounds or trials test one's boundaries, and develop imagination, psychic space, and a self; one "who doesn't experience trials … or denies them, accepts a closed identity" (Kristeva, 2005, cited in the Cohn-Bendit interview, 2020, p. 376). Imagination is also important in both individual and cultural trauma because as Alexander (2004b) comments, "only through the imaginative process of representation" may the actors sense the traumatic experience (p. 9). To be successful, both trauma narration (Herman, 1994, pp. 68–9, 177) and narrated life depend on being witnessed by others and the ability to communicate and give symbolic form to the affects of suffering, creating the conditions for resolving conflict and the potential for forgiveness (Oliver, 2001, pp. 7, 80; Schippers, 2011, pp. 121, 126–7). Against such a backdrop, trauma narration can be as seen as a form of the feminine genius's unity of living and thinking/narrated life.

3.3 Herman's Trauma Narration

Article 1 of this thesis analyzes the focal protagonists' rape trauma through Herman's model of trauma narration recovery. For constructing her theory on recovery in *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (1994), Herman draws on Pierre Janet's treatment of hysteria. Janet (1924) is one of the first scholars to describe a reconstruction of traumatic experience through narration: "When one could bring the subject to express his memories … he was freed from his delirium and the disorders connected with these memories" (Janet, 1924, p. 38). Janet's (1924, p. 42) early work on trauma narration influenced Freud's therapy tool of free association, where patients express thoughts freely to extricate themselves from traumatic memories in the subconscious. Herman's (1994) method of recovery, as applied in Article 1, unrolls in three interrelated stages: 1) *safety*, 2) *remembrance and mourning*, and 3) *reconnection*. In a narrow sense, trauma narration occurs only in the second stage of Herman's method but depends on the first and third stages to be successful. I have created a drawing of Herman's recovery method that is viewable in **Figure 2**. **Figure 2** is a companion to **Figure 1** in that it also represents the Kristevan feminine. I will explain the importance of the feminine as transformation concerning the three qualities for trauma narration as the section progresses through the three stages of trauma narration, the incompleteness of trauma, the possibilities of trauma

narration recovery, and the role of forgiveness in narrating trauma on both the individual and the collective level.

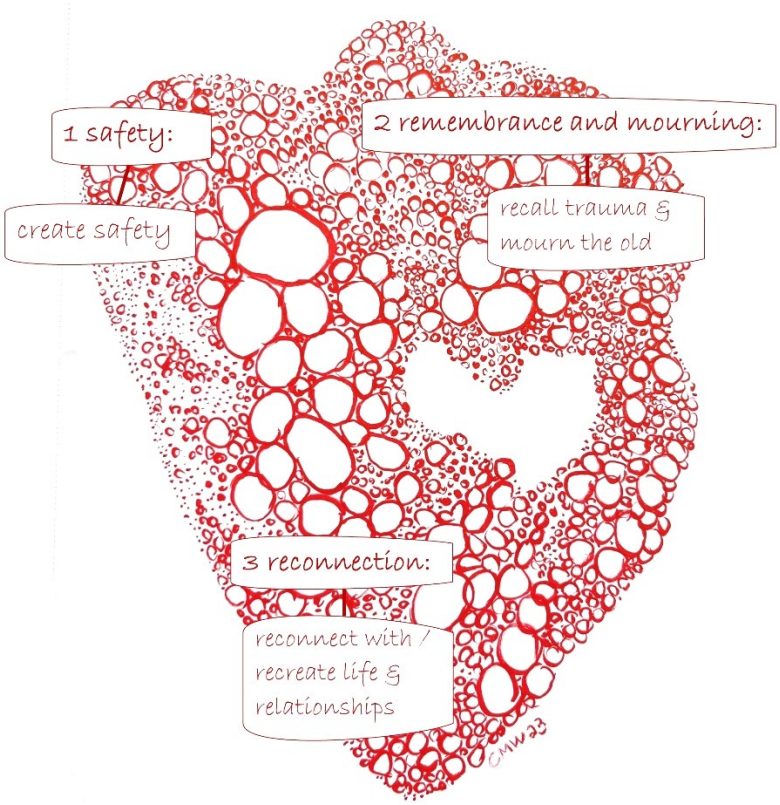

FIGURE 2 Herman's model for recovery (Wide's own drawing)

First, for any recovery to unfold, one must start with creating *safety* (Herman 1994, p. 155). As previously observed in studies by Rochère and Vilet (2011) and Walz (2021), the fairy-tale form provides distance from lived traumatic experiences and a safe environment for communicating them. According to Herman (1994, p. 159), creating a safe space already restores some of the victim's sense of control which has been destroyed by trauma. Safety can be likened to the quality of reliance of the feminine through a therapist's reliance, a trusted friend's or partner's reliance, or even self-reliance. Elaborating on reliance in her article "Reliance, or maternal eroticism," Kristeva (2014) confirms that "*to feel safe*" is a part of reliance, which comes with other basic needs, such as trust, sharing, and belonging (p. 79, original emphasis). With **Figure 2**, I wanted to capture reliance as an enabler of safety for trauma narration to occur through the intelligence of the heart, which, in the illustration, I imagine as the locus of the feminine. Herman (1994, pp. 160–162) particularly stresses the importance of feeling safe in one's own body and environment through relationships with others. The focal protagonists in Article 1 narrate trauma from a safe space: the safety provided by or found in one's own family, room, or home, or within the protective walls of a treatment center (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021). In this stage of trauma narration recovery, as in cultural trauma, the cause of trauma must also be identified (Herman, 1994, pp. 156–8;

see Alexander, 2004b, p. 1, on cultural trauma). In summary, a safe environment is vital for identifying the cause of trauma and for recovery, as is acknowledged in Article 1 and, in the Integrating Chapter, understood as the first feminine quality of reliance.

In the second stage of *remembrance and mourning*, as emphasized in Article 1, victim-survivors recall what they have failed to know, opening for transformation. Out of recalling the traumatic event and mourning the old self destroyed by it, victim-survivors in individual trauma reconstruct the story of trauma (see Herman, 1994, pp. 175–180, 188). According to Gillian C. Mezey (1997), this is perceived as having lost a "real or symbolic" part of oneself (p. 198). This is different from cultural trauma, where trauma is created and framed through stories (Alexander, 2012, p. 5). The second stage of trauma narration in individual trauma also relies on being witnessed by others. Traumatized individuals rely on others bearing witness to atrocities through the stories that they share. This need for others in trauma narration (Herman, 1994, p. 184) can be interpreted in terms of the feminine's quality of relationality: As I view it, the quality of relationality sustains trauma narration recovery through connectedness. As noted in Subsection 1.3, in artistic practices relationality can also be found in and through the creative process itself. I see relationality in **Figure 2** in the little red cells of the heart that gently touch one another. Victim-survivors' courageous confrontation with truth must be heard and borne witness to—as shown in Article 1, the viewer of the girl's drawings in Rego, the fictive listener of Atwood's Offred, Lee's Anna's sharing of trauma with her granddaughter, the reader of the journal in Block's tale (Wide & Rodi-Risberg, 2021). Being heard empowers the victim-survivor (Herman, 1994, p. 175). In individual trauma, Herman (1994, pp. 140–4) argues that bearing witness can be an overwhelming experience even for trained therapists. Alexander (2012) and Oliver (2001), however, note in the context of cultural (or social) trauma that witnessing can make the trauma better for the traumatized group. Oliver (2001) goes on to claim that "the essential dynamic of all subjectivity" is witnessing (p. 7): individuals need others to bear witness to them (Oliver, 2001), a need which can be understood in terms of Kristeva's feminine qualities of relationality and the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. That is, individuals need intimate relationships with others with whom they can share and also reshare their stories in the third stage of trauma narration.

The third stage requires *reconnection*. According to Kristeva in the Rice interview (2002; see also Oliver, 2004), narrating trauma allows the victim to reconcile with the traumatic memory and with the splitting of identity into the symbolic and the maternal that was caused by abjection but is being repaired by the imaginary third[22]. In Herman's third stage, victims must reconnect with everyday life as well as with themselves and the Symbolic to create a new future. In my view, Herman's reconnection depends on the reliance and relationality of the feminine that gives way also to narrated life, represented in **Figure 2,** through

[22] Of note, Kristeva's take on trauma narration while similar is not informed by Herman's model.

the imaginary third. Victim-survivors in Herman's third stage (1994, p. 196) are faced with creating a new beginning, a new sense of self, and new relationships. The protagonists in Article 1 of this dissertation remake their old sense of self in various ways: Rego's girl remakes her mother, Atwood's Offred remakes loving relationships, Lee's and Block's protagonists remake themselves, unleashing their inner beast, understood as a symbol of the girl genius.

While trauma narration provides hope, healing from trauma through narration is not always, "a transformation of mud into gold," as Suzanne LaLonde (2018, p. 196) puts it. According to Herman (1994, p. 211) and Caruth (1996, p. 18), a victim's narration of trauma is difficult because trauma often resists representation or finality, or, using Kristeva's (1989) vocabulary, the representation is internal. Here, I find Kristeva (1989) useful because she puts personal truth concerning the individual subject's attempts to create meaning of internal representations using language and other forms of meaning-making. In the context of an infant's abjection of the mother and the sense of maternal loss that follows from this that must be replaced with language to create a sense of the loss, Kristeva (1989) states that "language is, from the start, a translation" (p. 41). This means that while language and other meaning-making forms can translate the truth, they will never fully render the internal representation as it is experienced. Kristeva goes on in the Rice interview (2002, p. 281) to call the reconstruction of trauma through narration "an interpretation" that translates traumatic experiences into words. What is interpreted through trauma narration is, then, the victim-survivor's truth of how the victim-survivor recalls and reconstructs the traumatic event.

While recognizing difficulties, most scholars emphasize the possibilities of trauma narration for recovery from trauma. Herman (1992, p. 213) describes recovery through trauma narration as a long winding road with risks and obstacles. For her, while recovery is possible, it is never complete (Herman, 1992, pp. 197, 213). Comparably, Ruth Leys (2000) suggests that it may go either way: trauma narration can "faithfully represent" traumatic experience or it can become destructive, reenacting the traumatic occurrence through "fictive-suggestive performances" (Leys, 2000, p. 303). When interviewed by Rice (2002: see Kristeva, 2010, on religion), Kristeva similarly acknowledges that narrating trauma is an ongoing process of making reparations be it in the context of psychoanalytical listening, literature, the arts, or religion. LaLonde (2018, p. 196), moreover, considers that Herman's model of trauma narration which displays healthy psychological growth or PTG can help real trauma victims survive and become resilient. Richard G. Tedeschi and Lawrence G. Calhoun (1995, pp. 82, 110), who in their study describe PTG as a positive shift in the victim-survivor's state of being, recommend narration as a method for creating meaning of traumatic memory and achieving PTG. Wulf Kansteiner and Harald Weilnböck (2008, p. 2) have also adopted a positive view on trauma narration, recommending that traumatic events can be "truthfully represented in everyday narrative language." In Article 1, Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) join in the opinion that recovery is possible, and all focal heroines achieve positive PTG

through a remaking of themselves, disclosing the genius in the feminine therein called the girl genius.

As a final remark on trauma narration recovery, I want to draw attention to Kristeva's (2010; in Rice, 2002) intention of forgiveness. Even though not informed by Herman's model, as I view it, the process of forgiveness, although it is ongoing, enables a moving forward from trauma. While there are many interpretations of forgiveness, it is widely understood as a positive initiative where ill will felt towards the perpetrator is replaced with goodwill (Long, 2020). In my opinion, this comes close both to healthy PTG, as described above, and to Kristeva's understanding of forgiveness that results from processing individual trauma through narration and time. In the Rice interview (2002; see also Kristeva 2010), Kristeva asserts that the initiative of forgiveness requires the victim-survivors' narration of traumatic experiences. This is because narrating trauma permits the victim-survivor to confront the perpetrator's traumatism and to experience her own pain in ways that do not deny the past but, with time, transform it. Working through using narration renews psychic life, which grants the affected a sense of rebirth (Kristeva 2010; Rice, 2002). As I see it, this corresponds to the remaking of identity in the third stage of reconnection in Herman's model that I connected to transformation concerning the three qualities of the feminine above. Forgiveness is also an act of responsibility, where the victim-survivor takes responsibility for healing their suffering so as not to transmit it (Rice, 2002).

Through the intention of forgiveness in this Integrating Chapter, in line with Kristeva's (2010) and Rice's (2002) discussion, trauma narration can be seen as a responsible initiative for ending vengeance and for forgiving not only the perpetrator but also oneself. While revenge is an issue for the heroine of the narratives studied in Article 1, Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) show how the heroine through narration transforms revenge into gratitude. From my perspective in the Integrating Chapter, gratitude goes beyond reconciliation with and the remaking of the heroine's identity to also taking responsibility for repairing the perpetrator's traumatism. The sense of gratitude as a healthy form of PTG becomes an initiative of forgiveness where healing is viewed as more important than revenge. Therein lies responsibility. Moreover, as stated by Kristeva (2001a: see also Rice, 2002), going beyond trauma through narration, and thus engaging feelings of reconciliation and forgiveness, empowers the victim-survivor of individual trauma. To conclude, forgiveness can be viewed as empowering the heroine of the narratives that Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) study in Article 1.

While forgiveness is possible in the context of individual trauma, in terms of cultural trauma the process of forgiving others is more complex. Whereas Alexander (2004a; 2004b; 2012) abstains from discussing the role of forgiveness in cultural trauma, Kristeva in the Rice (2002) interview points out that finding forgiveness is more difficult on a collective level. Oliver (2001) pinpoints the level of this difficulty when observing that there is always a danger that collective, or what she describes as "social" (65), trauma of violence, is repeated instead of

worked through. Alexander (2012) describes the same difficulty when claiming that while some cultural trauma narratives are very tragic, others seek amelioration. In Oliver's view (2001), achieving a sense of forgiveness from trauma on a collective level will need more "social spaces" that feel safe (p. 110) and responsible witnesses (p. 85). For her, safe social spaces enable victim-survivors to process trauma through narration in the real or imagined presence of others. Others who bear witness to trauma must also respond by taking responsibility for interpreting these narratives (Oliver 2001; 2004b). In my view, this resembles what Alexander (2004b) refers to as assuming responsibility and "solidary relationships" (p. 1). Without this relationality of shared responsibility, Oliver (2001; 2004b) states there cannot be forgiveness on the level of the social. If this dissertation is also a trauma narrative and the academic space where it has been shared provides a safe space for narrating the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood, the reader who bears witness to it should also respond in responsible ways by continuously interpreting what has been shared in order to enable forgiveness.

4 SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

In the present section, I will summarize the three dissertation articles. The summaries primarily result from a close reading from the beginning to the end of my own articles. The order of the articles discloses a progression in my understanding of the Kristevan feminine, one of the two central topics of the dissertation. Concerning the three themes of trauma narration, female initiation, and the intergenerational, this progression begins in Article 1 with the girl genius, continues with girls' genius and feminine in Article 2, and ends with girls' feminine in Article 3.

4.1 Article 1: "From Rape Trauma to Genius through Narration in Contemporary Little Red Riding Hood Tales"

Through the first theme of trauma narration, Article 1 readdresses the rape narrative that scholars have found in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's LRRH. The article was co-written with Rodi-Risberg, who is the second author. As the first author, I was responsible for 71% of the total contribution, and Rodi-Risberg's was 29%. The artwork and the acquisition of focal works, as well as the bulk of the conceptualization, analysis, and writing were my responsibilities[23], whereas Wide (51%) and Rodi-Risberg (49%) contributed nearly equally to the editing of the article.

The article combines fairy-tale and trauma scholarship and Kristeva's theories of subjectivity and genius. It explores how Rego's, Atwood's, Lee's, and Block's versions return to the meeting between Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf that ends in violence in the canonical versions and transform it in creative ways through the heroine's narrating and overcoming rape trauma and constructing the girl genius.

[23] At one point, Wide independently conceptualized and implemented the central theoretical concepts of trauma narration, the Kristevan genius/girl genius, and subjectivity within fairy-tale research and wrote the first full version of the analysis.

All focal narratives use the wolf as a metaphor to depict the heroine's transformation into the girl genius. Therefore, it was logical to display the girl genius as a wolf in the visual results, the illustration series *Girl Geniuses' Narrating Trauma in LRRH* (Wide 2019–21) viewable in **Figure 3**. I drew the four illustrations of a wolf head with a red marker on paper, after which I brought them with me to a nature reserve of an old-growth forest in Sundom, Finland to take photographs, to create a woody backdrop. With the visual results, I comment on the genius's productive imagination in relation to the wolf in terms of the heroine's working through and out of rape trauma using narration. The heroine's alignment with the beast through the wolf indicates an alternative desire that is different from the victimized heroine in the canonical versions. The article shows that trauma narration through aspects such as female bonding and the productive imagination of the genius together with revenge that transforms into thankfulness decentralizes the rape narrative and centralizes the heroine and her recovery, which through witnessing creates empathy and compassion.

FIGURE 3 *Girl Geniuses' Narrating Trauma in LRRH* (Wide, 2019-21)

4.2 Article 2: "Wooing Werewolves: Girls' Genius, Feminine, and Initiation in Angela Carter's and Märta Tikkanen's Versions of Little Red Riding Hood"

Female initiation is at the center of Article 2 and the second theme of the dissertation. Article 2 was written first but was revised between Articles 1 and 3, resulting in more visibility of the feminine. Consequently, it is located as the second dissertation article. Because of differences in the publishing process between the journals, Article 2 (accepted for publication and revised in 2022) is the last article to be published in Wide 2024. Article 2 deals with female initiation in the fairy tale in relation to Kristeva's theories of the subject, feminine, and genius. Unlike Article 1, which focuses on the transformative aspect of the girl genius through narration, Article 2 emphasizes female initiation as a way to negotiate trauma and the girl genius as the three qualities of the feminine (relationality, reliance, and the unity of living and thinking) in Carter's "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice," and Tikkanen's *Rödluvan* in relation to Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother." Article 2 studies how Delarue's protagonist takes up a woman's traditional social identity through female initiation in the fairy tale and how the heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's narratives negotiates this identity. In the article, female initiation is likened to Kristeva's process of abjection.

The examination of female initiation falls into two parts. The first part of the article examines how the initiatory representations of the werewolf found in female initiation—needles and pins, skin-shifting, and cannibalism—return the girl in Delaure's tale to the maternal through abjection but, as is the custom in initiation under patriarchy, assign to her a traditional social identity of a woman in the Symbolic that to an extent is passive and subjugating. By contrast, the heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales controls her own initiation in the second part of the article. While circling back to the same initiatory representations and the maternal function, the heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's narratives transforms this identity in and through a romantic relationship with a male werewolf.

The transformation generates an active feminine agency and sexuality that empowers the heroine as a subject in the Symbolic, and that takes the form of the three qualities of the genius in the feminine: relationality through the heroine's core relationship with the male werewolf, reliance through love and a view of time as the capacity for new beginnings, and a working together of the heroine's living and thinking. In the article, I call this agency the girl genius because it displays the heroine's reaching feminine psychosexual maturity. This maturity negotiates the outcome of traditional initiation seen in Delarue's tale that is turned into an initiation of rape in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions, by putting the initiatory rituals themselves, female blood, and feminine sexuality concerning heterosexual romantic investments in a new light. Since female blood plays a vital role in all three initiatory representations that are embedded in

Delarue's, Carter's, and Tikkanen's narratives, I used my own menstrual blood as material for creating the visual results in the form of the photographic series *Girl Geniuses I–III* (Wide, 2020, visible in **Figure 4**). With the series, I advance a view of female blood as a positive substance and agency in the heroine's transformation.

FIGURE 4 *Girl Geniuses I-III* (Wide, 2020)

4.3 Article 3: "'Grandmas Do Worse:' The Kristevan Feminine in Contemporary Versions of Little Red Riding Hood"

The focus of attention in Article 3 is the third theme of intergenerational female relationships. The article delves into the heroine's grandmother relationship during her adolescent passage in Carter's "The Werewolf," Smith's "Bedlam," and Cross's *Wolf*. More specifically, it examines how the conflicts and possibilities of the changing grandmother-granddaughter relationship transform the heroine's feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality when she is becoming an adult and how this negotiates her grandmother relationship.

Since all three grandmothers in the focal tales of Article 3 resemble a crone or a witch, central to the analysis of the heroine's feminine is the crone or witch figure of initiation in old folklore, as also represented by the female werewolf in "The Story of Grandmother." The visual results of the photographic series *Crones and Granddaughters I–III* (Wide, 2021), seen in **Figure 5**, pursue this resemblance. From the viewpoint of the granddaughters, I depict the three grandmothers as crones through the shapes of trees.

Article 3 concludes that as part of growing up and changing, while conflict and trouble arise in the recreation of the heroine's grandmother relationship, they may be necessary for transforming psychosexuality, including reaching feminine psychosexual maturity. The heroine's reaching feminine psychosexual growth in the narratives studied in Article 3 is also key to resolving the issues of conflict

and friction with her grandmother. This eventually strengthens female bonding and empowers the heroine in the narratives studied.

FIGURE 5 *Crones and Granddaughters I-III* (Wide, 2021)

5 DISCUSSION

The following chapter will discuss the significance of the research carried out in this thesis. It commences with a summary of the key findings, which are evaluated in Subsection 5.1, while Subsection 5.2 discusses the implications of the findings. The section ends with a few concluding words and recommendations regarding the outcome of the results, which concludes the dissertation (5.3).

As stated in Section 1.1. the thesis aims *to examine how contemporary versions of LRRH by female storytellers represent the Kristevan feminine in girl or woman through the young-adult (or adult) heroine in a quest to transform cultural rape trauma*. The aim induces three research questions: 1) How does the heroine overcome rape trauma through the feminine genius? 2) How does the heroine negotiate women's social identity through the feminine? 3) How does the heroine recreate her feminine and how does this change her grandmother relationship? The dissertation applies the qualitative method of multimodal thematic close-reading that expands into practice-based research. Relying on intertextuality and metanarrative, trauma is established as a common link between prior and current LRRH versions from which the heroine moves past cultural rape trauma in the articles and their respective questions. This resulted in the three themes—trauma narration, female initiation, and intergenerational female relationships—and the two central topics, the Kristevan feminine and cultural rape trauma that converge in the new trend of LRRH by female storytellers in the Integrating Chapter.

The three articles address the aim by answering the three research questions, respectively. Article 1 shows that the heroine overcomes rape trauma through the feminine genius with the help of narration in terms of 1) female bonding, 2) productive imagination, 3) the feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life, and 4) the girl genius. Article 2 demonstrates that the heroine negotiates women's social identity through the feminine using female initiation that results in an active feminine agency and sexuality called the girl genius, displaying the three feminine qualities of reliance, relationality, and the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. Finally, Article 3 illustrates that the heroine recreates her feminine and changes her grandmother relationship in and through the grandmother-granddaughter relationship with the help of the

feminine qualities of reliance and relationality. The Integrating Chapter expands the central results of the articles into transforming the intertext of cultural sexual trauma. I will now provide an evaluation of these results.

5.1 Evaluating the Results

I will here give an evaluation of the results. In the evaluation of Articles 1-3 (Subsections 5.1.1–5.1.3), I interpret and contextualize the central results concerning the articles themselves, previous research, and the Integrating Chapter. This evaluation also contains a reflection on the visual findings of the articles that are viewable in **Figures 3-5**.

5.1.1 Article 1

In Article 1, the heroine overcomes rape trauma through the feminine genius by virtue of trauma narration in four relatable ways: female bonding, productive imagination, the feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life, and the girl genius. In the first way, Article 1 brings to focus female bonding through the heroine's maternal relationship, grandmother relationship, or both in Rego's, Atwood's, Lee's, and Block's narratives. The role of female bonding—that the studies by Marshall (2009) and Amber Moore (2018) point out in Block's narrative—was initially a surprise in the narratives studied in Article 1. Female bonding nevertheless highlights, first, the mother-daughter relationship that in Kristeva's theory is central to the development of feminine psychosexuality and female sexual plurality. Female intergenerational bonding was viewed as a metaphor for returning to the maternal function of the subject to transform victimized subjectivity. This strengthens the connection between all the narratives studied in the dissertation because all of them deal with maternal or grandmother relationships and a return to the maternal. Highlighting female intergenerational bonding in all articles can be seen as downplaying the rape narrative found in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions, as Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) point out. Second, female bonding enables a safe space for remembrance and mourning of the traumatized victim in terms of Herman's (1994) model of trauma narration. The Integrating Chapter shows how the first two stages of safety and remembrance and mourning in Herman's (1994) model concern Kristeva's (2014) feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality in terms of creating safety, trust, and connectedness that also enable witnessing by others.

In the second way, productive imagination represents the core of the genius. Article 1 connects with Oliver's (2007) study on the female genius through the productive imagination, although Oliver does not deal with trauma or fairy tales. Oliver's (2007) study interprets the feminine genius in Alvarez's literature in terms of imagination that allows women to protect psychic space/the maternal and flout male oppression, while in Wide and Rodi-Risberg's

(2021) article, productive imagination, as the ethos of the genius's creativity, crystallizes in the heroine's trauma narration as a means to expand psychic space in terms of reconstructing subjectivity after trauma. Productive imagination exhibits a pivotal moment in the heroines' recovery because it breaks traumatic repetition. Through the imaginary father that facilitates the symbolization of productive imagination, the heroine finds meaning in her own traumatic memory and the memory of rape trauma in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions.

Furthermore, the heroine's trauma narration contains elements of revenge fantasies and revenge. While in other contexts of trauma, revenge fantasies defer recovery (see Herman, 1994), Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) view them as inventions created by the heroine to transform trauma victimhood and cope with gendered violence when other means of escape have been exhausted. Because they are narrated, they become a part of the heroine's story and, therefore, exemplify a symbolization of productive imagination. While revenge is a horrendous and harmful act, it exposes a society that has either failed to protect or that normalizes violence and abuse of girls. The heroine's resorting to revenge in Article 1 was, nevertheless, only evident in the form of protecting life when in danger, which, according to Kristeva (2019), is in harmony with the concern for the feminine quality of reliance.

In the third way, as the Integrating Chapter shows, trauma narration resembles the third feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. The emphasis is on narrated life through Herman's (1994) third stage of reconnection rather than on the unity of living and thinking. This resemblance results from a combination of research on trauma and the Kristevan subject, genius, and the third feminine quality (see Herman, 1994; Kristeva 2001b; 2004c; 2019; Beardsworth, 2004; Schipper, 2011; Oliver, 2001, in Subsection 3.3). Both trauma narration and narrated life hinge on telling stories to others in order to work through and heal in ways that enable forgiveness through the responsible witnessing of others. Bringing together Kristeva's (2010; in Rice 2002) and Oliver's (2001; 2004b) initiatives of forgiveness and Alexander's (2012) moral of responsibility in the Integrating Chapter, trauma narration becomes a moral act of responsibility that enables forgiveness. Insofar as the heroine in Article 1 takes responsibility for individual and collective pain and trauma, as well as transforming them through narration and responsible witnessing, forgiveness is initiated on the level of both individual and cultural trauma. The heroine succeeds where more revengeful Little Red Riding Hoods have previously failed in tales by, for example, Clément and Forestier (2000/2014), Dahl (1983/2002), and Walker (2013). She transforms revenge through narration into forgiveness and moral values.

In the fourth way, the girl genius represents the heroine after her transformation. In the narrative process, the heroine undergoes an internal transformation that in the focal tales of Article 1 is displayed as taking on a new identity of a wolf, imaginatively or physically. This transformation into a wolf is more complex than role reversal, however. Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021)

interpret the heroine's transformation as healthy PTG in terms of recovery in ways that resemble the imagination of Kristeva's (2004c) genius and Warner's (1995) motif of the beast. Insofar as the genius and the beast motif illustrate the oppression of feminine sexuality and creativity that must be freed in society, they stand for similar ideas of feminine psychosexual maturity made available to girls through the girl genius and not only women as in previous studies (see Kristeva, 2001a; 2001b; 2004a; 2015; Oliver, 2007; Jasper, 2011, on women geniuses). Similar to Jasper's (2011) study that presents the female genius of Roberts as an alternative desire to "patriarchal frameworks" of sexuality (p. 67), Wide and Rodi-Risberg's (2021) study offers the girl genius as an alternative desire to normative sexuality and gender under patriarchy and the traditional rape narrative in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions. The transformation of Atwood's and Lee's heroines and the mother of Rego's protagonist results in increased agency via a new side of feminine sexuality and courage, while Block's protagonist is still narrating her trauma when the story ends. For her, narration gives her a voice previously denied her, indicating some healing and increased agency as a subject.

The visual results, *Girl Geniuses' Narrating Trauma in LRRH* (Wide, 2019–21, seen in **Figure 3**), add to the written results in many respects: storytelling, metanarrative, multimodal meaning-making and metalanguage through the senses, and therapeutic qualities. The series tells the story of LRRH in new ways. Like the narratives that I study in Article 1, I connect the series to Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's intertexts of rape trauma; the color red and the wolf in my illustrations allude to the red-hooded protagonist's encounter with the wolf. In addition, I see the wolf heads in Article 1 as portraits of the focal heroines, after transformation. By this, my series forms a metanarrative of their narratives. The illustrations also add multimodality and metalanguage to the meaning of wolf that opens to the senses through affects. Illustrating wolves feels different from writing about wolves. In the former, the wolves are perceived through the senses employing the color red, the fine pen strokes, the angles, and the cropping of the heads. To me, giving the wolves a face in the color red opens up different sensations of touch, fur, and even female blood—the latter will be significant in Article 2. The artwork, moreover, confirms a likeness between girl and wolf that redeems the wolf in LRRH, who is no longer a rapist to be afraid of but rather portrays the heroine herself and her transformation.

To answer the question of whether my artwork in **Figure 3** is therapeutic, I want to draw a parallel between animal welfare organizations' intention of releasing captive animals into the wild and freeing traumatized individuals from the constraints of trauma through narration. Bringing the illustrated wolves into the forest resulted on a personal level in a feeling of freedom of having released the wolves back into their natural element. I interpret this as a means of actually freeing the heroine of the focal tales from traumatic constraints. This freeing also releases the girl genius and the beast from traumatic oppression. Interpreted this way, the material and creative process add a layer of working through to the

artwork that can be said to contribute to the transformation of Little Red Riding Hood's cultural rape trauma.

5.1.2 Article 2

The findings of Article 2 highlight how, via the agency of the girl genius through female initiation in the fairy tale, the feminine of the heroine emerges as a sexual force in order to negotiate women's social role. Carter's and Tikkanen's narratives explore the three representations of female initiation in Delarue's tale: needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting. Concerning the role of abjection in initiation rituals, this exploration revealed a crossing of borders into the maternal function that, as in Article 1, enables transformation. The article shows, first, that the grandmother in Delarue's tale through initiation manages the protagonist's transformation into a woman, and second, that the heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales has more agency over her transformation, which, lastly, reveals the girl genius through the three feminine psychosexual qualities, also seen in Article 1.

First, Article 2 shows that the grandmother in Delarue's tale through female initiation controls the girl's transformation and social identity as a woman in ways that may disempower the heroine. The crossing into the maternal was in all three representations enabled by the grandmother, who is a werewolf. Similar to Verdier's (1997) and Vaz Da Silva's (2008a; 2008b; 2008c) studies, Article 2 recognizes in Delaure's tale the grandmother's positive transmission of women's skills and wisdom to her granddaughter through the representations of needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting, which, no doubt, is more empowering to girls than Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's rape narrative. Through the representation of needles and pins in Delaure's tale, however, Article 2 reveals that female blood takes on ambivalent assumptions regarding women's social identity that complicates their position in the Symbolic. Wide (2024) demonstrates a resemblance between the representation of needles and pins and menstrual taboo, a form of social abjection that excludes women from the Symbolic and subjugates them to men. Insofar as this representation relates to menstrual taboo, Wide (2024) shows that the grandmother in Delarue's tale offers her granddaughter the social identity of a woman under patriarchy. While, as Verdier (1997) notes, there is some power for women in the practices of female initiation, in Wide's (2024) view, it stays within an age-dominated female culture that is dominated by men and patriarchy, leaving little agency to young girls.

Second, while returning to the same three initiatory representations when similarly crossing the maternal border in contemporary initiation, in Carter's and Tikkanen's narratives agency is enabled in the heroine to transform social identity through the three feminine psychosexual qualities: reliance, relationality, and the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. As Kristeva (2004b; 2004c) uses women's menstrual cycles to exemplify the psychic depth of the first feminine quality of reliance where time is viewed as the capacity for new beginnings, the heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales learns to view time in terms of the

capacity for new beginnings through menstrual cycles but with a positive touch. Besides her brief comparison of menstruation and the quality of reliance, menstruation mainly figures as a social taboo in Kristeva's texts (e.g., 1982; 2001c). By contrast, menstruation in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, as in the representation of needles and pins, transforms from taboo into a positive and regenerative force of girls' agency, fertility, and sexuality through the heroine's highlighting of menstrual fluids concerning a curiosity about her own body.

The visual results in **Figure 4** use blood to highlight this positive turn of menstruation and the psychic depth of reliance, adding texture and therapy to the written findings in the form of cyclicality, color, meta fairy tale, and a working-through. For creating the artwork, I poured menstrual blood into a large water-filled white bowl and used a wooden spatula to stir it around to indicate the cycles of menstruation and time, as I imagined them in the quality of reliance. This is similar to Lewis's (2020) confrontation with social taboo and menstruation in the microphotographic collection *Beauty in Blood* created in 2015, reclaiming "feminine power" (p. vii), although Lewis does not engage with Kristeva's theory. Furthermore, as in **Figure 3**, **Figure 4** displays a meta fairy tale of LRRH on the topic of menstruation, which is comparable to Dyer's (2020) written menstrual fairy tales on women thinkers and poets that through "a journey into herself" seek to overturn "the patriarchal abject" of menstruation. In addition to referencing female blood in Delaure's, Carter's, and Tikkanen's narratives, menstruation in **Figure 4** alludes to the traumatized protagonist's red hood in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions. Creating **Figure 4** was therapeutic on an individual level, if not on a collective one. Before creating the artwork, menstruation had mostly figured in my own life as a discharge experienced through menstrual cramps and bloating that must be hidden. Creating an artwork of my own blood, through contact and curiosity, helped me to confront and work-through negativity and taboo to reach an appreciation of menstruation as beautiful that, as in Dyer's (2020) fairy tales, gives menstruation an identity shift.

In addition to the first quality of reliance, the second quality of relationality in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales emerges through the heroine's investment in a new romantic relationship with a male werewolf. Similar to Article 1, Article 2 takes after Warner's beast motif. While the beast motif in Article 1 results from a narration about rape trauma, Article 2 develops Warner's beast motif to include the male beast in "Beauty and the Beast" through a predator werewolf with whom the heroine falls in love. As in the materiality of female blood, the heroine's love in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales displays the first feminine quality of reliance as a reliance that, in addition to being sexual, mothers and nurtures her and her partner. Here, the binding of reliance facilitates the second feminine quality of relationality in terms of romance that enables a new core relationship with the werewolf although with the maternal in the distance. Through her boldness and decisiveness as a subject who acts with agency in ways that resonate with contemporary initiation, the heroine demonstrates a new side

of this relationship that breaks with notions of female passivity and subjugation in the traditional heterosexual romantic relationship.

The representations of the heroine's skin-shifting and cannibalism in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales reveal the third feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. While the emphasis of the third quality in the article is on the unity of living and thinking, the Integrating Chapter also understands it as part of narrated life. These pertain to the heroine's sexual transformation in and through the werewolf relationship. While the werewolf in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales cannot submit the heroine's sexuality to his control, she tames him through the transformative force of love and sex. Cannibalism indicated in Article 2 a sexual love that is devouring and relates to a child's first relationship with the mother before abjection (Wide, 2024). Furthermore, Carter's and Tikkanen's tales highlight skin-shifting through the heroine's experiences of animalness, fur, and skin in her relationship with the werewolf. These experiences that dissolve the girl's integrity as a subject open the border to the maternal. They can also be viewed as the imaginary father in the feminine that enables transformation by giving meaning to drives and affects. The imaginary father can here be understood as the third feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking (Wide, 2024). This is similar to Kristeva's (2004a) study, where, through writing, Colette plays around with the sensations of fur and desire to transform her animalness. The heroine in Carter's and Tikkanen's narratives transforms her own animalness, fur, and skin into symbols of her sexual transformation, agency, and freedom that change assumptions of female victimization associated with women's social identity in traditional heterosexuality, not to mention the rape narrative in Perrault's and the Grimm's LRRH.

Through the heroine's reaching the three qualities in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, what Wide (2024) calls the girl genius, Article 2 demonstrates that feminine psychosexual maturity is also available to girls. Through the three feminine qualities, Article 2 connects with Jasper's (2011) study on the female genius. Although Jasper (2011) does not study girls or female initiation, she discusses the feminine psychosexual qualities of Roberts's person and writing to display an alternative desire. Because of the erotic character of Carter's "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice" and Tikkanen's *Rödluvan*, Article 2 similarly puts forward the girl genius to display a preference for feminine sexuality. Insofar as Carter's and Tikkanen's tales allude to the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood, this transforms her trauma also on a collective level; it may even enable forgiveness of the trauma caused by the perpetrator.

5.1.3 Article 3

Article 3 demonstrates how the heroine's feminine is recreated in and through her grandmother relationship, in turn bringing changes also to this relationship. This demonstration in Carter's "The Werewolf," Smith's "Bedlam," and Cross's *Wolf* spotlights the feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality. This is different from Article 1, which, as the Integrating Chapter states, focuses

on the third feminine psychosexual quality, and Article 2 which emphasizes all three feminine psychosexual qualities. The in-depth analysis of the two qualities of reliance and relationality in Article 3 nevertheless revealed a new understanding of female bonding and conflict in intergenerational female relationships in the fairy tale that complements the study of the third feminine quality in Article 1. I will next evaluate the written and visual results of the renegotiation of the grandmother relationship and the two feminine qualities of reliance and relationality, and conclude by showing how they approach the third quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life and their impact on the canon and cultural rape trauma of LRRH.

The heroine's grandmother relationship in the narratives studied in Article 3 is renegotiated in her transition from childhood to adulthood. The adolescent passage is a complex time in life when, according to Kristeva (1990), the border to the maternal is weak, allowing a transformation of psychosexual identity. The grandmother in Article 3 forms the heroine's maternal object relation because of their strong relationship. As in Articles 1 and 2, the grandmother relationship that is examined in Article 3 facilitates the heroine's return to the maternal function to transform feminine psychosexual identity, a process that entails abjection (see Kristeva, 1990; 2007, on maternal abjection, transformation, and teenagers). In line with Kristeva's theory (2007), abjection in the focal narratives of Article 3 is a negative, conflicting, and even violent experience, what Mastrangelo Bové (2020) in another context refers to as a subject's "internal conflicts." These conflicts cause a breach in the focal heroine's maternal object relation in Article 3. In Carter's and Smith's narratives, this breach takes the form of the grandmother's matricide, whereas, in Cross's narrative, Cassy's negativity is mostly directed toward her mother, even if Cassy becomes aware of others' hostile feelings against her grandmother. Although Kristeva (2001a; 2001b; 2004a) rarely writes about grandmothers in her studies, the women geniuses similarly convey complex and ambivalent feelings about maternal relationships. For example, Kristeva (2004a) notes that in Colette's writing mothers are either missing or their daughters express hatred towards them. Nonetheless, without abjection, there is neither growth nor transformation. Article 3 shows that friction, caused by maternal abjection, not only causes trouble but is also an essential part of the heroine's growth and development of feminine psychosexuality.

With the visual results in **Figure 5**, I sought to capture the heroine's challenges and complexities caused by the changing nature of her grandmother relationship. As in **Figures 3** and **4**, the visual results in **Figure 5** add a meta fairy tale and texture through a personal story with therapeutic layers and color to the written findings. In creating the series, I drew inspiration from Staines's (2010: 338) drawing of Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother in the woods, as found in the Brothers Grimm's version. Like Staines (2010), I see similarities between Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother and what Staines refers to as a wise but ambivalent crone. Staines's (2010) description of "wild, hairy or mossy, forest dwelling" (p. 340) grandmothers impacted my seeing of the heroine's

grandmother in the silhouettes of majestic old linden, maple, and ash tree trunks, and their colorful apparel, while the branches metaphorically describe the granddaughters. My series in **Figure 5**, thus, becomes a LRRH meta fairy tale on grandmothers. Among these grandmothers, I also discerned my own maternal grandmother, who was a significant person if not one of my maternal object relations. Like Cassy's grandmother in *Wolf*, my grandmother taught me about the feminine psychosexual qualities discussed here, whereas my mother's feminine, as the feminine of Cassy's mother, remains weak to this day. Like the heroine in the tales that I study in Article 3, I was able to recall my maternal function. Similar to my own grandmother, I intended to depict the grandmother in Article 3 as capable, wise, and powerful through the loving eyes of her granddaughter. The colorful autumn leaves in **Figure 5** display a turning of seasons from autumn to winter, a time of the year when nature appears to die but is reborn in spring. Through these changes, I also sought to communicate the heroine's understanding that even if difficult, some friction is necessary yet temporary when recreating object relations in the adolescent transition and will, if worked through, engender her transformation and growth. In my view, this understanding of emotional complexities and challenges as rebirth in **Figure 5** relates to the first feminine quality of reliance as viewing time as the capacity for new beginnings that I will elaborate on next together with the second quality.

In Article 3, the changes in the grandmother relationship help the heroine recreate her feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality. At the beginning of the focal narratives, the heroine is a child who depends on her grandmother. When her grandmother relationship falls apart, however, she begins to act with responsibility, revealing that her feminine psychosexual qualities are growing. First, the heroine begins to express the quality of reliance through mothering. This is seen in the heroine's looking after houses and grandmothers in Carter's and Cross's narratives, and the heroine's care for herself and animals in Smith's narrative that is communicated through the figure of the Christian Eve. The heroine in the focal narratives rather than being a physical mother displays the energy of reliance: her actions towards herself and others are loving, caring, and nurturing in manners that, despite feelings of abjection, highlight hope for the future, trust, and belonging in the world and aim not only at preserving but also at restoring life.

Second, Article 3 demonstrates that through relationality, the heroine forms and learns to depend on new relationships. This is seen in her renewal of the maternal object relation and the building of new object relations. While Carter's heroine reestablishes and enhances the relationship with her grandmother (who dies in the narrative) by taking over her house, Smith's heroine builds a new relationship with herself and with animals and wolves. The heroine in Cross's narrative appears most relational because not only does Cassy recreate and refine her grandmother relationship, but she also improves her parental relationships and forms new relationships with her mother's boyfriend and his son.

The heroine's qualities of reliance and relationality in the adolescent passage in Article 3 reveal the complexities of intergenerational female relationships and a strengthening of female bonding in ways that also approach the third quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life. On the one hand, the heroine in Article 3 builds a healthy and loving adult identity with agency but without a male wolf; on the other hand, she recreates old and forms new object relationships with both humans and animals. While some trouble and conflict arise, they can be worked through, represented, and even forgiven. Taken through the imaginary father, this transformation both enables and is facilitated by the feminine resulting in the heroine's reaching psychosexual maturity through the qualities of relationality and reliance, the latter as mothering, and a view of time as the capacity for new beginnings. As in Article 2, the heroine's working through the passage of adolescence and object relations relying on the imaginary father can also be interpreted as the third feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life, emphasizing narrated life. In short, by transforming herself and her relationships the heroine in Article 3 decentralizes the role of the male wolf in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales. This reorients the cultural trauma story in their tales into a narrative of female bonding, strength, wisdom, and healing. Next, the implications of the results are presented.

5.2 Implications of the Results

In this subsection, I will discuss the implications of the research results. The social relevance and scientific contribution of the new insights are presented first in Subsection 5.2.1. The limitations of the study in Subsection 5.2.2 follow this presentation.

5.2.1 Social Relevance and Scientific Contribution

Here, I consider the social relevance and scientific contribution of the new insights, moving from the general implications of the dissertation to the specific implications of each article. After this follows the implications of the visual results. This dissertation contributes to society with a new trend of women's LRRH tales that transforms the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood through the feminine. More precisely, the dissertation provides a role model for how the cultural rape trauma in LRRH can be transformed through the feminine. Each dissertation theme—narration, initiation, and intergeneration—models how the heroine with the help of the feminine works through cultural rape trauma. This modeling may also contribute to changing the perception of LRRH from an oppressive rape narrative that victimizes girls to a regenerative cultural rape trauma narrative that increases girls' agency as subjects in society. Not only does the dissertation show that Little Red Riding Hood's cultural rape trauma brings awareness to the problem of gendered rape and victimization in Western

society, but it also demonstrates how, at least in LRRH, this problem can be transformed, ameliorated, and even forgiven. In effect, the results of this dissertation are of social value to those audiences and storytellers who are no longer happy with repeated representations of male desire, domination, and violence, who seek change, and who can envision an alternative in feminine psychosexuality to normative assumptions of heterosexuality that is controlled by masculine psychosexuality. The role model of girls' reaching feminine psychosexual maturity specifically benefits girls in the real world, who are into fairy tales, who seek freedom from the oppressive rape narrative created by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, and who want to rise to change by discovering their singular extraordinariness. Essentially, the new insights quell violence and emancipate the heroine through healing and forgiveness, move the contemporary LRRH tradition forward, and help new audiences of LRRH to find peace after cultural rape trauma as well as to imagine a new future for red-hooded girls.

The new insights also contribute to science. Modeling cultural rape trauma, its transformation, and amelioration provide new insights into the scholarship of feminist literary fairy tales that similarly tackles gendered oppression and LRRH on the rape narrative (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Beckett, 2014; Marshall, 2015). This dissertation also broadens the scope of trauma scholarship to include the scholarship of fairy tales, LRRH, and of Kristeva. In particular, Kristeva's theories of the subject and feminine illuminate the internal conflicts and possibilities of working through trauma. Finally, yet importantly, this dissertation introduces the girl and, more specifically, the girl genius in Articles 1 and 2 to Kristevan scholarship on the genius and the feminine. Although Kristeva (2000; 2004c; 2010; 2019) mentions girls' feminine psychosexual development in several studies, her focus is on exemplary women geniuses in real life. Likewise, the main focus of the studies of Oliver (2007), of Jasper (2011), and of Verma and Singh (2017) is on women geniuses. Next, I will consider the social relevance and the scientific contribution of the results of the articles.

The results from the analysis of the feminine genius in Article 1 contribute to society and science with the theme of narration as a way to overcome individual and cultural rape trauma by working through them. Article 1 expands the scope of Herman's model of trauma narration, a method used by therapists in real life, to include fairy tales. As Wide and Rodi-Risberg (2021) point out, trauma narration in the focal tales of Article 1 can serve as a role model for real rape victims to work through trauma from the safe space of fairy tales. Many rape victims do not seek help because of feelings such as shame, discomfort, and fear, or because they want to forget (Short et al., 2021). To show the extent of this problem, a large-scale study conducted in the United States by Nicole A. Short et al. (2021) shows that over 75% of female sexual assault victims who reported experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress did not meet with a psychologist or psychiatrist. Could the heroine's trauma narration in Article 1 inspire these victims to process trauma on their own or seek professional help? Working through trauma individually is markedly different from professional therapy, as

Kristeva notes in the Rice interview (2002). Still, I hope trauma narration as presented here, as it hopefully becomes more widely known, will provide help where it is needed to muster the strength to rise from victimhood, to work through and heal from rape trauma. At the very least, it may provide comfort by showing they are not alone. Returning for a moment to the contribution to the scientific scholarship of LRRH and literature, one additional point is the application of Herman's model in fairy tales that benefits the small number of LRRH studies on rape trauma (e.g., Walz, 2021; Beckett, 2014), the larger number of LRRH studies on the traditional rape narrative (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Beckett, 2014; Marshall 2009; 2015), and studies on the contemporary rape narrative in literature (e.g., Stockton, 2006; Field, 2020).

As for the four results of Article 1 that address both individual and cultural rape trauma, the first result of female bonding highlights the importance of female relationships and, more accurately, the mother-daughter relationship for girls, who work through trauma in real life. This finding is consistent with research on real female rape victims, who, according to Mezey (1997), prefer female therapists, although the therapist's sensitivity and attitude—I would say feminine attitude—is more important than gender. This result also contributes to trauma and Kristevan scholarship by revealing the return to the maternal function in trauma and the role of the feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality in creating safety and a place for remembrance and mourning in trauma narration. Although the return to the maternal in trauma has been pointed out by Kristeva (in Rice, 2004), it has not been featured in the context of Herman's model. The second result of the productive imagination of the Kristevan genius can be relevant to trauma scholarship because it shows where traumatic repetition ends and recovery begins. As Alexander (2012, p. 9) also states in the context of cultural trauma, it is only by representing imagination that trauma becomes known. The third result that brings together trauma narration and the feminine quality of the unity of living and thinking/narrated life advances Kristevan, trauma, and LRRH scholarships by showing that trauma, if not the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood, may be forgiven provided that it is narrated and witnessed in responsible ways. The fourth result of the girl genius that is also seen in **Figure 3**, as the victim-survivor's increased agency after healing from trauma and reaching feminine psychosexual maturity, provides a role model for girls by showing that healing from trauma is possible and that ordinary girls can be geniuses, too. The new relationship between the girl genius and the beast motif in Article 1 also brings together Kristevan and fairy-tale scholarship. This relationship is also relevant in Article 2.

The results from the analysis of the feminine in Article 2 advance society and science through the theme of working through initiation as a way to negotiate women's social identity that also helps transform the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood. As in Article 1, the girl genius in Article 2 exemplifies reaching feminine psychosexual maturity that benefits girls in real life. While the role of initiation rites has significantly lessened in contemporary Western society, the issues involved in the process of growing up are still relevant.

Working through the adult transition alone can be confusing with bodies that leak blood, grow disproportionally, and change in composition physically, mentally, emotionally, and sexually while societal forces in many ways still pressure girls to conform to women's traditional social identity in terms of female subjugation and passivity. While looking for a romantic partner within the heterosexual context, as the heroine studied in Article 2 demonstrates, girls must negotiate their sexual and gender identities as subjects in relation to object relations. Herein, the girl genius of Article 2 can act as a supportive role model for developing a strong sense of self that is rooted in the body and the heart in a patriarchal world that still today suppresses girls' geniuses. The girl genius is a gift to ordinary girls who may struggle with representing matters of love, their psychosexual identity, and sexual agency as subjects in their search for a romantic partner and who seek an alternative through feminine psychosexuality. Rather than being in the power of masculine desire, feminine psychosexuality emerges as a sexual force in Article 2 that is grounded in girls' corporeality of female blood, shown in **Figure 4**, and sexuality. It exemplifies in concrete ways the three feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance, relationality, and the unity of living and thinking/narrated life.

Studying female fairy-tale initiation as a way to work through the heroine's victimization from the perspective of Kristeva's theories of the subject, genius, and feminine, Article 2 benefits fairy-tale, Kristevan, and trauma scholarships. First, Article 2 adds Kristeva's theories to fairy tale scholarship on initiation (e.g., Verdier, 1997; Vaz Da Silva, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c) by constructing the three female initiatory representations—needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting—on abjection. Second, the article benefits Kristevan scholarship by testing Kristeva's comparison of abjection and initiation rituals (1982; in Penwarden, 1995) and by proving that initiation, as in the trauma narration of Article 1, is a process of working through and out of subjugated and victimized subjecthood that positively transforms the heroine as a subject who has sexual agency in the social, which can also be viewed as negotiating cultural rape trauma. This testing ground also proves that the three feminine psychosexual qualities of the genius apply to girls. Third, the working-through of initiation in Article 2 contributes to cultural trauma studies on amelioration (e.g., Alexander 2004b).

In Article 3, the results from the analysis are of social value and a contribution to knowledge through the theme of intergeneration as a way to recreate the heroine's feminine and grandmother relationships during her adolescent passage and ultimately reorienting the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood. Article 3 provides new insights into the dynamics of female intergenerational relationships. By highlighting female bonding on a psychosexual level that, at least, potentializes girls' sexual plurality, these insights are of social value to girls in the role of daughters and also older women considering the transformative capability of feminine psychosexuality. Specifically, the article demonstrates that the narratives of Carter, Smith, and Cross through the fairy tale provide a space of safety for girls to work through

conflicts in the mother-daughter or grandmother-granddaughter relationships during the passage through adolescence. The heroine is a positive role model for the feminine psychosexual qualities of reliance and relationality. This benefits girls by showing that intergenerational female conflict, when worked through in the adolescent transition, may be lessened, resolved, and also forgiven through the same qualities, in the end strengthening intergenerational female bonding as seen also in **Figure 5**.

Article 3 also contributes to science. By highlighting female intergenerational relationships, Article 3 introduces the grandmother to Kristevan scholarship on feminine psychosexuality in addition to the girl. Besides briefly mentioning the traumatic implications of the grandmother-granddaughter relationship on Klein's daughter and one of Kristeva's female patients, Kristeva (2001b; 2010) rarely discusses the role of the grandmother in the feminine. Through the Kristevan feminine, the article provides an alternative reading for examining girls' gender and sexuality in the process of maturing. This alternative reading could be valuable to fairy-tale and literary scholarship on girlhood. It also shows an appreciation of old age in LRRH that results in a reevaluation of the grandmother as the heroine's wise old mentor through the crone or witch figure, who is depicted in **Figure 5**, during the adolescent transition, and who has mostly been discussed in the context of male power and female victimization (e.g., Zipes, 1993; Henneberg, 2008). In this way, Article 3 differs from previous studies by Bacchilega (1997) and Joosen (2021) on intergenerational female relationships in Carter's "The Werewolf" and in Cross's *Wolf*, respectively, by showing that the grandmother in the narratives of Carter, Cross, and Smith are useful, powerful, and necessary for the heroine's adolescent transition and the attainment of feminine psychosexual maturity through the qualities of reliance and relationality. Last but not least, the centralization of the heroine, via her working through the grandmother relationship and adolescent transition enabling feminine psychosexual depth, decentralizes the perpetrator in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales and helps transform the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood. Next, I shall meditate on the implications of the visual results.

As images, the visual results presented in **Figures 3**, **4**, and **5** illustrate multiple social values and scientific contribution. The first social value is that being images, the visual results are easy to disseminate. Rose (2016, p. 21) points this out when stating that images have always circulated in societies in a wider sense than written texts and even more so today with the rise of the Internet. The second social value of the visual results is visual communication which benefits both science and society. Because images nowadays play a prominent role in most people's lives, research must also communicate visually (Kress, 2020; Rose, 2016). Images have an advantage over written text in that the information that they convey can be taken in quickly (Rose, 2016). The third social value is that images through multimodality broaden the scope of understanding. This also benefits science. As the self-reflections show (under Subsections 5.1.1–5.1.3), **Figures 3**, **4**, and **5** add texture, color, and affects through the wolves, menstrual

blood, and grandmothers that appeal to the visual sense and generate feelings different from reading. According to Barone and Eisner (2012), unlike written results that offer propositional claims about how things stand, visual results create affective insights into these states through "the service of understanding"(p. 3).

The fourth social value is that representing both research findings and new meta fairy tales of LRRH in their own right, **Figures 3**, **4**, and **5** may appeal to the greater public and also be appreciated by the target audience of girls. This combined representation of science and metanarrative also contributes to science by going beyond the confines of written results. Barone and Eisner (2012) make such a claim when stating that scholars who are specialists in their field(s) mostly write for other specialists, thereby excluding non-specialized audiences. Images, conversely, hold the capacity to address audiences that are not versed in scientific scholarship. Similarly, Rose (2016, p. 331) argues that because visual research results are images, they communicate more powerfully with different types of audiences than academic writing in a journal.

Finally, but most importantly, creating the artwork in **Figures 3**, **4**, and **5** resulted in working through or on individual "traumas" in surprising ways. This contributes to other practice-based studies such as MacLean's (2023) study that claim healing. Comparably, in **Figure 3**, I set out to free the heroine from rape trauma, whereas I work through my own negative feelings towards menstruation in **Figure 4.** By displaying menstruation as artwork, I confront menstruation as a social taboo by revealing an aesthetic dimension of female blood as beautiful, which can be appreciated in its own right and by menstruating girls in real life. This new dimension adds to menstrual scholarship (e.g., Lewis, 2020; Dyer, 2020) and Kristevan scholarship (e.g., Kristeva 2004b; 2004c) on the feminine, the latter of which while recognizing the importance of menstruation, focuses on mother-related matters. In **Figure 5**, I also work on my own maternal object relation and my feminine. Notably, as in other forms of working-through, the healing and forgiveness that resulted from practice-based research here are ongoing processes. These processes nevertheless confirm the therapeutic side of practice-based research, where creating art is a passage that must be worked through. In conclusion, accompanied by self-reflections, the artwork in **Figures 3** to **5** also adds a therapeutic layer to the transformation of the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood. From an ethical perspective, it can be argued that practice-based researchers are similar to artists and writers who work through trauma in the creative process, taking responsibility for their own healing from trauma.

5.2.2 Limitations

In this subsection, I discuss the limitations of the results that pertain to translation, language problems, and the focal narratives. In conducting this research, I have relied on English translations of Kristeva's texts. This means that I have not been able to experience Kristeva's true voice in the original language of French. Translation has been a problem, at least of Kristeva's early work. As an example,

Smith (1998) points out the problem with translating the French word *féminin* to English since *féminin* more neutrally relates to women's gender than the English word feminine that, according to Mary Mahowald (1981), also comes with negative connotations, such as weakness, coquettishness, and submissiveness. Since I use the term feminine in the specialized sense of psychosexuality, however, and not to describe gender, this might have been less of a problem in this dissertation. Second, reading Kristeva's texts in their original language does not necessarily result in a better study. For example, Jefferson (2015) translates the title of Kristeva's essay "Y a-t-il un génie féminin?" into "Does Female Genius Exist?," which is different from the official English translation "Is There a Feminine Genius?" and dismisses the role of the feminine.

Furthermore, some sources were unavailable in the English language. While I found Delaure's *The Borzoi Book of French Folk Tales* (1956) and Verdier's (1997) study, some of their research has not been translated into English. While this might have somewhat impacted Article 2, I was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of "The Story of Grandmother" and female initiation from the sources available in English (Delaure, 1956; Verdier 1997) and other sources (e.g., Girardot, 1977; Zipes, 1993; Vaz Da Silva, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; 2007; 2021). Because of language limitations, I could not gain more than a surface understanding of Tamas's *Au NON des femmes: Libérer nos classiques du regard masculine* (2023) as it is yet to be translated into English. Interviews and reviews in English (e.g., Biggs, 2023; Wilkin, 2024), however, confirm the commentary made on consent in LRRH and Barbot De Villeneuve's (1740/2014) tale that relates to Tamas's study in this dissertation.

The narratives also come with some limitations. The focal narratives of this dissertation are limited to female storyteller's renderings of girl heroines and their grandmothers. Their depictions will most likely differ from girls and grandmothers in the real world. Furthermore, since cultural traumas rely on others to have an impact, the total number of narratives in the dissertation could have been greater, impacting the results and the new trend of women's LRRH narratives accordingly, although a larger sample would not automatically result in a better study or trend. The benefit of using a smaller sample here is that it provides more context to the narratives studied, so arguably the sample could have been even smaller. While the amount of data might appear small for creating a lasting impact since Henrik Vejlgaard (2008, p. 37) argues that two trendsetters are enough to create a trend, ten is a good number for the new trend of women's LRRH tales transforming cultural trauma through the feminine. While Tikkanen's narrative may not be enough to give substance to the new trend in the Nordic countries, it constitutes a nice addition to the British and North American narratives. As Vejlgaard (2008) points out, uncovering new trends is ultimately about detecting "signs," which have not been noticed before and which show "that some aspect of human behavior is changing" (p. 34). Therefore, it may be concluded that the new trend of female storytellers' contemporary narratives of LRRH that I have detected demonstrates an impactful transformation of cultural rape trauma through the feminine.

5.3 Concluding Words and Thoughts for Future Research

The emancipatory, creative, sexual, and potentially healing and forgiving outcomes of the transformation of cultural rape trauma through the agency of the feminine form a new trend in contemporary versions of LRRH, created by female storytellers within the larger body of Western feminist fairy tales. This new trend, identified by this dissertation, is for those who can envision a better and more harmonious world that moves past cultural sexual trauma to find forgiveness and peace. It is for those who embrace the feminine, not only of Little Red Riding Hood, but in themselves through the cultivation of psychosexual feminine need through transformation in relation to the three qualities of the feminine—reliance, relationality, and unity of the living and thinking/narrated life—which can result in psychic depth. While the feminine is mainly presented as an offering to girls within this dissertation, beyond this context it includes all individuals who seek to work on themselves and their traumas, to let go of the old and to transform and prosper.

There is great potential for more research on cultural rape trauma and the feminine. As my readers and I begin to put cultural rape trauma in LRRH behind us and envision a new future for Little Red Riding Hood, in order to learn more about how the feminine can continue to transform the world outside of LRRH, I would, first, like to challenge my readers by asking them to consider what they have learned about the feminine in them through Little Red Riding Hood in this thesis, and to cultivate it. Second, I would like to see more fairy-tale studies, including studies taking a practice-based approach, for example, through the creation of visual results or storytelling on cultural sexual trauma and the Kristevan feminine created by male, female, and nonbinary storytellers alike. I see a potential for research on cultural sexual trauma and girls' feminine in many of Block's (2009a) other fairy tales. For instance, "Charm" features a girl's memory of rape trauma that results in gender and sexual fluidity. There are other fairy-tale heroines in the fairy-tale canon who suffer from violence and maybe also cultural trauma, so Adelmann's (2021) novel on traumatized fairy-tale heroines would also make an excellent study. It would also be interesting to see more studies that highlight the feminine in itself, for example, in relation to female initiation in Smith's visual essay *Woven Tales* (2016), which was published for her eponymous exhibition at Gerald Peters Contemporary, USA, in 2016. The feminine could further be studied in the British author Hannah Whitten's *For the Wolf* (2021) and in the American Rachel Vincent's *Red Wolf* (2021). Both are fantasy novels that feature a red-hooded girl protagonist, a wolf, and a grandmother. As this study has focused on the girl heroine's feminine in LRRH, the feminine could also be approached in future studies from the perspective of the female storytellers' lives. Studies that focus on different aspects of the feminine could be beneficial, too, for example on reliance and relationality and different types of relationship, such as the human and animal in Smith's *Woven Tales* (2016) and Carter's other fairy tales in *The Bloody Chamber: And Other Stories*

(1979/2006a). Maybe someday someone will even analyze my meta fairy tales of LRRH. This is my hope; meanwhile, I will continue to serve the Kristevan feminine, which I have discovered in myself while writing this dissertation with its purpose of helping to create more harmony, peace, and love in the world.

SUMMARY

The subject matter of this dissertation is trauma, the feminine, and "Little Red Riding Hood." More explicitly, the dissertation performs research on cultural rape trauma and Julia Kristeva's concept of the feminine, meaning feminine psychosexuality, in written and visual versions of LRRH by contemporary female storytellers in mainly North America and Britain. While both the contemporary versions by female storytellers and the canonical versions of LRRH by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm have to a certain extent been researched before in relation to the rape narrative, a very limited number of studies have so far in the contemporary versions examined rape trauma. Moreover, while there are some studies on real women's feminine conducted by Kristeva and others concerning Kristeva's idea of the female genius, no studies have yet addressed girls' feminine. The dissertation addresses these gaps in research by asking the following question: How do the contemporary female storytellers' versions of LRRH represent the Kristevan feminine in girl or woman through the young-adult (or adult) heroine in order to transform the narrative of cultural rape trauma that is ingrained in the canonical versions of the tale by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm?

In order to advance the central research problem, the articles of the dissertation ask three sub-questions (one question is addressed per article): 1) How does the heroine overcome rape trauma through the feminine genius? 2) How does the heroine negotiate women's social identity through the feminine? 3) How does the heroine recreate her feminine and how does this change her grandmother relationship? Although only Article 1 explicitly examines trauma, cultural rape trauma has advanced into a central topic of the dissertation together with the Kristevan feminine. More specifically, the dissertation demonstrates that the heroine's feminine is represented through three trauma-related themes. These are trauma narration, female initiation as a way to negotiate trauma, and intergenerational female relationships as a way to reorient trauma.

Article 1 studies the heroine's narration of rape trauma in Paula Rego's illustration series *Little Red Riding Hood Suite* (2003/2006), Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Tanith Lee's short story "Wolfland" (1983b), and Francesca Lia Block's short story "Wolf" (2009b) as a way to overcome trauma through the feminine genius. The article reveals the Kristevan feminine of the heroine in the form of female bonding, productive imagination as the ability to transform by producing new, the girl genius who is a younger version of Kristeva's genius, and advanced by the dissertation, narrated life. These results are understood as the transformative capability comprising three qualities of feminine psychosexuality: reliance, relationality, a unity of living and thinking/narrated life.

Article 2 examines female initiation in Angela Carter's short stories "The Company of Wolves" (1979/2006b) and "Wolf-Alice" (1979/2006d), and Märta Tikkanen's novel *Rödluvan* (1986) as a way to negotiate women's social identity in terms of transforming female victimization. The article highlights the heroine's

feminine as a sexual force in the heterosexual romantic relationship, which also shows a new appreciation of female blood. As in Article 1, the feminine assumes the form of the three psychosexual qualities, displaying the attainment of feminine psychosexual maturity called the girl genius in the article.

Article 3 investigates how the feminine of the heroine is recreated in and through her grandmother relationship during the adolescent passage in Angela Carter's short story "The Werewolf" (1979/2006c), Kiki Smith's visual essay "Bedlam" (2001), and Gillian Cross's novel *Wolf* (1990). The article highlights the heroine's reaching feminine psychosexual maturity through the two qualities of reliance and relationality, as well as changes in the grandmother relationship that resulted in a new understanding of female bonding and conflict in intergenerational female relationships that also reclaims the wise crone or witch figure of the fairy tale.

Combining Kristeva's theories of subjectivity, the genius, and the feminine with research on trauma and fairy tales, the dissertation demonstrates that the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood can be worked through and overcome by agency of the three themes: trauma narration, female initiation, and female intergenerational relationships. To demonstrate this, the dissertation applies the method of multimodal thematic close-reading, which expands into practice-based research through the creation of visual results in the form of artwork that accompanies each article. Being images, the visual results break new horizons by communicating more directly and forcefully than written results in academic texts do, and furthermore with new, non-academic audiences. The visual results also add multimodal understanding to the written results through texture, color, and affect. Accompanied by self-reflection, the visual results revealed to some extent the author's individual working-through in ways that enhance the written results by generating transformation and freedom.

The dissertation contributes to society by offering the contemporary female storytellers' "Little Red Riding Hood" narratives as a new trend that models how the cultural rape trauma in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's canonical versions can be transformed through the feminine in ways that enable healing, forgiveness, and freedom from the binds of trauma. This may benefit not only audiences and storytellers of LRRH but also victims who suffer from actual or attempted rapes. In particular, the dissertation provides a role model for girls who love fairy tales and who seek amelioration and freedom from the oppressive rape narrative of the canonical versions of LRRH through the regenerative narrative of the feminine that transforms and overcomes the cultural rape trauma of Little Red Riding Hood.

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GLOSSARY OF CENTRAL KRISTEVAN TERMS

Adolescent Oedipus is adolescents' version of the oedipal structure, in which, spurred by idealization, adolescents replace the earlier object relations of the parents with a new model.

The chora is the post-natal relation of mother and child.

The female genius refers to singular women's exemplary creativity through the extraordinary in the ordinary.

The feminine or *the genius in the feminine* describes transformative feminine psychosexuality, imagination, and the three qualities (see separate definitions): reliance, relationality, and a unity of living and thinking/narrated life.

The imaginary father is situated between the maternal and the symbolic functions of a subject and enables a shift from the former to the latter. The imaginary father can be seen as an extension of the maternal.

Maternal abjection is the infant's rejection of the maternal, perceived as an excess. The maternal never truly leaves a subject and poses a threat to symbolic subjectivity. Therefore, maternal abjection is seen as both a shielding of subjective borders and as a transgression of them.

The maternal function or *the maternal* refers to affective and nonsensical elements of a subject's language and body that results from the shared infant-mother psychic space, which Kristeva calls the chora.

The maternal object relation is the infant's first intimate relationship with the mother, resulting from an internalization of her as an object and in the infant's first sense of self and connectedness.

Maternal reliance is the psychosexual energy of a mother, sublimated into mothering which allows the child attachment.

The oedipal dyad refers to Kristeva's psychosexual developmental structure for girls, divided into the primary Oedipus, where the child's maternal object relation and first psychic space form, and the secondary Oedipus, where, if a girl conforms to a heterosexual identity, she changes love object from mother to father.

Relationality describes connectedness and object relations of the feminine, rendering the subject inseparable from real or imagined others.

Reliance is the quality of the feminine that is perceived as energetic or vocational mothering and time as the capacity for new beginnings.

Subjectivity is people's sense of themselves as subjects that have agency. For Kristeva, subjectivity is an open structure, hence, the subject-in-progress, shifting between maternal and symbolic functions of its own being within the Symbolic.

The Symbolic points to sociocultural forces and contexts and their history, such as family, art, education, religion, and law that shape and organize society as a whole.

The symbolic function or *the symbolic* describes a subject's structured complex elements of language and thinking.

The unity of living and thinking/narrated life is a working together of an individual's life and thoughts of the feminine, also described in the Integrating Chapter of this dissertation as a narration of life and lived experience.

ORIGINAL PAPERS

I

FROM RAPE TRAUMA TO GENIUS THROUGH NARRATION IN CONTEMPORARY LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD TALES

by

Carola Maria Wide & Marinella Rodi-Risberg, 2021

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With introduction by Paul Quinn and Naomi Foyle

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

THE CHICHESTER CENTRE FOR FAIRY TALES FANTASY AND SPECULATIVE FICTION

Fig. 1 Paula Rego, *Mother Takes Revenge* (2003).
Pastel on paper, 76 x 57 cm, 29 46/50 x 22 22/50 in
© Paula Rego. Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro.

From Rape Trauma to Genius through Narration in Contemporary Little Red Riding Hood Tales

Carola Maria Wide and Marinella Rodi-Risberg

Introduction

Jack Zipes, Sandra Beckett and Claudia Barnett describe 'Little Red Riding Hood' (LRRH), classified as ATU 333 and published by Charles Perrault (1697), later taking the form of 'Little Red Cap' in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's (1812) versions, as a rape narrative. The traditional rape narrative, defined in terms of an empowered male subject and an objectified female subject,[1] socially constructs female identity as 'rapable', penetrable and passive,[2] making her body a space at risk of rape that she must protect.[3] This is seen in Zipes's interpretation of Perrault's red-hooded girl as a 'sadomasochistic object', who invites rape and is accountable for the wolf's wrongdoing, wherefore she is murdered.[4] Although the Brothers Grimm added a happy ending through a male hunter who saves the girl and her grandmother, the girl still suffers the trauma of rape and bears responsibility for tempting fate by behaving waywardly and sexually.[5] Beckett contends that most contemporary versions of LRRH continue to represent rape narratives.[6] For example, Sara Moon's (1983) version of Perrault's LRRH confronts viewers with the dangers of 'abuse, rape, prostitution'.[7] Barnett's reading of Perrault's, the Grimms' and Paul Delarue's versions of LRRH, in conversation with Zipes's analysis of Western rape culture, has demonstrated not only the part played by fairy-tale characters in generating and strengthening traditional gender roles, but also how the approaches to and terms employed in analysing fictional victim-survivors of sexual violence and abuse can have broader cultural ramifications.[8] Barnett hopes that in the future, 'academic power-discourse' may be instrumental in changing this rape-culture narrative, which in turn may influence how actual survivors view themselves and inspire them to initiate justice.[9]

Contemporary feminist versions by Portuguese-British artist Paula Rego, Canadian writer Margaret Atwood, British writer Tanith Lee and American writer Francesca Lia Block focus on the physical and traumatic impacts of rape on the survivors. As such, these trauma narratives constitute literary and artistic metatextual returns to, or intertextual re-enactments of, traumatic instances in Perrault's and the Grimms' texts. Simultaneously, they analyse the effects of rape trauma in ways that invite the audience to empathise with

the survivors' suffering. As Robin E. Field argues, it is necessary to centralise the victim-survivors in rape narratives.[10] The surviving protagonists' desire to live and recreate their stories in the narratives here engenders the outwitting of the wolf: he is actually or imaginatively killed by either girl, mother, or grandmother. Yet these narratives are not just reversal tales where the victim assumes the role of the aggressor. Rather, they view rape from the perspective of the protagonists who narrate their trauma, an act of recalling the traumatic event which recreates female identity from object to subject, from victim to survivor. Narrating the victim-survivors' stories, the tales offer the protagonists a voice denied them in the traditional tales, construct what Teresa de Lauretis terms an alternative 'measure of desire'[11] and help shape the meaning of LRRH regarding rape for today's audiences. Herein, they challenge the traditional rape narrative which Stockton maintains is normalised in compulsory heterosexuality and narrated from a masculine viewpoint, hinging on men's fears of false claims and fantasies of possessing the female and her sexuality.[12]

Rego's illustration series *Little Red Riding Hood Suite* (*LRRHS*) (2003), Atwood's dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Lee's Gothic short story 'Wolfland' (1980) and Block's young adult piece 'Wolf' (2000) represent various categories of artistic composition, but all centre on similar concerns and so invite an exploration across genres. With the exception of Atwood's novel, they have marginally been studied in the context of rape, gendered subjectivity and self-narrativity. In *LRRHS*, comprising six illustrations executed in pastel, Little Red Riding Hood's mother derives power from killing a man named Wolf, who raped her daughter.[13] According to Marina Warner, Rego's fairy tales resist simplistic interpretations of victim and oppressor through surprising reversals, fluidity and ambiguity.[14] Atwood's novel features Offred, a Handmaid who is forced to produce children for the male ruling class in fictional Gilead, but recovers her agency by telling herself stories.[15] Zipes categorises *The Handmaid's Tale* as a feminist version of LRRH which explores women's rising from collective victimhood through the solitary heroine, who consults her own resourcefulness, wit and intelligence to overcome difficulties.[16] In this, Offred resembles Julia Kristeva's individual heroine, highlighted in her idea of the female genius that describes ordinary women doing the extraordinary to change the conditions which define them.[17] Lee's 'Wolfland' features a girl named Lisel, whose grandmother was sexually abused by her husband and became a werewolf to defend herself. Andrea Gutenberg examines how changes in female subjectivity through abjection (an internal process that dissolves subjectivity) in Lee's tale help the characters escape gendered violence.[18] The protagonist in Block's 'Wolf' is a survivor of incestuous rape, who finally takes matters into her own hands. Elizabeth Marshall links 'Wolf' to the Grimms' 'Little Red Cap', arguing that it challenges assumptions of girls' vulnerability to rape and empowerment through self-protection,[19] an idea Laura Mattoon D'Amore terms 'vigilante feminism'.[20] Ann Martin situates Block's heroine among alternative feminist subjects who appropriate their own narratives.[21] However, these studies do not recognise in the focal narratives rape trauma, trauma narration, or the victim-survivor genius.

All these narratives return to the meeting of wolf and girl that ends in violence in the traditional tale and creatively transform it into an empathic and agentic trauma narrative of the rape survivors' healing. Roberta S. Tristes emphasises that young sexually abused heroines find their narrative voices only after 'their bodies have been completely disempowered',[22] to which Marshall responds that girls' rescue from sexual violence may be late and result from outliving childhood and creating agency through self-narration.[23] While the focal protagonists are temporarily victimised, they work through trauma in ambivalent and complex ways, elucidating a creative change regarding female fear, suffering and victimhood in relation to the rape narrative that is emancipatory for girls. By having the protagonists change their selves, the tales represent responses, new understandings and efforts to make sense of the ongoing influence of such violence in our culture, addressing rape and girls' and women's reactions to it as a real issue. They recognise rape trauma and depict the protagonists' efforts at post-trauma recovery in ways that resonate with post-traumatic growth (PTG), positive transformation after traumatic experience as delineated by Judith Herman,[24] and with the Kristevan subject and the genius: specifically, the focal heroines overcome rape trauma by narrating it, through which process they transform into, or assume characteristics of, the wolf. In her work on PTG, Herman outlines the victim-survivor's narrative reconstruction of traumatic experience as a central part of healing together with creating a safe space for narration and re-establishing connection.[25] In reconstructing one's trauma narrative, traumatic experiences must be represented to oneself; as Kristeva emphasises, one must 'think about them, name them, master them, traverse them, forget them'.[26] However, traumatic experiences often seemingly resist representation and are, therefore, described as non-representational; they challenge narratives that individuals tell themselves about themselves.[27]

Kristeva's work on subjectivity and genius provides important insights into the focal protagonists' representation and non-representation of trauma and agency as subjects. Her subject is dialectic, constructed through representational and non-representational functions of signification. Key terms include the maternal, symbolic, abjection and the imaginary father, of which the latter relates to the genius. The maternal is an unconscious psychic function or space, constructed in and by an individual's first relationship with the mother, her body, affects and drives.[28] Judith Butler refers to the Kristevan maternal as a 'libidinal multiplicity', pointing to a wealth of non-representational meanings created here,[29] whereas Elizabeth Grosz calls it the order of 'subject formation' since it marks out subjective space.[30] An orderly representation of signification and an individual's assuming the position of subject correspond to the conscious function of the symbolic.[31] While a symbiosis of the symbolic and the maternal constructs the dialectic subject,[32] abjection and the imaginary father are extensions of the maternal. Abjection is a negative process that both defends and 'pulverizes' symbolic subjectivity:[33] the former action rejects while the latter opens for the maternal.[34] Kristeva invents the imaginary father, a positive,

regenerative and productive process, to (re)establish the subject's relationship with the symbolic, disrupted by abjection.[35] The imaginary father is the function of imagination and possibility[36] and the locus of both fairy tales and geniuses. Warner characterises fairy tales as 'a language of the imagination', making a space for females to re-represent themselves and their stories.[37] For Kristeva, the imaginary is the origin of genius-ness.[38] This view is supported by Suzanne Guerlac, who in her structuring of Kantian genius on the Kristevan subject, relates the genius to the spontaneous, intuitive and imaginative functions of the maternal, arguing that 'productive imagination', the capacity to produce new (which is at the heart of the Kantian genius),[39] is the principal constitutive factor of genius.[40] The focal heroines' trauma narrations in the works examined here highlight the productive imagination of what we call the girl genius (to differentiate it from the Kristevan genius that centres on nonfictional women and to emphasise the role of the girl). The girl genius is presented textually and non-textually through artwork in the conclusion.

The focal heroines' narrations of trauma highlight the (grand)mother-(grand)daughter relationships, shifting attention from male violence and female suffering to female bonding and heroism. Traumatic events can, indeed, lead to the Kristevan genius that simply stated is creativity that raises an individual above ordinariness:[41] the protagonists' narration of trauma results in unique accounts of imaginative work, providing the turning point towards healing, through fantasies of murdering the wolf and remaking their identities from beauties into beasts, or explicitly into wolves. For Warner, the beast motif in women's fairy tales symbolises the release and representation of the heroine's libido and creativity in the function of the imaginary similar to the genius.[42]

Paula Rego's *Little Red Riding Hood Suite:* Picturing Trauma

LRRHS is a little girl's trauma story that raises the mother to the status of heroine, narrated from a safe environment post-trauma. According to Warner, Rego speaks from within her fairy tales, more specifically, from the ignored place of girls, centralising their 'dramas of sexual curiosity and conflict' through images before the mastering of written language.[43] Contrary to that of adults, children's locus of control relates 'to instinct, to irrationality, to pre-social'.[44] What the viewer of Rego's piece witnesses is the girl's piecing together of her sexual trauma. As trauma can resist verbal representation, images that appear disconnected or frozen in time express the survivor's early attempts to represent traumatic experience that resist representation.[45] In such a situation, Herman maintains that creating pictures is superior to other modes of expressing trauma, including writing or speech.[46] In Kristevan theory, traumatic experience provokes abjection, a regression to maternal space which breaks down meaning.[47] In narrating her trauma, the girl in Rego's work, who imagines herself as Little Red Riding Hood, wants her mother. Oliver asserts that, in the end, all individuals desire the same thing, their 'mommies'.[48] It is well known in child development that if the mother primarily attends to her child, she becomes her

child's first love object.[49] Yet, behind the child's love for the mother-object lurks the maternal space, into which infants are born but nevertheless abject in order to acquire language and become subjects, after which the maternal continues in the periphery of selfhood.[50] While individuals long for the love and nurture experienced as infants in the maternal phase, pre- and postnatally, charged with pre-objects, bodily drives and abjection, the maternal frightens, too.[51]

The first illustration, *Happy Family – Mother, Red Riding Hood and Grandmother*, depicts the girl's family, as seen through her loving lens, which resonates with how trauma reconstruction ideally begins with the survivor's life pre-trauma and progresses towards the traumatic experience.[52] Here, the girl indicates the feelings of love, happiness and intimacy, emphasised in the word 'happy' of the title. Specifically, the first illustration foregrounds the girl and her mother, captured in an embrace, under the protective eyes of the grandmother in the background. The girl demonstrates love for her mother and grandmother, who are her 'stern heroines',[53] a love which is clearly reciprocated. The female characters of three generations are represented in red throughout the series and so allude to Perrault's and the Grimms' traumatised, red-hooded girl. Simultaneously, red highlights a bond between the characters, symbolising protection. In folklore and literature, red is, above all, the colour of attachments, charms and eternal love.[54] Female character bonding here constitutes a women's culture. The model for Rego's female sphere is Portuguese female culture, dictated by Catholicism, in which Rego was raised.[55]

The girl's remembrance of sexual trauma in *LRRHS* occurs in the gutter of illustrations four and five, *The Wolf Chats up Red Riding Hood* and *Mother Takes Revenge* (Fig. 1). The first four illustrations, where the girl cloaked in red leaves the family nest to meet her grandmother but is stopped along the way by a man named Wolf, follow the storylines of Perrault and the Grimms. Therefore, remembering can here be viewed as an intertextual re-enactment of rape in their tales. While illustration four describes the meeting, illustration five depicts the Wolf with a bulging belly. Blank spaces between images allow viewers to add narrative details to a story.[56] Not depicting rape by placing it in the gutter, Rego thus asks viewers to draw upon what Marshall refers to as 'a larger repertoire of graphic knowledge about girl's bodies, … spaces and sexual vulnerability' to imagine the violation.[57] Moon uses this gutter strategy in her version, too. On one page spread, a photograph shows the two black shadows of a frightened little girl threatened by a huge wolf with open jaws, accompanied by the line 'this wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding Hood, and ate her all up'.[58] The next spread presents an empty bed with rumpled bedsheets, indicating the forbidden sex through eating as a metaphor for rape.[59] Like in Moon's, Perrault's and the Grimms' tales, Rego's visual narrative turns to eating to describe rape. What the viewer of *Mother Takes Revenge* is shown is the girl's captivation in the Wolf's gut after he has devoured her. The representation of sexual trauma as incarceration has been used by, for example, Anne Sexton in her poem *Red Riding Hood* (1971), where it is likened to

pregnancy: 'he appeared to be in his ninth month and Red Riding Hood and her grandmother rode like two Jonahs up and down with his every breath'.[60] Similarly, in *Mother Takes Revenge*, the girl imagines trauma by placing herself inside the wolf's belly, a creation that illustrates the workings of the imaginary. While both trauma and the maternal require repetition,[61] the imaginary, key to the genius, produces.[62] Productive imagination turns away from traumatic repetition in the maternal and towards the symbolic for understanding. It provides the link between these[63] through the imaginary father, a child's orientation of bodily energy in reference to her mother.[64] Male pregnancy in illustration four is ironically ascribable to the imaginary father as far as this function is the child's imagination of returning to the undifferentiated plenitude of the mother's womb, 'the first possible image of a life'.[65] The love provided here, 'the mother's love and her love for her own mother, a narcissistic love from generation to generation', supports the child's shift to the symbolic[66] in *LRRHS:* this love saturates language with non-representational meaning through instincts, feelings, sounds, images, rhythms, etc.[67]

In *LRRHS,* the girl represents the resolution of rape trauma through the mother's empowerment. First, the girl imagines her mother coming to save her in *Mother Takes Revenge.* Along with male pregnancy, this illustration presents a revenge fantasy. While revenge fantasies may be fantasies that delay recovery,[68] in the context of productive imagination, they are unique inventions of the child's imaginary father. Corollary, since they reciprocate the symbolic through the imaginary, revenge fantasies empower the subject. Armed with a dung fork, the mother, like the huntsman in the Grimms' tale, sets out to deliver her daughter from the wolf's gut. The girl's rescue is staged like a gender-reversed birth scene, as illustrated by the wolf's position on the floor, wide-open knees and as if full-term pregnant belly. The blood he must shed is promised through the red colour of the girl's robe stuck underneath his pelvis. Second, while in the final phase of recovery, the survivor recreates herself and achieves agency by becoming the person she wants to be;[69] in the last illustration, *Mother Wears the Wolf's Pelt*, the girl does not remake herself but her mother. Here, the mother wears the wolf's fur as a trophy, symbolically displaying compensation for the girl's suffering, to be witnessed by others. The wolf's fur alludes to Roald Dahl's poetic version 'Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf' (1983) where, after killing the wolf, the girl exchanges her red hood for a 'lovely furry WOLFSKIN COAT'.[70] In Rego, one of the mother's hands strokes the fur while the other touches her belly, indicating fullness after a heavy meal like she has devoured the Wolf as he has her daughter. The cunning look on her face confirms this, which means that rather than aligning with the Grimms' huntsman, the mother has allied herself with the wolf. In short, the girl imaginatively transforms her mother into a beast heroine, which Warner says is a signature of Rego's fairy tales[71] and is, as will be shown, shared by the other focal tales.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale:* Narrating the Survivor

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, Offred resolves trauma by telling stories to herself since Gilead prohibits writing. Her trauma story unfolds both during and after traumatic events. She addresses an unknown listener called 'you': 'I will say, *you, you*, like an old love song'.[72] In trauma recovery, having someone witnessing one's story is essential for restoring relationships with others which are disrupted by trauma.[73] After escaping Gilead, Offred records her traumatic past on an old-fashioned tape recorder which is discovered in the future. Recording is a method of trauma narration that helps to control the recalling of dissociated traumatic memories.[74] Thus, telling stories authorises Offred's function of storyteller: 'If it's a story I'm telling, then I have control over the ending'.[75] Since her Handmaid's position is unavoidable, resembling a non-agentic girl ('She called us girls'),[76] Offred's 'private narrative about her body' empowers her to flout Gileadean patriarchal prescriptions.[77] Denying herself the status of victim ('Nor does rape cover it: nothing is going on here that I haven't signed up for')[78] gives Offred a sense of bodily agency during the rapes, although Herman suggests repressing the perpetrator's victory may delay healing.[79] Offred apologises for the tribulation, limping and mutilation of her narrative: 'I'm sorry there is so much pain in this story. I'm sorry it's in fragments'.[80] Herman confirms that trauma stories contain contradictions, fragments and emotions.[81] Nevertheless, confronting traumatic experiences to take control of, mourn and remember, and finally reconstructing a personal narrative of body and self that have been destroyed by trauma, constitute healing.[82]

The Waterford house that Offred imagines as a winding labyrinth with corridors and rooms represents her confrontation with traumatic experiences that destroy her senses of body and self. Here, Atwood makes use of traditional fairy-tale settings in a context of trauma. Location, as Donald Haase notes, communicates the estrangement and peril experienced by protagonists: rooms and mansions are emblematic places 'that threaten characters with isolation, danger, and violence, including imprisonment and death'.[83] During the rapes in the master bedroom, while held down by Serena Joy and penetrated by the Commander, Offred disconnects from her body and emotions. She tells her imagined listener that 'One detaches oneself' and 'I lie there like a dead bird'.[84] Such descriptions typify the traumatic reaction of dissociation.[85] Offred's portrayal of corporeal death indicates the dying of herself: 'There's something dead about it, something deserted. I am like a room where things once happened and now nothing does'.[86] She contemplates suicide: 'you could use a hook, in the closet. I've considered the possibilities'.[87] Suicidal fantasies, typical for rape victims, are provoked by the danger of obliteration that traumatic moments entail.[88] Offred further expresses vast emotions, including great anguish ('There's no way out of here. I lie on the floor …') together with hysteria and disintegration ('I've broken, something has cracked. … I shake, I heave, seismic, volcanic, I'll burst. Red all over the cupboard …').[89]

Offred indicates feeling self-abased and completely submissive: 'I'll obliterate myself, if that's what you want; … I'll sacrifice. I'll repent. I'll abdicate. I'll renounce. ... I resign my body freely, to the use of others. They can do what they like with me. I'm abject.'[90] She experiences abjection, known for dissolving identity, rendered in Kristeva's own words, 'I expel myself, I spit myself out, I abject myself … ''I'' am in the process of becoming an other at the expense of my own death'.[91] The abject additionally emerges in Offred's estrangement from language, as 'a language that gives up',[92] typical for traumatised individuals.[93] English words and spelling feel foreign to Offred when she secretly plays Scrabble with the Commander in his study: 'My tongue felt thick with the effort of spelling. It was like using a language I'd once known but had nearly forgotten'.[94] Kristeva comments on trauma in another context: 'the trauma had threatened verbal construction itself'.[95] At another point in her story, when recalling old song lyrics, words slip away from Offred: 'I don't know if the words are right. I can't remember',[96] and she appears like one of Kristeva's trauma patients, described as 'plunged in verbal and mental confusion: she forgot words, even sentences'.[97] Like in Rego's series, abjection destroys identity in Atwood's novel.

Offred mourns her relationships before trauma. She goes back and forth between memories and present events, which helps her cope.[98] In order to survive, Offred builds a dream world where her family and friends are with her in Gilead, during nights which she claims as her own ('the night is my time out').[99] The traumatic loss of her daughter is especially painful, and she dreams that her little girl turns into a ghost and an angel that slowly fades away from her.[100] Additionally, Offred mourns her mother: 'I've mourned her already. But I will do it again, and again'.[101] Traumatic suffering, Kristeva says, opens 'old traumas', pointing to an unspeakable trauma of the maternal function,[102] which is described as a 'labyrinth of strangeness, otherness, and affectivity'.[103] If the maternal is not properly mourned and named in childhood, it is buried alive in the mind.[104] Offred further imagines the ghost of her predecessor, who died in Offred's room, promising to mourn her, too.[105]

As part of her PTG, Offred, like the girl in *LRRHS*, conjures up revenge fantasies. While trauma renders the victim powerless, revenge fantasies give a false sense of agency and are, Herman suggests, ways of resisting mourning the loss experienced.[106] In these, the roles are reversed;[107] Offred assumes the role of perpetrator, her captors her victims. However, Offred's fantasies defy being reduced to resistance in that they are unique inventions of her imaginary space and, thus, exemplify the genius: they produce possibilities, not in a sensical/symbolic but nonsensical/maternal sense, like fairy tales that Warner states innovate through the nonsensical, marvellous and fantastic.[108] In her fantasies, Offred transforms into a killer, reinventing herself through murder. She senses freedom, creativity and a shift of power to her advantage by inventing crime scenes. She plans to kill the commander by stabbing him with a toilet lever, in a way that signals sexual aggression and orgasm: she would 'slip the lever out from the sleeve and drive the sharp end into him suddenly, between his ribs. I think about the blood coming out of him, hot as soup, sexual, over my hands'.[109] Her

creative plot to set fire to the house brings her great pleasure, 'Such a fine thought it makes me shiver'.[110] In sheer desperation, Offred invents new murder weapons relating to gendered tasks: 'a knife from the kitchen', 'sewing scissors', 'garden shears', 'knitting needles'.[111] Sharing destiny with the mother in Rego's piece, Atwood's heroine adjusts herself to the beast. As Herman confirms, revenge fantasies engender the feelings of monstrosity and horror for oneself.[112] On the outside, Offred still resembles Little Red Riding Hood, 'a nondescript woman in red carrying a basket';[113] on the inside she is a beast who derives (sexual) pleasure from violent thoughts of murder.

Offred miraculously restores her ability to love and form new relationships. Restoring one's capabilities of love and social relationships that trauma has destroyed are necessary for recovery from and letting go of traumatic events.[114] Serena Joy orders Offred to have sex with the Commander's driver Nick since she wants a child but suspects that the Commander is sterile. However, Offred falls in love and begins a sexual relationship with Nick outside Serena Joy's arrangement. This relationship gives Offred meaning and hope. She becomes pregnant, and Nick eventually helps Offred escape the darkness of Gilead. Offred and Nick's lovemaking occurs when Offred, under the moon's protection, sneaks out of the Waterford house to meet her lover. Their relationship links to the 'moonlight', 'night' and 'hunger',[115] which invoke the beast motif of the werewolf, central to the heroines of 'Wolfland'.

Tanith Lee's 'Wolfland': Traumatic Transformation

Anna in 'Wolfland' tells her story about her violent past to her granddaughter Lisel in a dream ('Had Lisel been asleep and dreaming?').[116] Like Rego's protagonist, her trauma is narrated from a safe environment after trauma. Her trauma story thus manifests in dreaming which recalls Warner's descriptions of fairy tales as 'a literature of dreaming',[117] of wonders, nonsense and imagination that unlock possibilities.[118] In Freud's dream work, the meaning of dreams derives from unconscious thoughts which, because they are prior to meaning, appear meaningless: in dreams, 'nonsense, tones, rhythms',[119] gaps and trails of different sound-image combinations indicate the workings of the maternal function.[120] Like dreams, traumatic memories appear fragmented, vague, meaningless, mute, unintegrated and disorganised.[121] In the dream, Anna confronts violence inflicted on her by her husband while she holds on to her daughter: 'She held a whip out to him. "Beat me," she said. "Please beat me. I want you to. Put down the child and beat me"'.[122] She submits to her husband's will: '"Do as I say, or you'll be worse." The fire flared on the swirl of her bloody cloak as she moved to obey him'.[123] Like in the other focal tales, 'Wolfland' challenges the connection between red and rape, traceable to the Grimms and Perrault. While Anna meets aggression, violence and suffering with valour and strength, Lisel indicates a violent take on female heterosexuality, 'confining her attention to those portions which contained duels, rapes, black magic' in her reading.[124]

Through dreaming, Lisel bears witness to Anna's trauma story. Testifying to another's narrative symbolically makes the other part of oneself, and both sharers' imaginative and symbolic capacities are expanded.[125] Interpreting the trauma of another makes their unconscious known in a new way.[126]

Through werewolf transformations, Lee's 'Wolfland' illustrates the protagonists' capabilities of the genius's productive imagination. In the dream that she shares with Lisel, Anna acts out her revenge fantasy by identifying with werewolves. Anna draws inspiration from werewolf legends connected to the land on which her husband's castle stands and creates a new identity for herself as werewolf. One night, she ventures alone in the forest and ends domestic rape. She eats the yellow flower that grows near the castle to conjure up the goddess Wolfwoman, which will give her the gift of transmuting into a werewolf. Herman describes trauma recovery as a second adolescence.[127] Imaginary activity is particularly strong in adolescent years due to an opening in the psyche towards the maternal body, which allows adolescents to experiment with different identities.[128] The imaginary can create multiple different identities[129] which, although to some extent reproducing stereotypes and fantasies that are common among adolescents, are 'genuine inscriptions of unconscious content that flower in the adolescent pre-conscious'.[130] Identities like these, seen in Anna's and Lisel's identifications with werewolves, thus exemplify genuine productive imagination, credited to the genius.

In the figure of a werewolf, Anna meets violence with violence. Through animal transformations, Lee explores female reactions to gendered violence in a similar manner as Warner does in *The Leto Bundle*, in which Leto metamorphoses into a pelican and a cuttlefish to defend herself against rape.[131] Leto's transformations empower her as a subject.[132] She attacks her rapist and gives birth to twins in the shape of two blue eggs. Similarly, Anna, as a werewolf in 'Wolfland', meets her drunk husband halfway on his journey home from the tavern to beat her up, and ravenously rends him to pieces.[133] The werewolf, which in folklore stands for immoralities related to sex and death,[134] functions as a revenge fantasy that rescues the females from violence and, therefore, Gutenberg argues, stands outside 'sin and punishment'.[135] Anna's transformation from beauty into beast gives her strength to take hold of her life. Shouldering responsibility for one's life helps trauma survivors acknowledge the harm done, assert personal authority and control healing.[136] Beastly behaviour shifts from beast to human where the real monster is Anna's human husband.[137] Warner interprets the 'beast symbol' in women's literature as a release of the heroine's 'inner dynamic of desire, creativity, self-expression' that is often destroyed by convention, and this force is always erotic.[138] Comparably, in folklore, the werewolf's body is constructed as erotic.[139] Fur seemingly adds sexual attraction.[140] After killing her husband, Anna finds a new life companion in her servant Beautiful, who submits to and helps her with her nightly transformations.

By adopting the nature of female werewolves, the protagonists in 'Wolfland' challenge assumptions of gender-based violence in the history of LRRH. To break the curse of gender violence in the story, Anna invites Lisel to the castle so that she, too, can be transformed into a werewolf. Anna takes what Herman refers to as 'social action' to prevent future generations from male violence.[141] Anna's trauma story has elements of a cautionary tale that warns against marital abuse: 'he showed me the whip he had been hiding under the fruit. You see what it is to be a woman, Lisel. Is this what you want?'[142] Concurrently, Anna recognises her own kin in Lisel, which warrants the action of transforming her.[143] When Lisel realises that she is a werewolf, too, Anna responds that 'I've put nothing on you that was not already yours', to which Lisel replies that marriage has never been for her.[144] Actually, Lisel's transformation begins during her drive towards the castle. When a wolf taps on the carrier's window, Lisel's body reorganises itself into a wolf: 'Her eyes also blazed, her teeth also were bared, and her nails raised as if to claw'.[145] Even though terrified, she finds the wolf strangely attractive. Lisel's transformation is final when she, in her red cloak, swallows a liquor made with the yellow flower and, like Anna once did, wakes up to a new cross-speciated identity in which she writes the rules of the sexual script: 'She suddenly knew red feasts and wild hymnings, lovers with quicksilver eyes and the race of the ice wind and stars smashed under the hard soles of her four feet',[146] indicating emancipation of female sexuality and gender from the conventions of submission, marriage and childbirth within heterosexual desire, albeit with a bestial twist. After Lisel's change, Beautiful obeys her, too, by kneeling and kissing her red robe. Still in dream state, Lisel declares that 'Of course, it was all a lot of nonsense' but nevertheless, caught between the cross-speciated identities of human and wolf, pursues her grandmother into Wolfland on four paws.[147]

Francesca Lia Block's 'Wolf': Writing Incest

In Block's 'Wolf', the targets of trauma are the nameless narrator and her mother. The protagonist's trauma story begins in the shadow of chronic child sexual abuse, perpetrated by her stepfather. Like Rego's and Lee's protagonists, Block's heroine narrates her story of trauma in a safe place. Contrary to staging the stranger rape in the woods of Perrault and the Grimms, Block's tale tackles incest in the heterosexual home where the reader witnesses rape.[148] Block's narrative uses fairy-tale settings in a traumatic context in terms of how not only unfamiliar locations but also domestic places such as the home can be 'defamiliarized and threatening'.[149] Comparable to Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale* and Anna in 'Wolfland', who also suffer domestic abuse and resort to dreams, the protagonist in 'Wolf' creates an alternative reality, a dreamscape which, although it indicates despair, helps her cope with the chronic rapes: 'Here you go on this long, long dream. ... Just relax and observe because there is pain and that's it mostly and you aren't going to be able to escape no matter what'.[150] Her statement clearly exemplifies

constriction in trauma whereby survivors in dangerous situations of terror realise the uselessness of resistance and instead surrender, manifesting a disconnected calm.[151] Cathy Caruth likens trauma to a bad dream, the repetition of which represents the incomprehensible and fearful brush with death that trauma entails and in which the traumatised individual has lost the memories of the cause of fright.[152]

Block spotlights the mother-daughter relationship in the father-daughter incest trauma. This special focus breaks conventions of romance and heterosexuality found in traditional fairy tales.[153] The strong bond makes the daughter and mother allies ('we were made of the same stuff')[154] and contrasts with most father-daughter incest stories, in which females compete for male affection.[155] Like the girl in *LRRHS*, the girl in 'Wolf' adores her mother: 'I really love my mom. You know we were like best friends'.[156] People mistake them for sisters, they do each other's hair and exchange clothes. The mother reciprocates her daughter's love.[157] Martin observes that the love that flows between them validates non-normative desires,[158] although heterosexual curiosity is displayed through the boy whom the girl meets on a bus. While in normative heterosexuality, female children negotiate homosexual love for the love of the opposite sex, in Kristevan theory, female sexuality is grounded in the relationship with the mother and insists on the child's relationship with the maternal body and drives. It remains homosexual also after the exchange of love object, although this type of lesbianism is suppressed through abjection in heteronormativity.[159] Amber Moore sees female character bonding as protection against the incestuous stepfather figure where the girl insists on her mother's happiness.[160] Marshall maintains that the girl sacrifices herself for her mother.[161] Albeit afraid ('I was scared shitless'), she suffers the abuse to keep her mother, whom her stepfather has threatened to kill after her mother has discovered the abuse and threatens to take her daughter away against his will.[162] These circumstances serve as an invitation to bravely accept the call to face her fears and establish a sense of safety; the protagonist in 'Wolf' makes a courageous decision to leave LA. On the one hand, the girl tries to save both her mother and herself;[163] on the other hand, she captures her own story[164] and in this, breaks cultural assumptions of girl victims who fail to defend their bodies.[165]

Block's protagonist rises above victimhood, stating, 'I am not a victim by nature.'[166] This indicates healthy PTG, breaking the monotony of victimhood, and recreating self through 'imagination and fantasy',[167] which in turn parallels the genius's productive imagination. When she climbs out the window to take a bus to see her grandmother in the desert, she begins to align with nature in subtle ways. The awakening of the protagonist's animal instincts occurs on a sensory level reminiscent of Lisel's transformation in 'Wolfland' before swallowing the drink which permanently transforms her. The girl in 'Wolf' opens her senses to the trees, the night, the moon, connecting them to her own body as freedom: 'I smelled my own sweat but it was different. I smelled the same old fear I'm used to but it was mixed with the night and the air and the moon and the trees and it was like freedom'.[168] Like in Atwood

and Lee, the elements of night, moon and freedom in Block resonate with werewolves. The protagonist also expresses a desire to lose control, which increases her attachment to werewolves, which are known for their incapability to control their attacks:[169] 'I'd rather feel out of control at the mercy of nature than other ways … I just closed my eyes and let it ride itself out. I kind of wished he'd been on top of me then because it might have scared him'.[170] Aside from the title 'Wolf', wolves are never mentioned in Block's narrative. However, drawing on the combination of the title and the protagonist's intimacy with nature, it becomes clear that she, not her stepfather, is the wolf. Block, too, subverts the roles of beauty and beast to release beauty's beast within.

The heroine's release of her inner beast culminates in the killing of her rapist. Like Rego's and Lee's heroines, Block's takes charge of her life by acting out her revenge and thereby asserting her authority and highlighting the genius's productive imagination. Marshall interprets 'Wolf' as a revenge fantasy without denying the girl's vulnerability to rape.[171] Like the other narratives here, red transforms into an ambiguous symbol of victory and killing from having been associated with female victimhood. When the girl sees her stepfather's car in the driveway and hears him arguing with her grandmother, a vivid image of the colour of dried blood dances before her eyes, bestowing her with magic powers and transporting her into the same room.[172] Moments before she seizes her grandmother's gun, rape memories return: 'I remembered him above me in that bed with his clammy hand on my mouth and his ugly ugly weight'.[173] The girl's shooting alludes to James Thurber's (1939) and Roald Dahl's (1983) adaptations of LRRH with similar endings.[174] Whereas the girl in 'Wolf' is admitted to a treatment centre, the grandmother takes the blame for killing him. As Marshall mentions,[175] the girl and her grandmother's revenge recall the Grimms' lesser-known version of LRRH, *Little Red Cap*, in which the girl and her grandmother kill the wolf by luring him down the grandmother's chimney into a large water-filled pot.[176]

Block's heroine writes about sexual violence committed against her in a journal she receives at the treatment centre. Although the staff disbelieve her and consider her to be ill, the heroine states that journaling is 'the best thing' in her life, turning vengeance into gratitude.[177] Tristes claims that child survivors learn to claim power over their voices and 'overcome their victimization only by talking about it'.[178] The protagonist in 'Wolf' feels no guilt. Killing her stepfather can be seen as a tactic to resist the trauma of rape culture enacted by him, and she is finally released from it. Comparably to Rego's tale, the mother is central to the healing process of Block's heroine. At the centre, she mourns the lost relationship with her mother, whom the stepfather killed, and whom she imagines in the figure of an angel ('my mom will be there like an angel').[179] Although Beckett indicates that 'Wolf' does not have a happy ending,[180] the depicted hope as the protagonist moves on, while not necessarily providing a model for complete healing, does offer an example of standing behind victim-survivors in their efforts at recovery and reminds readers of the suffering of sexually traumatised girls in society.

Fig. 2 Carola Maria Wide, 'Girl Geniuses' Narrating Trauma in LRRH' (2019-21).

Conclusion

The focal heroines process rape trauma through narration; the audience witnesses traumatic events, which centralise the traumatised heroines and create empathy and compassion for them. In these trauma narrations, revenge and female bonding resist the rape scripts of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, and further decentralise the rapists, indicating alternative desire, expressed through the heroines' alignment with the beastly wolf that deviates from normative heterosexuality and gender in traditional fairy tales. The photographic illustration series 'Girl Geniuses' Narrating Trauma in LRRH' (Fig. 2), created by Carola Maria Wide with photography, nature and a red marker on paper (2019-21), represents the heroines' mostly internal transformations from beauties into beasts, provoked by abjection through trauma. These transformations metaphorise a release of the heroines' freedom of expression, creativity and libido that originates in the non-representational imaginary as productive imagination, shifts to symbolic representation through narration and culminates in the girl genius that highlights the agentic and empowered heroine-subjects. As new versions of the LRRH, the visual results contribute to the story canon, indicating that beast and genius are identical; and the girl and wolf are more alike than might appear. In Rego, Atwood, Lee and Block, the LRRH intertext becomes a traumatic link between past and present that frames the story of sexual violence within a contemporary context, revealing levels of violence and harm with which the protagonists are entangled and from which they struggle to free themselves through self-narration which heals them, transforming vengeance into gratitude for life.

Carola Maria Wide and Marinella Rodi-Risberg

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II

WOOING WEREWOLVES: GIRLS' GENIUS, FEMININE, AND INITIATION IN ANGELA CARTER'S AND MÄRTA TIKKANEN'S VERSIONS OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

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Carola Maria Wide, 2024

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WOOING WEREWOLVES: GIRLS' GENIUS, FEMININE, AND INITIATION IN ANGELA CARTER'S AND MÄRTA TIKKANEN'S VERSIONS OF "LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD"

Carola Maria Wide
Doctoral Student in English
Department of Language and Communication Studies
University of Jyväskylä, Finland
University Teacher in English
Centre for Languages and Business Communication
Hanken School of Economics, Finland
carolamariawide@gmail.com

Abstract: Girls' initiation contributes to cultural representations in Western folk fairy tales. This study examines girls' initiation in three contemporary versions of "Little Red Riding Hood", Angela Carter's "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice" (1979), and Märta Tikkanen's *Rödluvan* (Little Red Riding Hood, 1986), in relation to "The Story of Grandmother", popularized by Paul Delarue (1956). Combining fairy-tale research with Kristevan theories on subjectivity, the feminine, and the genius, it examines how initiation assigns to the girl in Delarue's tale a social identity and role as a woman and how the contemporary tales negotiate this through the heroines' wooing of werewolves. The findings, presented in both written and visual forms, show the reach of the heroines' feminine psychosexual maturity, here called the girl genius, in Carter's and Tikkanen's versions, representing an alternative to traditional assumptions of girls' psychosexuality within normative heterosexuality.

Keywords: abjection, Angela Carter, the Kristevan feminine, the girl genius, girls' initiation, menstruation, Märta Tikkanen, the Kristevan subject, Little Red Riding Hood

INTRODUCTION

Girls' initiation, their admission into adulthood, plays an important part in Western folk fairy tales. Francisco Vaz da Silva (2008b: 487; see also Conrad 2008: 1041) argues that all oral folk narratives, or wonder tales, address

initiation simply because they have assimilated traditional representations and structures of initiation. This is seen in the oral folk tale "The Story of Grandmother", where, according to Yvonne Verdier (1997: 117), a menstruating girl is sent to her grandmother to undergo initiation. The tale that circulated in female culture (Verdier 1997: 118) dates to the 1000s (Tehrani 2013: 5) but was not transcribed until 1886 by Achille Millien in France, after which it became the front version of Paul Delarue's (1956) collection of twenty oral versions of "The Story of Grandmother". Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother" is better known today as "Little Red Riding Hood" (LRRH), ATU 333, by Charles Perrault (1697), and "Little Red Cap" by the Brothers Grimm (1812), who acquired the tale from women tellers. Although Perrault and the Brothers Grimm shift the focus from initiation to caution about rape (Zipes 1993 [1983]: 8, 33–37), elements of initiation persist in their versions. This is seen in Mary Douglas's (1995: 6) assertion that stories like LRRH are "verbal rites", handling women's matters of the past, and in Judy Grahn's (1993: 141) descriptions of the girl in the Brothers Grimm's LRRH as an "archetypal menstruant" and the story as a menstrual narrative, outlining initiation. Other examples of tales with an oral and initiatory past are "Sleeping Beauty" and "Beauty and the Beast". Perrault's "Sleeping Beauty" (1697) and the Brothers Grimm's version "Little Briar Rose" (1812) centralize an adolescent princess's deathlike sleep, caused by a splinter from an old woman's spindle, interpretable as a shift of menstruation and fertility from old to young (Vaz da Silva 2007: 243–244). The protagonist in Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve's "Beauty and the Beast" (1740) is likewise a girl, and the tale that revolves around her romantic relationship with an animal bridegroom might be the oldest of these fairy stories since it returns to Lucius Apuleius's "Cupid and Psyche", transferred to writing in the 200s AD (Swain 2008: 106–108). Yet, the oldest story that stems from oral lore and that is known to describe initiation (Wolkenstein & Kramer 2004: 23–25) is the Sumerian poem "The Descent of Inanna" (2000 BC), where in Grahn's (1993: 211–212) view, goddess Inanna visits the netherworld to do menstrual initiation rites.

Adolescent girls' initiation, like that of adolescent boys', has had a central meaning in human societies, although today these are nearly individualized in the Western world. Girls' adolescence is a transition between child and adult, innocence and maturity, where girls' identities, psyches, and bodies are particularly open, malleable, impressionable, and, therefore, suitable for initiation (Markstrom 2008: xi, 46–53). During adolescence, hormones impel massive biological, cognitive, and emotional changes, which, according to Carol A. Markstrom (ibid.: x), are only comparable to those of infants. Along with sexual maturity, Julia Kristeva (1990: 8) asserts that adolescence involves an

openness towards the border of the maternal, an individual's psychic space relatable to the mother and formed in infancy. This causes the adolescent's psychic transformation that traverses borders between differences in identity related to gender and sexuality, in reality and imagination. The function of girls' initiation has traditionally been to structure, through rites, cultural attitudes, values, customs, and beliefs related to perceptions and practices of women and menstruation on girls to shape desired physical traits, character, and personality (Markstrom 2008: 2–3). By assigning a socially fit identity and role to the initiate, defining girls' place in society as women, rites bridged the gap between child and adult and provided comfort and assurance in relation to the unknown (Perianes & Ndaferankhande 2005: 423; Markstrom 2008: 2). Nevertheless, owing to changes in education, employment, dependence patterns, and mobility in life transitions in Western societies, while diminishing the importance of age, adolescents' or young adults' individual agency has been centralized, highlighting individual choices, opportunities, and representations in contemporary initiation (Furlong 2009: 1–2). This shift to individuality was predicted by Arnold Van Gennep (2004 [1909]: 189), who claims that rites can be individual: "Sometimes the individual stands alone and apart from all groups". According to Inge Seiffge-Krenke and Shmuel Shulman (2011: 158–160, 166), a key component of adolescents' individual transition and social development today is the romantic relationship, describing an interest in romance, sexual, and emotional gratification with the other (or same) gender that highlights the adolescent's seeking of "a new love object" to replace that of parents (Kristeva 1990: 9). The ability to form and maintain relationships, particularly romantic ones, referred to as "object relationships" by Kristeva (2004a: 420), is central to contemporary initiation (Seiffge-Krenke & Shulman 2011: 165–166) because relationships with others change individuals' entire life courses (Heinz 2009: 7).

Romantic and sexual relationships in the young heroines' transition into adulthood are highlighted in British writer Angela Carter's and Swedo-Finnish writer Märta Tikkanen's contemporary narratives of LRRH. While Carter's short stories "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice", published in *The Bloody Chamber* (1979), have been widely studied and the former even filmed in 1984, Tikkanen's novel *Rödluvan* (Little Red Riding Hood, 1986), translated into Finnish as *Punahilkka* (1986), has received less attention. According to Sinikka Tuohimaa's (1994: 169–176) study, Tikkanen's semi-autobiographical novel is violent and erotic, describing Märta's transformation from girl to woman and her romantic relationship with Henrik, her second husband, whom Märta names the Wolf, while she calls herself Little Red Riding Hood. Carter's tales are similarly classified as heterosexual erotica for women, focusing on the protagonists' romance with werewolves. Whereas Cristina Bacchilega (1997:

59) argues in her study that Carter intertextually returns to both written and spoken LRRH traditions to deconstruct normative sexual and gendered behaviour by re-evaluating girls' menstruation and initiation, Andrea Gutenberg reads Carter's tales as fables of sexual initiation, redeeming both the werewolf and the girl through abjection, an individual's inner abilities to transform, or contrastingly fortify, subjective identity (Kristeva 1982: 13–15). Merja Makinen (1992: 4–14) emphasizes that Carter constructs, with her protagonists, a female psychosexuality that is rooted in violence, perversion, "animalness", and drives, what Kimberley J. Lau (2008: 77) calls "an alternative erotics".

Expanding on previous research, this study addresses representations of initiation in Delarue's, Carter's, and Tikkanen's tales by colligating theories of female initiation in folk fairy tales by Verdier (1997) and Vaz da Silva (e.g., 2008a; 2008b; 2008c) with the Kristevan *subject* and *feminine* (e.g., Kristeva 1982; 2019). I am interested in how initiation in Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother" assigns a woman's traditional role and position to the protagonist and how the heroines in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales negotiate tradition through a transition that awakens, along with menarche and romantic interests, the heroines' libido that resembles the characteristics of feminine psychosexuality, as theorized by Kristeva, moving within normative heterosexuality, *the girl genius*, my adaptation of the Kristevan genius to foreground girls. The Kristevan *subject* emerges from an infant's relationship with and love for its mother, marking out psychic, or maternal, space through the drives of the body, but is not considered complete until the young child abjects the mother, by separating from her to become a subject proper within the symbolic (hence symbolic identity) through language, culture, and morals, taking up (or not) the father as a new love object (Oliver 1993: 3–5, 22–23, 32; Kristeva 2014: 69–72). A subject's *feminine*, emerging from maternal space and in a symbiosis with the masculine, forms an individual's psychosexuality (Kristeva 2019: 3–4). Through her writing on Hanna Arendt, Melaine Klein, and Colette Willy, who distinguished themselves within their respective fields, Kristeva (2004a: 419–427) discovered three characteristics of the *feminine* connecting these women geniuses: 1) a view of temporality as new beginnings or rebirth; 2) a self that connects to others; and 3) a unity of living and thinking, offering meaning to life (Kristeva 2004b: 222–227; Schippers 2011: 119–121).

The combination of initiation and Kristevan theories lends itself to a comparison of initiation and abjection. In an interview with Charles Penwarden (1995: 23), Kristeva likens the subconscious workings of initiation, or the rite of passage, with that of abjection. According to Kristeva, abjection is known to confront individuals' feminine and transform identity through a return to maternal space, for example, during adolescence (Kristeva 1982: 58; 1990: 8).

She continues that this is viewable in societies' coding themselves through rites and rituals "to accompany as far as possible the speaking subject on that journey" (1982: 58). Comparably, initiation in folk fairy tales follows Van Gennep's (2004 [1909]: 18, 90–106; see also Vaz da Silva 2008b: 487) division of passage into three stages, where *seclusion* removes initiates from childhood and places them at the entrance of *transition*, experienced in terms of transformation through death and rebirth, after which initiates are incorporated into adulthood in the *inclusion* phase. Following along from this, Delarue's tale highlights three representations of female initiation – needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting (Verdier 1997: 102; Vaz da Silva (2008c: 1026) – that relate to the werewolf. These are featured in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, too, in terms of awakening the heroines' libido in ways that reach feminine psychosexuality and disclose the genius. This will be shown in written and visual representations in the conclusion, where the written exegesis and the creative work have been synthesized, and they both represent the same findings, the latter perhaps offering a challenge to readers by presenting a social taboo, menstruation, concerning female bodies.

"THE STORY OF GRANDMOTHER"

In "The Story of Grandmother", female initiation defines the protagonist's place as woman. Following her mother's instruction, the protagonist journeys into seclusion, marking a crossing into the maternal, with food and crosses paths with a werewolf. With the words "You are going to carry a hot loaf* and a bottle of milk to your grandmother", the mother in "The Story of Grandmother" sends her daughter away (Delarue 1956: 230), like in real-life initiations, where often in the company of initiators, initiates sought privacy from family and community (Frazer 1998 [1890]: 686–689; Grahn 1993: 24–35). Between the family home and the grandmother's house, the protagonist in Delarue's tale encounters a crossroad, figuratively representing a critical juncture that shows her crossing into the underworld, metaphorically marking the maternal. Considering initiation rites, Louise Carus Mahdi (1998 [1996]: xxiii) indicates that crossroads are initiates' crossing into the underworld of dead ancestors, spirits, and deities, functioning as sites of sacrifice, transformation, and the advents of initiators. At the crossroads, a werewolf in "The Story of Grandmother" greets the protagonist, asking her where she is going. Food marks the crossing in Delarue's (1956: 230) tale when the girl imparts that she is "taking a hot loaf and a bottle of milk to [her] grandmother". Food was shared among generations in French folk tradition, and children distributed the food, cooked by their

mothers, to their grandparents (Verdier 1997: 114). Verdier (ibid.: 111–114) interprets the werewolf, known for its ability to skin-shift, in Delarue's tale as a representation of the girl's grandmother, initiating her into womanhood. In many parts of the world, girls' initiation was overseen by senior women. Wiser in years, they managed women's secrets and life, transferred to girls in initiation rites (La Fontaine 1977: 424, 434). If rites, including initiation, demonstrate the border between an individual's maternal and symbolic (Kristeva 1982: 73), the crossroad is comparable to crossing the borders of an individual's symbolic identity into the maternal, which not only transforms but also threatens subjectivity; as Kristeva (ibid.: 64) argues, "Phobia alone, crossroad of neurosis and psychosis, and of course conditions verging on psychosis, testify to the appeal of such a risk." Standing at the crossroad, the werewolf in Delarue's tale controls the representations of female initiation, transforming the girl subject: needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting.

The fork in the road in the woods diverges into the roads of needles and pins, the first werewolf representation used in female initiation and a stand-in for menstruation, which highlights women's place (Delarue 1956: 230). The werewolf in Delarue's tale asks which way the protagonist will take to her grandmother's house, "the Needles Road or the Pins Road" (ibid.). Crossroads in folk fairy tales are symbols of magic rites, faith, and luck, and involve a choice of road, where an animal may influence which road to take (Garry 2005: 334, 338–340), like the werewolf in Delarue's tale. The girl chooses the Needles Road in Delarue's version, while in many of the other versions, she decides on the Pins Road. In a version from Forez, France, she defends her choice by stating, "I like the road of pins with which you can dress up" (Verdier 1997: 105). According to Verdier (ibid.: 101–106), needles and pins carry specific meaning in the context of sewing. Sewing was an important skill for girls, to whom the tale was told by women during the 1800s in areas of France and Italy, where it was a custom for peasant girls during a winter to live with an old seamstress. In addition to needlework, she educated them in socially fitting adult behavior and responsibilities, formalizing their place as women for the benefit of family and community. Here, pins carried a symbolic meaning, representing maidens through menarche and virginity, whereas needles resembled adult women's sexuality and blood (ibid.: 106–107). Women's bleeding and fertility in folk fairy tale are often described in terms of figurative language, for example, the spindle in "Sleeping Beauty" (Vaz da Silva 2007: 243–244), a red apple in "Snow White" (Girardot 1977: 292), and a red hood in LRRH (Verdier 1997: 103–104). Women's regular bleedings also figuratively connect with the werewolf's transformations under the full moon (Gutenberg 2007: 151–152). In Verdier's view, through pins and needles, the girl is instructed in women's roles, work, and sexuality,

defining her place as woman in French peasant society. Traditional values, old customs, and morals governed peasant life, dividing culture into young and old, women and men (Poster 1984: 222, 225). While Verdier (1997: 117) sees some power, freedom, and even rivalry between women within female culture, even more so among both genders in urban areas and the noble, it must be noted that rural peasant women were not free because, outside women's culture, adult men ruled over them and their children (Poster 1984: 225).

It is also noteworthy that in the context of initiation, the Pins Road in "The Story of Grandmother" calls attention to a cutting of girls' genitals, resulting from menstrual taboo, a prohibition or social exclusion (see Freud 1989 [1913]: 15–41; see also Kristeva 1982: 62–63). The Latin word for a pin, fibula, has motivated infibulation, a type of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), closing the vagina (Andro & Lesclingand 2016: 219). Fibula also has a second meaning of brooch (OED 2023), drawing attention to an old Egyptian custom of pinning brooches, fibulae, to female slaves' labia (Burrage 2015: 81). Romans correspondingly infibulated theirs; and chastity belts, forming mechanical infibulations, were popular among the noble in Medieval Europe (Andro & Lesclingand 2016: 220). A Greek papyrus of 163 AD claims the FGM to have been important in girls' initiation rites in Memphis, Egypt (Burrage 2015: 81). The FGM closely relates to taboo (ibid.: 12). Menstrual taboo, where it is practiced, typically starts around menarche and continues throughout women's menstruating life (Laws 1990: 23–24; Grahn 1993: 24–28). The menstrual taboo parts menstruants from others because female blood is considered a defiled substance (Kristeva 1982: 62–63; Freud 1989 [1913]: 15–41), seen in, for example, Leviticus 15:19–33 of the Old Testament and Torah. The Roman author Pliny the Elder (1855: 304–305) warned against the menstrual taboo in *The Natural History by Pliny*, 77 AD, arguing that proximity to female blood makes iron rust, ivory dull, and wine go bad; it makes mirrors fog, bees die, and dogs go mad; additionally, it causes fruits to fall prematurely, plants to wither, and crops to barren. According to Kristeva (1982: 73), defilement in a context of taboo points to the first boundaries of an individual's "clean and proper self", amounting to the maternal because mothers traditionally washed infants' bodies to keep their skin clean, which has provoked a view of women's bleeding, fertility and the feminine as unclean (Penwarden 1995: 23). Kristeva (1982: 15–17, 48) lists taboo as a form of abjection that operates in individuals' subconscious, upholding morals in the unconscious part of the mind, where it "prohibits, separates, prevents contact" (ibid.: 59). Defilement in taboo must be cleansed through rites (ibid.: 17, 70, 83). Such cleansing is separation rites (ibid.: 77), including the FGM, alluded to in the Pins Road of Delarue's tale, although a curbing of

female sexuality and generative powers is perhaps viewed as more important (ibid.: 70, 77; Burrage 2015: 12).

In addition to needles and pins, the second and third representations of female initiation, cannibalism, and skin-shifting, specific to the werewolf of folk fairy tales (Vaz da Silva 2008b: 1026), display abjection in the oral LRRH tradition. Because werewolves were well-known for cannibalism already in medieval lore (Zipes 1993 [1983]: 18–20), as Verdier notes (1997: 104), the werewolf in "The Story of Grandmother" only follows its instincts when it kills and eats the girl's grandmother while placing some of "her flesh in the pantry and a bottle of her blood on the shelf" (Delarue 1956: 230). Another oral LRRH version from Tyrol, Italy, takes particular relish in the werewolf's gruesomeness: "he had hung the intestines of his victim on the door in place of the latchcord, and he had placed the blood, the teeth and the jaws in the buffet" (Verdier 1997: 108). The grandmother's eating is present in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions, too, although the man-wolf is a man or a wolf, seemingly lacking capacities to transform between these. Because the werewolf cannot maintain its own stable borders of identity and also threatens its victim's, in Gutenberg's view (2007: 149–153), it resembles an abject, described by Kristeva (1982: 75) as a border "between the human and the non-human". The werewolf also rivals the maternal through an individual's imagination and introjection of a maternal construction that it must expulse to establish borders between its own inside and outside, between itself and the mother, in order to become a speaking subject (Gutenberg 2007: 153). This calls attention to Sigmund Freud's (1918) study of the "wolf man" who suffered from animal phobia, a fear of being devoured by animals. According to Kristeva (1982: 38–42; see also Oliver 2009: 286–287), the phobic object, sometimes a wolf, stands in for the mother that the child has assimilated through the mouth but is not yet introjected or displaced.

The protagonist in Delarue's tale transforms into a cannibal, the second werewolf representation in female initiation after she has entered her grandmother's house with food. Verdier (1997: 117) likens the granddaughter's sojourn with an "initiatory visit", turning the grandmother's house into a menstrual hut, used for initiation rites in a large part of the world (see Buckley & Gottlieb 1988: 12–13). The heroine in Delarue's tale accesses the "world of the dead" (Verdier 1997: 16), like Inanna, who entered the netherworld, the world after death, to meet her sister for initiation (Wolkenstein & Kramer 2004: 23, 33). In Delarue's tale, the werewolf requests that the heroine eats the meat from the cupboard and drinks the wine. While the heroine appears monstrous (Verdier 1997: 104), Vaz da Silva (2008a: 157) argues that in folk fairy tales, "women in different generations often ingest one another", making cannibalism a representation of female initiation. For example, the stepmother in the tale "Snow White"

demands a hunter to bring the princess's liver for supper (Vaz da Silva 2008a: 157). Cannibalism describes the initiate's "passage and transubstantiation, death and renovation" (Vaz da Silva 2008a: 157), reflecting intergenerational survival relatable to power, identity, and presence among blood-kin (Warner 1998: 63). Through the young generation's assimilation of the old, cannibalism has been incorporated into fairy tale magic, ensuring female fertility, rejuvenation, and rebirth (Bacchilega 1997: 56; Vaz da Silva 2008a: 157). Cannibalism is also about assimilating information (La Fontaine 1977: 425; Freud 1989 [1913]: 102). Ancient Egyptians and Tunisians ate their kings and queens before they were to die naturally, and in Paleolithic and Neolithic traditions, deceased relatives' brains were eaten, while their skulls were adorned, cared for, and provided for with food offerings and sought for advice (Skinner 1961: 71–86). The meal in Delarue's tale is more complex in the other oral versions, illustrating the girl's learning from women's cooking (Verdier 1997: 109, 115). In a Touraine version from France, the girl makes blood pudding of her grandmother, while in two versions from Tourangelle and the Alps, France, she cooks and eats her grandmother's breasts and nipples while a voice calls out, "You are eating my *titine* [nipples or breasts], my daughter" (Verdier 1997: 108).

Delarue's tale draws on the third werewolf representation in female initiation, skin-shifting. Werewolves in old lore are "skin-shifters", transforming between animal and human skins (Vaz da Silva 2008c: 1026). Kristeva (1982: 53) comments on skin in relation to experiencing abjection: "It is as if the skin, a fragile container, no longer guaranteed the integrity of one's own and clean self". Werewolves' shedding of skin represents transformation, death, and rebirth (Vaz da Silva 2008a: 279; 2008c: 1026), invoking "cyclical notions of time and being" and of menstruation (Vaz da Silva 2003: 349–350). Kristeva (1982: 15) argues that abjection similarly transforms individuals since "[a]bjection is a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego)", resembling a second birth that recalls the genius's characteristic of new beginnings and rebirth. The girl's change of skin, or identity, in Delarue's tale is visible in the werewolf's prompting her to strip her clothes and share the bed. The peasants of rural France often shared the same bed, making children understand the secrets of sexual life early because they were aware of their own parents', families', or animals' sexual acts (Poster 1984: 230). Nicolas Edme-Restif (Poster 1984: 231) describes a not so innocent game, called Wolf, played in the historical Burgundy region, from where stem several versions of the oral LRRH tale. A wolf, always a boy, was blindfolded and placed in the middle. The other children threw their clothes on the wolf, who identified the owner based on their scent. If the wolf identified a girl, he ate her, which often involved sexual indecency or roughness, especially among older children. Van Gennep (2004 [1909]: 81) explains

that unclothing in initiation sheds initiates' identities, preparing for rebirth. Similar to the children that played Wolf, the girl in "The Story of Grandmother" removes her clothes and throws them, not on the wolf, but in the fire, like goddess Inanna, who was gradually shorn off her clothes and jewelry, then, hung on a peg for days from her own skin, as a celebration or maybe cleansing of women's fertility and bleeding (Wolkenstein & Kramer 2004: 33); resembling real-life menstrual rites were girls hung in hammocks for the duration of menarche (Frazer 1998 [1890]: 690–4). While Vaz da Silva (2008c: 1026) argues that the "wolfish girl" in Delarue's tale "ends up figuratively reborn", making her sexual debut and implying female empowerment between generations, Verdier (1997: 118) maintains that women's domestication of initiation, as seen in Delarue's tale, underscores "the traditional power and autonomy of women over their destiny". However, it cannot be overlooked that girls submitted to traditional values and roles of heterosexuality, where women assumed a submissive and passive role. Since pain was believed to ensure submission, the intercourse of real-life initiations, where it was practiced, could be violent, too (Delaney & Lupton & Toth 1988 [1976]: 32). Coitus sometimes coincided with marriage but equally often not (Van Gennep 2004 [1909]: 70). More often, an old woman perforated girls' hymen (Delaney & Lupton & Toth 1988 [1976]: 32; Van Gennep 2004 [1909]: 72), drawing attention to the werewolf-grandmother in Delarue's tale.

Sexual initiation was a sign of the completion of skin-transformation, the transitional phase, incorporating the initiate into society as an adult; she could now leave the menstrual hut. As a ruse to exit her grandmother's house, the protagonist in "The Story of Grandmother" asks the werewolf if she can go outside to defecate. Her mention of feces and the werewolf's wish to swaddle her, by doing it in the bed, refer to mothers' duties. Based on Edme-Restif's recalling (Poster 1984: 233–234), little girls were swaddled in their excrements more often than boys, as Mark Poster notes (ibid.), to ensure "helplessness and dependence" on others in French peasant communities, where individual autonomy was considered threatening. Yet, the girl in Delarue's tale maintains the boundaries of her clean and proper self by going outside to reveal herself and escapes. Unlike Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions, where Little Red Riding Hood is swallowed by the wolf, albeit also saved by a hunter in the latter, the protagonist in "The Story of Grandmother" returns home as a woman.

MÄRTA TIKKANEN'S *RÖDLUVAN*, ANGELA CARTER'S "THE COMPANY OF WOLVES" AND "WOLF-ALICE"

While, like in Delarue's "The Story of Grandmother", Carter's and Tikkanen's tales centralize girls' passage into adulthood, menstruation, and fertility, their heroines' transitions recreate women's traditional place and roles through romance, which results in sex and a reach of feminine psychosexual maturity, displaying the genius's three characteristics. Food, crossroads, and werewolves acquire new meanings in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, when the heroines take control of their own initiation, indicating a transition to romantic interests. Separation here conforms to breaches in parental attachments, allowing a development of romantic involvements (Seiffge-Krenke & Shulman 2011: 167–168). Kristeva (1990: 8–9) explains that youths' psychic reorganization coalesces with an opening towards the maternal, metaphorically described through the crossroad of Delarue's tale, questioning their own identifications and seeking of romantic object relationships with others. Similar to the mother in "The Story of Grandmother", the mother in "The Company of Wolves" prepares a food basket for her daughter to carry. However, as opposed to the former tale, the "strong-minded" daughter in the latter decides to visit her grandmother despite the dangers of wolves (Carter 2006: 133). She increases personal authority and individuation from her parents through decisiveness, according to Walter R. Heinz (2009: 3), a characteristic of contemporary transitions. The knife slipped into the food basket also demonstrates strength and bravery. The heroine's crossroad in "The Company of Wolves" is the woods, where a male werewolf in the form of a chivalrous, handsome hunter approaches her. Dressed in green hunting clothes and a hat, the werewolf resembles the Green Wolf of French lore, symbolizing fertility in spring rites (Monaghan 2011: 180). Terri Windling (2002: 4–5) links the green wolf with Jack in the Green of British lore, known as a trickster figure in green with a good eye for girls, appearing on May Day and symbolizing rebirth and regrowth. The crossing in Carter's tale turns into a "rustic seduction" (Carter 2006: 135), when the werewolf tries to double-cross the protagonist with a magic compass, showing the quickest way to her grandmother. Despite his little tricks, she finds him "dashing" (ibid.: 134) and promises to kiss him if he arrives at her grandmother's house first.

Similarly, the protagonists in *Rödluvan* and "Wolf-Alice" meet their romantic partners. Rödluvan in Tikkanen's tale carries raspberry juice and bread in a basket when crossing a path with a wolf in the woods, whereas Märta, working as a reporter in the parallel story, comes across Henrik, the Wolf. Märta describes the Wolf as soft, naked, vulnerable, and scared underneath his wild, reckless, and aggressive fur. Despite her innocence, Rödluvan, with whom Märta

identifies, is contrastingly viewed as "grym, glupsk och listen" (ferocious, wolfish, and lascivious),[1] leading the wolf into the depth of the woods (Tikkanen 1986: 165–166). Her whole life course transforms when she divorces and remarries, which indicates the decision-making and timing of contemporary transitions, transcending age, which carried significance in traditional initiation (see Heinz 2009: 3). Märta outlines a shift of romantic attachment from her father and first husband to Wolf, her true companion. Like Carter in "The Company of Wolves", Tikkanen, through Märta's outlining of male object relationships, indicates the heroine's separation from, or abjection of, the mother, girls' primary love object in early childhood, for the father as a new romantic relationship, resulting here in her heteronormativity and taking up a position of autonomous, speaking subject (see Oliver 1993: 55). Unlike the other protagonists who wander into the woods, in "Wolf-Alice" the wild is the protagonist's natural habitat as she is abandoned by her human mother. Wolf-Alice grew up among wolves. Her home is the lair, and her food is milk from wolves until hunters cross the lair and kill her wolf mother. The killing represents Wolf-Alice's crossroad, showing parting from her wolf mother. Wolf-Alice cannot speak and is, therefore, not a speaking subject, as Kelly Oliver (1993: 23) notes, one "becomes, through language, a subject proper". However, parted from her mothers, it may be argued that she is in transition to become a subject. The hunters bring Wolf-Alice to a convent, from which, because of her animalness, she is sent to work for the Duke, a werewolf. Like the heroine in Carter's "Wolf-Alice", who was snatched by hunters, animal brides in fairy tales are often victims of abduction, reflecting on men's fantasies of rape and domination and women's desire for autonomy (see Warner 1995: 310; see also Silver 2008: 41).

Tikkanen's and Carter's tales return to the first representation of female initiation, needles and pins, found in "The Story of Grandmother", and change it into a celebration of menstruation. Tikkanen's *Rödluvan* alludes to needles and pins, seen in "knappnålar och synålar och bröst och blod" (pins and needles and breasts and blood) (Tikkanen 1986: 227), where pins, needles, and blood stand for menstruation, whereas the addition of breasts indicates female fertility and sexuality. Carter plays with similar word combinations in her tales, for example, in "The Company of Wolves", the heroine's "breasts have just begun to swell … she has just started her woman's bleeding" (Carter 2006: 133). Furthermore, Carter and Tikkanen represent needles and pins through sewing. The grandmother in "The Company of Wolves" resembles an old seamstress, invoking initiation through her needle craft, "the grandmother who'd knitted her red shawl" and "the patchwork quilt she made before she was married" (ibid.: 133–135). However, rather than a continuation of women's traditional place, as suggested in Delarue's tale through the werewolf-grandmother (Verdier 1997:

110), her passing in Carter's tale indicates a break with traditional ways of doing initiation and needlework because the werewolf is here a male lover. The heroine in "Wolf-Alice" comparably breaks with the past by tearing up finely sewn garments, belonging to the Duke's dead mother, into rags to halt menstruation (Carter 2006: 144). Like the other protagonists, Märta in *Rödluvan* renegotiates women's place, assigned through sewing. Wearing her father's old suits, refashioned into girls' garments, her father's masculinity is transferred to Märta, employing a feminization of masculinity (Tikkanen 1986: 130).

In relation to menstruation, Carter and Tikkanen construct the heroines' feminine psychosexuality to expand into the genius's characteristic of time as new beginnings and rebirth. Kristeva uses menstruation and motherhood to describe how the view of time as new beginnings and rebirth works with the feminine: "Whether or not it is founded on the experience of menstrual cycles or of maternity, this temporality which breaks with linear time … seems to resonate with female psycho-sexuality" (Kristeva 2004b: 226). The protagonists in Carter's tales have arrived at similar understandings of time as cyclical using menstruation and sexuality. The heroine in "Wolf-Alice" "learned to expect these bleedings" and "discovered the very action of time by means of this returning cycle" (Carter 2006: 144), as well as combining blood and sexual fantasies that foregrounds the werewolf's relation to the moon and menstruation: "she woke to feel the trickle between her thighs and it seemed to her that a wolf who, perhaps, was fond of her, as wolves were, and who lived, perhaps, in the moon? Must have nibbled her cunt while she was sleeping, had subjected her to a series of affectionate nips" (Carter 2006: 144).

Like Wolf-Alice, the heroine in "The Company of Wolves" has gained an understanding of "the clock inside her that will strike, henceforward, once a month" while imagining sexual pleasure through her "magic space the entrance to which is shut tight with a plug of membrane" (Carter 2006: 133). In *Rödluvan*, Märta's perception of time as new beginnings and rebirth rises from her feminine that emphasizes maternity, positively enhancing female generative powers: "ungens doft och mjölkens, kvinnolukten, den går aldrig ur, den leder bakåt inåt neråt, djupt mot skogstjärnar och fuktig sammetmossa, fjärrantider, ursprungsåder sinnlighet, orgasmextas" (the kid's scent and the milk's, women's scent, which never disappears; it reverts backwards inwards downwards, towards a woodland pond and damp velvet feather moss, bygone times, mother vein, sensuality, the ecstasy of orgasming) (Tikkanen 1986: 273). Tikkanen's construction of giving birth as new beginnings comes close to Colette Willy's, one of Kristeva's geniuses, perception of herself as "hatching" (Kristeva 2004a: 210) or Hanna Arendt's, another of Kristeva's geniuses, view of natality, seeing each child as "a new beginning" because "each begins, in a sense, a new world" and has the capacity to begin again (ibid.: 423).

Carter's and Tikkanen's tales explore fears of the werewolf in folklore, highlighting sexuality and power and revealing the heroines' attachment to the werewolf as similar to the relationship between the girl and the beast in the tale "Beauty and the Beast". While Warner (1995: 308–309) maintains that many of Carter's fairy tales expand on the theme of "Beauty and the Beast", also making it prominent in "Wolf-Alice" and "The Company of Wolves", Vaz da Silva (2008a: 163) suggests that werewolves in Carter's tales represent dangerous male sexuality and female power. Of all nightly and woodsy creatures in folklore, the wolf is described as the worst in "The Company of Wolves". Through the werewolf theme, Carter (2006: 129) constructs homology between eating and sex: "once he's had a taste of flesh then nothing will do". The werewolf's erect penis when jumping on the grandmother to eat her in her home makes his sexual intentions explicit while also alluding to the eating of the grandmothers in Delarue's, Perrault's, and the Brothers Grimm's tales. Eating and cannibalism have been linked to coitus in literature since the turn of the 1500s (Partridge 1996 [1947]: 40–108), and werewolf lore was increasingly coupled with sexual perversion in the 1900s (Gutenberg 2007: 154). Comparable to the werewolf in "The Company of Wolves", the werewolf-Duke in "Wolf-Alice" is portrayed as a "corps-eater" and a "body snatcher", whose "eyes see only appetite" (Carter 2006: 142). The werewolf-Duke resembles the Beast in the tale "Beauty and the Beast", where Beauty, who has come to live with the "ugly male animal," performs tasks for him to retrieve his love (Vaz da Silva 2008a: 41). The heroine in "Wolf-Alice", likewise, assists the werewolf-Duke, knowing "no better than to do his chores for him", cleaning scraps of his victims every night from his bedroom (Carter 2006: 143). Like the Beast attracts his Beauty in "Beauty and the Beast" (Warner 1995: 308), the heroines in Carter's tales attach to the werewolves, despite their repulsiveness, reminding one of the abject, described as "a repulsive gift" that fascinates its victims while threatening the integrity of their identities (Kristeva 1982: 9). Animal grooms in fairy tales, like the werewolves in Carter's tales, represent the transformative powers of love (see Silver 2008: 41). Previously seen in the heroine's liking of the werewolf in "The Company of Wolves", Wolf-Alice's attachment to the werewolf-Duke indicates an increased object relation, significant in the context of both adolescents and the genius (Kristeva 2004b: 222–224; 2007: 715–717). While adolescents often submit to "amorous passion" and idealization of their love objects (Kristeva 2007: 717), the genius's ego cannot separate from its relationships (Kristeva 2004a: 420). Like the other werewolves here, the wolf in *Rödluvan* engulfs the grandmother (Tikkanen 1986: 226), while Henrik, the Wolf, turns to alcohol, affairs, and violence (ibid.: 177–274) because he is afraid of love, "han kan inte älska" (he cannot love) (ibid.: 167). Like Carter invokes the "Beauty and the

Beast" theme in her tales, Märta in *Rödluvan* hopes her love, indicating her romantic investment and increased object relationship, will change the Wolf's heart but nearly breaks her own (ibid.: 167, 271).

Tikkanen highlights cannibalism, the second representation of female initiation, in *Rödluvan* through the abjection of the heroine's mother, thus reversing the beast motif also seen in "Wolf-Alice". Of Tikkanen's and Carter's tales, Märta in *Rödluvan* remains most true to the cannibalistic representation of female initiation, earlier seen in Delarue's tale: "Vargen bjuder henne på en måltid som hon sent ska glömma dricker mormors blod och äter mormorns bröst" (The wolf invites her to a meal which she won't forget drinking granny's blood and eating granny's breasts) (Tikkanen 1986: 226). The first experience of cannibalism for humans is the infant's incorporation of the mother's breast (Skinner 1961: 71). Melanie Klein, also called a genius by Kristeva, discovered the infant's first notion of a self in relation to a partial object, the mother's breast, which occurs before her abjection (Kristeva 2004b: 223). Warner (1998: 146) likens the child cannibal in folk fairy tales, reversing the motif of the beast, with children's uncontrollable id, instinctual and animalistic desires, through "inner compulsions, especially greed and the ferocious survival instinct". According to Kristeva (1982: 39), for small children, cannibalism is a fantasy, dealing with the fears of losing the mother after having abjected her, as she writes, "I incorporate a portion of my mother's body, her breast, and thus I hold on to her". Equally fantastic to the infant, as its wish to devour the mother, is the fear of being devoured by her (ibid.: 4), which describes a feeling of maternal excess (Oliver 1993: 77). In another context, Warner (1998: 57) similarly describes cannibal parents in folk and fairy tales as excess. Märta in *Rödluvan* captures the essence of maternal excess through an ambivalence of devouring when stating that "äter inte Rödluvan upp sin mormor äter mormor henne" (if Little Red Riding Hood doesn't eat her granny, granny will eat her) (Tikkanen 1986: 226). These fantasies that doubtless are aggressive and sexual, too, coincide with the child's incorporation of language, culture, and morals (Kristeva 1982: 13, 41–44): The child replaces maternal loss with signs, gestures, and words (ibid.: 41). As Kristeva (ibid.: 79) writes, "I give up cannibalism because abjection (of the mother) leads me towards respect for the body of the other", the mother having turned into an other after abjection, helping the child separate from her and become autonomous (Oliver 1993: 61). Raised by beastly wolves that similarly understand neither human language nor culture, the protagonist in "Wolf-Alice", as Makinen (1992: 11) argues, is raised "outside of the social training of the symbolic" but nevertheless learns enough about this to become a subject proper, visible in her partaking in a congregation at the local church: "She lent them the assistance of her own, educated voice" (Carter 2006: 148).

The theme of "Beauty and the Beast" combines with cannibalism and skin-shifting, the second and third representations of female initiation, in "The Company of Wolves", unleashing the heroine's inner sexual being. Reminiscent of "The Story of Grandmother", the heroine in "The Company of Wolves" removes her clothes and throws them on the fire, indicating her skin-shifting. However, when the werewolf wants to eat her, too, knowledgeable that "the worst wolves are hairy on the inside", she bows to fate and meets his desire, realizing that she is "nobody's meat" (Carter 2006: 137) and changing the "passive terror" endured by the Brothers Grimm's Little Red Riding Hood in the wolf's belly (Makinen 1992: 5). Merja Makinen (1992: 10) points to Carter's use of "skin and flesh as signifying pleasure" in *The Sadeian Woman*, which through the protagonist's sexual passion in "The Company of Wolves" transforms "'meat' into 'flesh'" (ibid.: 11) and the werewolf into a "tender wolf" (Carter 2006: 138). The tale ends with romance through Carter's envisioning of a bizarre fairy tale wedding: "she will put the lice into her mouth and eat them, as he will bid her, as he would do in a savage marriage ceremony" (ibid.: 139). While Makinen notes Carter's fascination with "'beast marriage' stories" (ibid.: 9), Warner (1995: 307) argues that by exploiting the beast motif, Carter's heroines discover their own "force of nature" through the werewolves, only reflecting what already resides within; as Makinen (1992: 9) emphasizes, Carter's tales show that women can be sexually active and even perverse. The beast represents a sensuality that has traditionally been viewed as devouring but which, if embraced, is empowering because it provides "a new awareness of both self and other" (ibid.: 10), also viewable in Carter's "Wolf-Alice".

Similarly, skin-shifting and cannibalism of female initiation wed in "Wolf-Alice", displaying sexual maturity that reaches feminine psychosexual maturity seen in the genius's unity of living and thinking. Carter (2006: 146) constructs skin-shifting, in Wolf-Alice's own words, through "the new skin that had been born … of her bleeding". Carter (ibid.) also combines skin-shifting and cannibalism in Wolf-Alice's examination of her own skin and breasts, which for hours, she would lick and taste with her long tongue, indicating both pleasure and eating. Towards the end of the tale, by putting on a dead woman's bridal dress, which refers to marriage, Wolf-Alice reverses the representation of skin-shifting, her transformation. She sets out from the castle in the bridal dress and finds the injured Duke, shot with a silver bullet, in the graveyard. The villagers have decided to finish him because he abducted the bride, the owner of Wolf-Alice's dress. However, Wolf-Alice brings him to his bedchamber in the castle. With her long tongue, she licks "without hesitation, without disgust, with a quick, tender gravity, the blood and dirt from his cheeks and forehead" (Carter 2006: 148). As Makinen (1992: 11) observes, Wolf-Alice confronts her own desire "in all its unruly 'animalness'". While Lau (2008: 91) finds Wolf-Alice's response

"both tender and erotic", like the protagonist's picking of lice in "The Company of Wolves", in Makinen's (1992: 11) view, she brings the werewolf-Duke "into the world of the rational, where he too can be symbolized" (ibid.); however, in such a way that "flesh" makes "thought", that thought yields to instinctual drives (Kristeva 2004b: 225). Such is the genius's characteristic of the unity of living and thinking, also emphasized in Carter's characterization of Wolf-Alice: "how did she think, how did she feel … with her furred thoughts" (Carter 2006: 144). Like Carter, Colette Willy (2004) explores her furry thoughts through the minds and feelings of a dog and a cat in her short story collection *Barks and Purrs*. According to Kristeva (2004a: 85), pushing beyond "the limits of the sensory" with humor and simplicity, Colette tames her own animality through "extreme perceptions and desires as if they were those of a beast". Carter (2006: 149) constructs a similar kind of gentle animalness, displayed in the heroine's "soft, moist, gentle tongue" in "Wolf-Alice", which is very different from the protagonists' more violent animalness in "The Company of Wolves" and *Rödluvan*.

Tikkanen's *Rödluvan* similarly represents skin-shifting, through love and sex, which extends into feminine psychosexual maturity. Märta's shift of skin in *Rödluvan* is shown through death and orgasming, indicating her transformation: "strip-tease och eldsflammor och lilla döden, stora döden" (striptease and flames and little death, giant death) (Tikkanen 1986: 209). Märta, as Rödluvan, describes her libido as "riktigt skönt pervers och ful och härligt våldsamt snedvriden och hotfullt farlig" (really charmingly perverted and ugly and delightfully crooked and terrifyingly dangerous) (ibid.: 225). The heroine in "The Company of Wolves", correspondingly, seduces the werewolf, by kissing and violently ripping off his clothes, informed that without his human clothes, he is condemned to wolfishness. Lau (2008: 86) argues that the protagonist "opts for the bestial", revealing her own animalness and sexual agency. Nevertheless, unlike the sex in "The Company of Wolves" that, according to Makinen (1992: 9), is grounded in equality and recognition of "the reciprocal claims of the other", the Wolf in *Rödluvan* cannot control Märta in the sexual act because, as he laments, her pleasure is internal and "han blir utanför" (he is left outside) (Tikkanen 1986: 223, 273). Märta thinks that he is afraid to give in to her love (ibid.: 167), and it is not until he is dying that they reconcile in love (ibid.: 290). Yet, like the protagonists in "Wolf-Alice" and "The Company of Wolves", Märta's psychosexuality has a soft side, too, resembling maternity through her love and care for the Wolf and her own children, making the maternal part of the erotic because if the mother lacks the libido of the lover, a drive-oriented satisfaction, her eroticism, Kristeva (2014: 75) argues, would run "defensive or operational", impeding thinking. Maternal eroticism orients itself towards other beings (ibid.: 71), emphasizing the genius's inseparableness from others.

CONCLUSION

Figure 1. *Girl Geniuses I–III (2020). Carola Maria Wide ©.*

Addressing three representations of female initiation in folk fairy tales – needles and pins, cannibalism, and skin-shifting – in Delarue's, Carter's, and Tikkanen's tales, this study has shown how traditional female initiation in Delarue's tale allocates a social identity of the woman to the girl, by her taking up women's responsibilities, roles, and positions, and how the heroines in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, while returning to traditional representations of female initiation and womanhood, transform them through romance and sex in ways that resemble contemporary transitions. The study has additionally compared the heroines' initiation with abjection: while initiation is not abjection, initiation rites function like abjection, through the return of a subject to the maternal, transforming and reconstructing the subject's identity. With the photographic series *Girl Geniuses I–III* (2020) in Figure 1, picturing the author's blood, I hope to demonstrate that abjection can be a regenerative force and that menstruation, like in Carter's and Tikkanen's tales, can be both beautiful and empowering for girls. Along with an awakening of the heroines' menstruation, love, and sexuality, using the werewolf as an adaptation of the beast, Carter and Tikkanen represent a reach of the heroines' feminine psychosexual maturity, the Kristevan feminine. The Kristevan feminine concludes here in the girl genius, which transforms and moves the heroines' identity as subjects beyond the ordinary and can, therefore, be considered as an active and agentive force for girls: a self that holds a capacity for viewing time as new beginnings and rebirth, that orients itself towards romantic others without losing itself, and, finally, that amalgamates living and thinking, instinctual drive and intellect to achieve wholeness. Such is the genius of Carter's and Tikkanen's girl protagonists. In

order to write of the feminine, one is sometimes bound to first experience it (Kristeva 2000: 120), which also suggests a certain genius of Carter and Tikkanen, which could be worth examining in the future.

NOTE

[1] All translations are my own.

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Carola Maria Wide is a doctoral student at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and a university teacher in English at the Hanken School of Economics, Finland. She writes her dissertation on contemporary "Little Red Riding Hood" tales, the Kristevan genius and feminine. She has so far published three articles, of which the most recent is "'Grandmas Do Worse': The Kristevan Feminine in Contemporary Versions of Little Red Riding Hood" (2023). Her research interests include the English language, culture, and literature, as well as visuality, fairy tales, and feminine psychosexuality.

carolamariawide@gmail.com

III

"GRANDMAS DO WORSE:" THE KRISTEVAN FEMININE IN CONTEMPORARY VERSIONS OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

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"Grandmas Do Worse:" The Kristevan Feminine in Contemporary Versions of Little Red Riding Hood

Carola Maria Wide

Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

ABSTRACT

Recent scholarship on intergenerational female relationships in "Little Red Riding Hood" often stresses conflict. Examining such relationships from the perspective of adolescent daughtering through Julia Kristeva's idea of the feminine in three contemporary versions of the story, Angela Carter's "The Werewolf", Kiki Smith's "Bedlam", and Gillian Cross's *Wolf*, this study demonstrates that some friction is necessary for recreating the protagonists' grandmaternal relationship, which positively highlights female bonding and enhances the protagonists' maturity and feminine development to embrace new beginnings with an environmental twist.

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Introduction

The intergenerational female relationship during the heroine's adult transition in the history of "Little Red Riding Hood" (LRRH) is well-known; a granddaughter brings a basket of food through the woods to her grandmother. However, few studies engage with the intergenerational female relationship in the tale, and those who do, often consider female conflict. Female competition for the wolf's attention dominates Bruno Bettelheim's (2010, p. 173) classic study of the Brothers Grimm's "Little Red Cap" (1812, as cited in Zipes, 1993), containing a girl, who dwarfs her grandmother by giving directions to her house, so the wolf can eat her. Yet, the wolf eats the girl, too, and the two females must rely on a woodsman to be saved. Yvonne Verdier (1997, p. 173) argues that Charles Perrault's version (1697, as cited in Zipes, 1993), where the girl and the wolf's bed encounter eclipses the intergenerational female relationship, is no different. Only a handful of studies engage positively with the grandmother-granddaughter relationship in LRRH. Rima Staines (2010, pp. 339–340) emphasizes female influence in her study of the grandmother in LRRH as a crone or witch figure of old folklore. While often treated analogously, a witch describes a practitioner of magic (OED Online, 2022d), whereas a crone represents a wise old female storyteller, managing girls' initiation in old folklore (Girardot, 1977, p. 291; Staines, 2010, pp. 336–337;). Similarly, Verdier (1997) foregrounds the grandmother's role during her granddaughter's maturation into woman in an oral tradition of LRRH, called "The Story of Grandmother." This version was transferred between female generations as a girls' initiation tale, outlining their transition into adults and circulating in Europe long before Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales. It differs from later tales in that both the wolf and the girl devour the grandmother with the moral that "grandmothers will be eaten," following a natural progression of generations (110). While Jack Zipes (1993, pp. 7, 25) acclaims the oral tale for highlighting girls' agency, Verdier (in Zipes,

CONTACT Carola Maria Wide carolamariawide@gmail.com Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

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1993, p. 24) also admits a disavowal of female influence, reflecting traditional gender roles, positions, and groups, into which initiates were accepted, enabling conflict among females.

Gender-focused studies of fairy tales, including LRRH, show a need for alternative methods for the analysis of gender in illuminating intergenerational female dynamics. Vanessa Joosen (2021, pp. 172–174) remarks that attention to gender has generated a shift away from traditional gender norms that submit the female to the male gender. Predictably, male writers are often blamed for female conflict in fairy tales: Zipes (1993, xi) mentions the presence of male sexual domination, and Susan Henneberg (2010, pp. 126–127) reports deep-rooted sexism and ageism in the LRRH tradition by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. Henneberg (125) argues that while mothers fare badly, "grandmas do worse" in fairy tales, causing anxieties of female power and marginalizing old women that deprive girls of desirable support, nurture, and role models of old age: Fairy tales, consequently, tell girls that a viable future is not in sight for them, resulting in Henneberg's (126, 133) call for positive representations of mature women, emphasizing female bonding and influence. Similarly, Joosen (2021, p. 181) wishes for greater emphasis on grandmothers but also requests alternative approaches that move beyond gender, to revise female roles in fairy tales. Whereas Marina Warner (1995, pp. 207–8) finds that the problem of female conflict is far deeper than gender, involving differences among generations of women, Janneke Van Mens-Verhulst, (1993, p. 15) claims that real-life intergenerational female differences derive from mother-daughter relationships. In mother-daughter dynamics, mothering depicts caring activities relatable to mothers, whereas daughtering describes a reception of care and dependence on a relationship maintained by an older and more powerful individual (16). Grandmothers are extensions of mothers, who may support daughters during parenting, providing role modeling, resources, and care for their granddaughters, which potentially facilitates good intergenerational relationships (Barnett, 2010, pp. 28–30). Van Mens-Verhulst (1993, p. 15) advocates for special attention to mother-daughter dynamics and, particularly, to daughters' reactions to receiving mothering, what Julia Kristeva (2014, p. 69) calls maternal "object relations" or attachments, improving the overall awareness of dynamics between women. Her contribution lies in representing mother-daughter relations and reimagining the maternal after Freud, who relied on father-son-dynamics and the paternal (Stone, 2011, p. 45).

Kristeva's writing on daughtering, emphasizing the role of the feminine (e.g., Kristeva, 2019, 2004), offers a productive way of analyzing intergenerational female dynamics in fairy tales in general and LRRH in particular. My approach of using the Kristevan feminine constitutes an alternative to reading intergenerational female relationships in fairy tales, with a specific focus on LRRH. The Kristevan feminine derives from the French *féminine*, which more neutrally applies to traditional attributes or qualities of women than the English feminine that also describes female gender or sex (Smith, 1998, p. 10). For Kristeva (2019, pp. 3–4), the feminine, together with the masculine, forms individuals' psychosexual identities. Girls' feminine, combined with the masculine, is partly constructed in their psychosexual development, where their maternal attachment develops between birth and the preschool years, making the mother girls' love object, until they change (or not) love object from mother to father. This results from a co-existence of sexuality and language and in an individual's identity of subject in the social realm that represses the maternal, becoming an other (Kristeva, 2014, pp. 69–72, 2019, pp. 3–4; Oliver, 1993, pp. 3–5, 10, 22–23). Then, during girls' adolescence, the parental object relations are renegotiated (Kristeva, 2007, p. 717). The Kristevan feminine is partly constructed in maternal reliance, which, like mothering, is a psychosexual somatic energy or vocation, grounded in tenderness and care, aiming at maintaining life and enabling a mother's bond with her child (Kristeva, 2019, p. 5). The feminine, more specifically, comprises the centralities of reliance and relationality, in focus here, as well as unity of life and thought, where thinking and living coexist (Kristeva, 2004, pp. 419–20). While reliance involves mothering, relationality maintains an individual's object relations, expressing a need for (Kristeva, 2004, p. 413) "others and the environment" (Kristeva, 2014, p. 71), assisting their identification and recreation (Kristeva, 2019, p. 5). Accordingly, this examination of the

Kristevan feminine in three contemporary versions of LRRH—British writer Angela Carter's short story "The Werewolf" (Carter, 1979/2006), American artist Kiki Smith's visual essay "Bedlam" (Kiki Smith, 2001), and British Writer Gillian Cross's young adult novel *Wolf* (Cross, 1990)—reveals the conflicts and possibilities of the intergenerational female allyship during the heroines' adult transition, renegotiating their grandmaternal attachment and enhancing their reliance and relationality, as well as facilitating an interest in the natural world and the crone or witch figure, displayed in the author's photographs in the conclusion.

Angela Carter's "The Werewolf"

Whereas most studies consider the werewolf in Carter's tale (e.g., Bacchilega, 1997; Gutenberg, 2007), this essay highlights the witch theme prominent in the story, examining the heroine's grandmother's resemblance to a witch, which turns initiation and conflict into a witch hunt that culminates in a witch's duel, ending in the witch's death and enhancement of the heroine's skills in reliance and relationality. Warner establishes that a witch's duel is a confrontation between a heroine and a witch, who has seized the heroine's lover, and in which the heroine clutches at the witch, who transforms between different shapes until defeated (Warner, 1995, p. 194). The witch's duel in "The Werewolf" resembles the heroine's initiation. Cristina Bacchilega (1997, p. 59) observes the reactivation of girls' initiation in Carter's tale, which she classifies as a women-centered version of LRRH, drawing on both oral and written LRRH traditions. The grandmother-granddaughter relationship in "The Werewolf" can also be viewed as representing Carter's own grandmaternal attachment. Edmund Gordon (2017, p. 21) and Lorna Sage (2007, p. 6) observe that strong, sensible grandmother characters, who practice folk wisdom and who are based on Carter's own grandmother, abound in Carter's fiction, including "The Werewolf." Since Carter lived with her maternal grandmother in Yorkshire during the Second World War, their attachment was exceptionally strong (in Gordon, 2017, p. 21) if not her maternal object relation. Against this, the grandmother-granddaughter relationship in "The Werewolf" can be viewed as equally strong. Carter (1997, p. 3) claims that her grandmother raised her into "the child she had been" and called her "a witch" with "second sight" (in Gordon, 2017, p. 5) and simultaneously associated her Scottish witch-hat-wearing paternal great grandmother with "the Aberdeen witches" (Carter, 1997, p. 15). In an interview with Sage (2007, p. 8), Carter speaks of her great-grandmother's home in North Aberdeenshire as a witch-purging country, revealing her ambivalence towards old witch hunts. Notably, after her passing in 1992, Carter was herself dubbed a witch by fellow writers: "Fairy Godmother," "the witch queen," and "the white witch" (Atwood 1992 and Rushdie 1992 as cited in Makinen, 1992, p. 2).

Early in Carter's "The Werewolf," reliance and relationality constitute the mother-daughter relationship. First, gendered domestic tasks, such as cooking and nursing show the mother's generosity and reliance towards the grandmother, which can be viewed as including her daughter: "Go and visit your grandmother, who has been sick. Take her the oatcakes I've baked for her on the hearthstone and a little pot of butter" (127), recalling the mother's care in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales (in Zipes, 1993, pp. 91, 135). Second, sending her daughter to care for her grandmother denotes the mother's relationality in "The Werewolf," maintaining their relationship. Since the grandmother lives five miles into the enclosed forest, the mother advises her daughter to bring her father's knife as protection against wildlife and, accordingly, indicates a wish to shelter her. The knife also suggests the woodsman's knife, cutting open the wolf's belly in the Brothers Grimm's LRRH. Carter's heroine is sympathetically described as a "good child," who follows her mother's instruction, thus, absorbing interpersonal and mothering skills by helping her mother and grandmother (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 127). When she sets out in the snow to visit her grandmother with food in a basket, prepared by her mother, the heroine wears nothing else than a shabby lambskin coat (127). The lambskin keeps her warm, suggesting maternal nurture. While Adriana Madej-Stang (2015, p. 214) postulates that the lambskin implies the girl's innocence, Bacchilega

(1997, p. 61) argues that it demonstrates her killing nature since, after all, lambs could become wolves. The double meaning of the word crone supports the latter, referring both to ewes and to old mighty women (Staines, 2010, p. 336; OED Online, 2022c). The sheepskin in "The Werewolf" could, thus, reveal a more mature and cunning layer of the girl's feminine dimensions.

Carter arranges the intergenerational conflict as a fictive witch hunt, demonstrating tension between the girl and her grandmother, between folk belief and the Christian religion that occurred throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. While in the Early Middle Ages, the art of magic, such as protective charms to avert demons was common, witchcraft was linked to Paganism and its worship of strange gods, viewed as the worshippers' ancestors that must be replaced by the Christian God (Saunders, 2010, pp. 68, 79, 87–89). Comparably, while the villagers in "The Werewolf" engage in magic; garlic is a charm, and they place food, "votive offerings, "loaves," and "cakes," on their ancestors' graves, which are like offerings to Pagan gods, they adhere to Christianity, "a crude icon of the virgin behind a guttering candle," as well as hunting witches, "they strip the crone, search for her marks . . . stone her" (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 126). By the Late Middle Ages, witches were gendered as female, making old, widowed women, skilled in herbal lore, prone to witch accusations (Saunders, 2010, pp. 77, 113–115), like the girl's grandmother in "The Werewolf."

In the forest, the protagonist confronts her grandmother as a witch, who has transformed herself into a werewolf, an individual changing into a wolf (see, Gutenberg, 2007, p. 149), threatening the protagonist's feminine. In old folk belief, witches were known for their transformative capabilities and often shapeshifted into wolves (Madej-Stang, 2015, p. 213). The connection between witches and wolves returns to Norse mythology, in which the witch Hyndla rides on wolves (Adams Bellows, 2009, p. 219). Carter's werewolf also alludes to the oral LRRH tale, where the grandmother is a werewolf. Carter's werewolf is characterized as "a huge one, with red eyes and running, grizzled chops" (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 127). Whereas her size indicates domination, her outward character demonstrates strength, fierceness, and shadiness, characterizing both old, red-eyed witches (Madej-Stang, 2015, p. 214) and werewolves, whose fierceness and strength are conventionally associated with masculine traits, too (Gutenberg, 2007, pp. 151–2). The grandmother-werewolf reveals her shady side in "The Werewolf" by attacking her granddaughter (Madej-Stang, 2015, p. 214), rivaling the wolf's engulfing of the red-hooded girl in Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's tales. Gutenberg (2007, p. 153) interprets the attack in Carter's story as a phantasy of engulfment, provoked by an excess of the Kristevan maternal (Oliver, 1993, p. 77): A fear of feeling engulfed resulting in an individual's loss of identity, merging with the mother's, can inhibit an individual's feminine growth (Kristeva, 2004, p. 414). However, in "The Werewolf," the girl defeats fear by turning on the werewolf with her knife. Since the heroine claims the knife as her own, using it for her own protection, it relates "an important step for the daughter into independence and adulthood" (Madej-Stang, 2015, pp. 213–4), positively recreating her maternal attachment.

The witch hunt in "The Werewolf" turns into a witch's duel, approaching initiation. Using her knife, the girl removes the wolf's front paw, causing the werewolf to retreat while marking the newly fallen snow with blood. An old woman's blood-spill in fairy tale has been linked to her gifts of menstrual cycles and fertility to a young girl. This is seen in, for instance, the Brothers Grimm's "Snow White" and "The Goose Girl," where, in the former, a queen spills a few drops of her own blood on snow to receive a daughter and, in the latter, a mother leaks blood on a handkerchief, given to her daughter before her wedding (Vaz da Silva, 2007, pp. 244–245). Another example is the oral LRRH tale, where the girl drinks her grandmother's blood to gain wisdom of adult female bodies and sexuality (Bacchilega, 1997, p. 61). In a similar gesture, the heroine in "The Werewolf" cleans the blood from the knife on her apron although blood is seemingly not enough since she stores the whole paw in her basket, too, by which she retains possession of the witch, as in a witch's duel. The hand further links to the folktale "Maiden without Hands." In some versions of the tale, a daughter cuts off her own hands to escape incest while in others by, for example, the Brothers Grimm, her father removes her hands, whereby he controls her sexuality, accentuating "the role of

hands in sexuality" (Warner, 1995, p. 348). Through the hand, it can be argued that also the heroine in "The Werewolf" gains skills in psychosexual domination. To summarize, the amalgam of the hand and blood in the witch's duel epitomizes the heroine's initiation, transforming female conflict into bonding.

The heroine's clinging to the hand sustains the witch-grandmother attachment, interpretable as increased relational and mothering skills. When reaching her grandmother's house, the heroine confronts her grandmother, who is weakened by her lost hand and in a poor state, as a witch. The girl's mothering skills shine through in the care for her grandmother, when she makes her "a cold compress" alleviating the disabled woman's fever (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 127). Opening her basket, the paw falls out as a human hand, recognizable as her grandmother's through a wart on the forefinger, like in real witch trials, where marks on the skin distinguished witches (see, OED Online, 2022d). The girl in "The Werewolf" lifts the blanket to discover the truth, but the grandmother loudly resists as if possessed. Yet, the strong and armed heroine firmly grips the witch, discovering a "bloody stump" where her right hand should have been (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 128). She calls for the neighbors, who kill the witch, and the girl claims her house by moving in and prospering (128). In terms of a witch's duel, the heroine's seizing of the witch clearly demonstrates relationality although Gutenberg (2007, p. 163) suggests that while the ending references gendered witch-persecutions, the girl's ruthlessness deprives her of "femininity and motherliness." Whereas Gordon (2017, p. 21) considers that the grandmother comes to grief unsympathetically, like Gutenberg, Bacchilega believes that the girl replaces her in a shady way, reproducing the werewolf's violence and scapegoating the grandmother (Bacchilega, 1997, pp. 55, 61). Despite shadiness, Carter maintains in the Sage interview that for her, houses are representations of mothers (Sage, 2007, 6), and Sage adds, even of grandmothers (6). For example, in Carter's novel *Wise Children*, the mother is dead, but her soul survives through her house. While the grandmother dies in "The Werewolf," as Carter comments, "her spirit lives on and the house survives" (6). In this way, even if the heroine succeeds her grandmother, like in initiation, the ending is happy since the girl is reunited with her grandmother although in a changed form; as Bacchilega (1997, p. 56) notes, the girl must "negotiate the older woman's changing nature and death." In deep nature and nurture among "bears" and "wolves" (Carter, 1979/2006, p. 127), the witch's final form is of a house in the girl's loving and caring hands, demonstrating a renewal of her grandmaternal attachment, her excelling in relationality and reliance, indicating her capacity to start again (Kristeva, 2019, p. 6). The heroine in "Bedlam" will, similarly, replace her grandmother and embrace nature.

Kiki Smith's "Bedlam"

In "Bedlam," Smith outlines the madness of growing up, or what Kristeva terms the "adolescent malaise" because of the difficulties and suffering that mar maturation (Kristeva, 2007, p. 715). Helaine Posner confirms the motif of girls' initiation (Posner, 2001, p. 6), while Patricia Briggs (2008, p. 55) classifies "Bedlam" as a version of LRRH. "Bedlam" comprises 31 photographs, published in the book *Telling Tales* for Smith's homonymous exhibition at the International Center of Photography, New York, in 2001. Smith's "Bedlam" assembles characters from familiar tales: The heroine and her grandmother are appropriated from the tales LRRH and "Snow White." With "Bedlam," Smith clearly has both madness and girls' maturity in mind because although the word bedlam originally stood for Bethlehem, Jesus's birthplace in Christianity, it has come to embrace the meaning of madness today, largely because of a mental hospital, Bedlam, in London, founded by the Order of Our Lady of Bethlehem in 1247 (OED Online, 2022b). Madness is potent in adolescents' psychosexual development, given that in relation to the love object, adolescents are easily borne away by romanticism, enthusiasm, and fanaticism, potentially provoking the "*mad speech and acts*" of schizophrenia (Kristeva, 2007, p. 719).[1]

In adolescence, the belief in the love object's existence is strong, and this attachment is even idealized (716). While believing is not madness per se, it bears madness because in adolescents'

psyches, the idealized object is positioned between madness and the imaginary scenario of desires (719). Above all, idealization seems necessary for renegotiating the maternal attachment during youth (716). Smith highlights the adolescent passage in "Bedlam" by forging a relationship between Little Red Riding Hood and Sleeping Beauty, who in their familiar tales are young girls who start to bleed: While the red cloak in the LRRH tradition signifies menarche (Verdier, 1997, pp. 107–108), the princess's pricking of her finger on an old woman's spindle in Perrault's "Sleeping Beauty" describes transference of menstruation from the spinner to her (in Bettelheim, 2010, p. 233). During her passage in "Bedlam," Little Red Riding Hood will replace her grandmaternal relationship, representing her maternal attachment, with an idealization of the Christian Eve and animals, indicating Smith's call to preserve nature.

Smith constructs Little Red Riding Hood as a relational, guileless girl, whose vulnerability appeals to viewers' maternal care. Rather than a single character, the heroine represents a relationship between three different Little Red Riding Hood characters, indicating relationality and different aspects of the heroine in new and surprising ways. On the one hand, Smith presents the heroine as a rosy-faced, innocent child in a red headwear through photographs from her series "Gang of Girls and Pack of Wolves" (Smith, 2000 as cited in 2001) and "Wandering" (2000). The former portrays Little Red Riding Hood in profile view through simple colored line drawings, reminiscent of children's drawings, creating a feeling of guilelessness (Posner, 2001, p. 7). Smith created these drawings from an old picture of herself (Engberg, 2005, p. 38). Then, the latter depicts several tiny sterling-silver figurines of Little Red Riding Hoods. While elaborately executed, the figurines' finishing remains simple, achieving the line drawings' innocent appeal. On the other hand, Smith represents Little Red Riding Hood as a troubled individual through photographs from the series "Untitled (Daughter)" (Daughter) (1999) in Figure 1. Daughter portrays a white paper mâché sculpture of a red-hooded girl with hair growing on her face, reminding one of Carter's wool-clad protagonist. The combination of child and the traditional craftswoman material of paper, fabric, and hair, tops the overall impression of Daughter as innocent, although the bush gives her a disturbing and deviant look, stigmatizing her as an outcast, an abject, beyond her control (Posner, 2001, p. 9). In talking with Posner, Smith describes her intention with Daughter, imagining "an abandoned, forlorn little girl . . . so sweet, tender and wanton" (9). As noted in Carter's tale, tenderness is the core of reliance, Kristeva elucidates (Kristeva, 2011, pp. 44–47), a libidinal transformation, allowing sexualization to change into tenderness, caretaking, and love. In another

Figure 1. Untitled (Daughter), 1999. © Kiki Smith, courtesy Pace Gallery.

context, Nico H. Frijda (83 in Kalawski, 2010, p. 159) comparably elaborates that tenderness is an aspect of love, an expression of love through caregiving, and an act of recognizing objects that excite caring feelings or behaviors in others. It involves empathy through compassion for individuals in need by taking their perspective (Kalawski, 2010, p. 159). In essence, Smith's cluster of Little Red Riding Hoods, best understood as a relationship (hereon addressed as LRRHS or the heroine), clearly demonstrates relationality, prompting mothering in the viewer.

Despite her troublesome character, the grandmother completes LRRHS' maternal attachment. "Bedlam" opens with a sepia-colored photograph of the grandmother as a beautiful crone or witch in a black Victorian dress, viewable in Figure 2 (Kiki Smith, 2001, p. 27). The photograph is from Smith's series "Sleeping Witch" (2000), for which Smith herself models, realizing a childhood fantasy (in Posner, 2001, p. 19). Discussing with Posner, Smith discloses her attachment to her: "I have always thought of myself as the crone" (19). Thus, the crone in "Bedlam" could take after one of Smith's real-life object relations although she does not reveal who this individual might be. She (19) finds the crone's post-menopausal, post-sexual state liberating from and subversive of the social's expectations on female fertility, stating that the crone is "free to make trouble." Staines (2010) similarly infers that "sometimes frightening, sometimes kind, always ancient, always cunning," the crone is known for both her shortcomings and her virtues, also representing wisdom and storytelling: Her function was that of an oracle and woman teller, imparting knowledge to younger generations, viewable in the grandmother-crone's next appearance in "Bedlam" (Kiki Smith, 2001,

Figure 2. Sleeping witch, 2000. © Kiki Smith, courtesy Pace Gallery.

p. 45): Confronting the viewer in half-length, her wide-open mouth assumes storytelling while her eyes roll back in her head, like a madwoman, comparable to trance. Discussing with Catherine Clément about the feminine's relation to women's trance, Kristeva describes trance as an action of "breaking loose" from all representation (Clément & Kristeva, 2001, 16), explainable in terms of Kristevan subjectivity as a reintegration with the maternal, dissolving individual subjectivity (Oliver, 1993, p. 4), previously seen in Carter's werewolf threat: One positions oneself between "the female experience" (Clément & Kristeva, 2001, p. 16) and the social, the latter which, Kristeva (2019, p. 1) infers, subjugates women under men, the feminine under the masculine. The crone's wrinkled forehead in "Bedlam" also shows concern, interpretable as caring for LRRHS, demonstrating some degree of mothering on her part.

A paper doll and Daughter's hair demonstrate conflict relating to LRRHS' change of love object. A hastily assembled white paper doll with muslin fabric strips and cotton strings, from the series *Puppet* (2000), demonstrates LRRHS' "wounds and fractures of human existence" (Smith in Posner 19), which seem to recall disappointments in the love object. Disappointment in object relations is common, considering "the sadomasochistic nature" of erotic drives and desire that threatens and frustrates adolescents' belief (Kristeva, 2007, p. 717). This easily turns into punishments of the object and oneself (717). Maneuvered by a puppeteer, the crone-grandmother, who like a "mad scientist" gives the doll life (Posner, 2001, p. 21), the doll in "Bedlam" demonstrates the powerlessness of daughterhood, overshadowed by the grandmaternal. By not avoiding helplessness or disappointment, Smith, nevertheless, facilitates the heroine's healing and growth, stating a wish of reattaching the doll's limbs (21), making relationality and reliance a regenerative force (see, Kristeva, 2019, p. 6). Daughter's furry face (Figure 1) additionally expresses fear and lostness, foregrounding childhood trials and traumas, while marking the wolf's violence and animality in the familiar tales of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm (Posner, 2001, p. 9), explainable as her violence relating to object replacement, symptomized by "*attraction* and *repulsion, fascination* and *disgust*" (Kristeva, 2019, p. 3). While attraction and fascination show desire for the mother object, repulsion and disgust typify her abjection: Coinciding with thought and language development, a child "kills" the mother to leave her (Kristeva, 2014, p. 76): Maternal abjection, spurred by idealization, is an unfinished, negative process that "explodes" adolescents' maternal object relation (Kristeva, 2007, p. 716). For adolescent daughters, abjection is more violent than for sons, disrupting harmony through "hatred of the castrated woman," precipitating matricide (Kristeva, 2019, p. 3).

Like the witch in "The Werewolf," the enchanted grandmother in "Bedlam" meets with disaster, readable as the girl's initiation. N. J. Girardot emphasizes that as faith would have it, all mothers to girls sometimes play the roles of witches (Girardot, 1977, p. 291). Kristeva calls it daughters' matricide, a hazy unconscious complex that dispossesses them of themselves, wherein they may embark in an endless vengeance with their mothers and their representatives (Kristeva, 2019, p. 3). Such is the situation in "Bedlam." On the spread 56–57, a wolf pup jumps out as if it was jumping on the grandmother, as in Carter's tale, although Smith reverses the roles. Since the pup has a human face, drawn with a black marker, it appears as a representation of "Daughter," albeit in a more wolfish form. The grandmother is shown falling to the ground with a basket of black apples. Then, the final spread (pages 60–61) captures her on her deathbed of yellow autumn leaves, holding out a luminous red apple to the viewer, seen in Figure 3. Posner (2001, p. 16) draws a parallel between the red apples in "Bedlam" and in "Show White," with which a witch poisons the homonymous protagonist. Girardot further compares the witch in "Snow White" with the crone of old folk story: "She is a witch, yet at the same time she is something like the old women of primitive tradition (frequently depicted as a crone or witch) who must torture and 'kill' the young initiate" (Girardot, 1977, p. 291) although the crone's own crimes victimize her in "Bedlam" (Posner, 2001, p. 18). Posner emphasizes that the crone's black apples, albeit poisoned with death and evilness, allude to Eve's forbidden fruit in the Christian creation tale, which a serpent tempted her with, through which Eve became knowledgeable in women's love, fertility, and sexuality (Posner, 2001, p. 18). Similarly, Francisco Vaz Da Silva relates the red apple in "Snow White" to womb blood and female

Figure 3. Sleeping witch, 2000. © Kiki Smith, courtesy Pace Gallery.

fertility (Vaz da Silva, 2007, pp. 244–5). Recalling that hands connote sexuality, the red apple in the crone's hand in "Bedlam" could very well be understood as initiation, exchanging female blood, fertility, and sexuality between grandmother and granddaughter, between initiator and initiate, where matricide facilitates an object replacement from grandmother to Eve.

LRRHS idealizes her attachment to Eve, representing maternal energy. Since Eve in "Bedlam" lacks family, rather than a state or vocation, she denotes maternal energy or reliance, poetically described by Kristeva as "*to link, to gather, to join, to put together;* but *also to adhere, to belong, to depend on;* and therefore *to trust, to feel safe, to share your thoughts and feelings, to assemble together, and to be yourself*" (Kristeva, 2014, p. 79), transcending earlier mentions of reliance, limited to mothering, tenderness, and care. Through Eve, the heroine's reliance moves beyond the destructive feelings of "*expulsion, abjection* and *separation*" of matricide, to transform and attach, highlighting the creative and binding capabilities of relationality (Kristeva, 2019, pp. 3–5). Photographs from the series "Eve" (2001) depict Eve as a beautiful marble figurine; blood-red lips and cheeks embellish her white appearance. Eve seems mesmerized in love, joy, and pleasure of her own blood flow, displayed on the spread 38–39 through her naked feet's red-colored toenails and a swarm of blood-filled worms, pregnant with life. Depicting the first mother, woman, and wife in Christian mythology, Eve still holds sway as a role model for girls despite criticism of causing humanity's fall from grace. Smith exploits Eve's complexity (Posner, 2001, p. 15): Her creation tale begins in "an abject state," provoking growth through LRRHS' metamorphosis into an adult Eve,

resembling a more mature and integrated feeling of self (5). In the adolescent's search for a new love object, Kristeva further clarifies that because of idealization, epic love couples, such as Adam and Eve often represent "the adolescent ideal" although this ideal is unattainable and today, weakened by gender and sexual fluidity (Kristeva, 2007, p. 720). Idealization is comparable with the feminine dimension of increased object relations because both enhance object attachments. Described as individuals' creative bonds with others (715), object attachments or relationality are key to the feminine, either through real presence or imaginary psychic support (Kristeva, 2019, pp. 419–420). Similarly, adolescents idealize object relations through a partner or an ideal on a "professional-political-ideological-religious" continuum (Kristeva, 2007, p. 718).

In addition to idealizing Eve, LRRHS chooses wolves and animals as her companions, demonstrating mothering and relationality with nature. Besides an individual's maternal attachment, Kristeva recognizes an animal attachment, having turned into an abject (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 12–13), resulting in what Kelly Oliver (2009, p. 281) calls an animal abject, functioning "on the level of the social" and demonstrating a link between mother and animal in the human psyche. Throughout "Bedlam," LRRHS is in the company of wolves and animals, represented as maternal and friend attachments. On the spread 46–47, LRRHS undergoes rebirth through Genevieve, a Christian saint, and a wolf, taken from Smith's series "Bronze Genevieve" (2000) and "Bronze Wolf" (2000), drawing attention to reliance as new beginnings (2011, 46), as in Carter's tale. In Smith's imaginary work, Genevieve was born from the wolf. The imaginary process of rebirth forges a maternal attachment with the wolf. In addition, because of the wolf's hair, Daughter is part wolf, and Smith specifically imagines her as Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf's child (in Posner, 2001, p. 9), strengthening LRRHS' attachment with wolves. The wolf is a friend, too, indicating relationality; a photograph from "Wandering" on page 35, depicts the heroine wandering among wolves. LRRHS also befriends other animals from the series "Carriers" (2000) in "Bedlam." Warner emphasizes that in Smith's art, animals are "imaginary friends," who move with the heroine through her experiences (Warner, 2003, p. 43). Meaning bearers, receptacles, or conveyers (OED Online, 2022a), carriers demonstrate that animals mother the heroine by witnessing, holding, and consoling her during troubles, moving her forward. Unlike Carter's werewolf, which threatens the heroine's subjective integrity, animals are present through change, helping Smith's heroine to overcome conflict and pain (Warner, 2003, p. 43). In talking with Posner, Smith proposes that LRRHS and the wolf are called to create a greener world (Posner, 2001, p. 12), revealing LRRHS' recreation of, not only her maternal, but also her animal attachment and care for nature, described in another context as "an ecological subjectivity" by Oliver (2009, p. 306), adding value to relationality, reliance, and through Smith's concern for environmental causes, an environmental shift in the familiar tale.

Gillian Cross's *Wolf*

Like Carter's and Smith's tales, Cross's *Wolf* expands on the protagonist's transition into adulthood, during which time she enhances her feminine abilities and, in this case, comes to terms with her past by reconciling with her lost parents. Sandra Beckett (2009, pp. 301–308) and Joosen (2021) acknowledge the themes of intergenerational female bonding and LRRH in *Wolf*, where 13-year-old Cassy Phelan lives alone with her paternal grandmother Nan in London but is sent away to her mother after a nocturnal intruder pays a mysterious visit to her family home, and Cassy's life takes a dangerous turn. Despite having a mother, Goldie, whom she occasionally visits and a father, an IRA terrorist known as Mick the Wolf, whom she cannot remember, it is Nan who parents Cassy, thus, constituting Cassy's maternal object relation. In an interview with Catherine Horn (2021), Cross says that she was directly inspired by Zipes' study *The Trials & Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood* that traces LRRH to its oral past until "The Story of Grandmother." Joosen (2021, pp. 177–178) identifies the intertext of "The Story of Grandmother" in *Wolf*, where the girl consults the wolf about her clothes, instructing her to throw them on the fire, and come to bed. Reversely, the morning after the intruder's

visit, Nan in *Wolf* advises Cassy to place her pajamas in the washer and put on her red-hooded school mac (Cross, 1990, pp. 5, 9): *Wolf* apparently continues where the oral tale ends.

In *Wolf*, Nan shows reliance and relationality towards Cassy, contrastingly, appearing hostile to others. In Joosen's view (Joosen, 2021, p. 179), Nan aligns with the "wise old mentor," the crone of old folk stories, like the other grandmothers here. However, unlike them, Nan appears sympathetic, loving, and caring, supporting Kristeva's (2011, p. 47) claim that maternal reliance "is not a kind of witchcraft": Nan's relationship with Cassie is based on bonding, affection, and tenderness, displaying Nan's role-modelling of femininity in that reliance facilitates relationality through identification with the other and keeps the relationship open for change (Kristeva, 2019, p. 5). Mothering is primarily shown through Nan's work as a nurse and raising her granddaughter as her own. Like the mother in Carter's tale, Nan's care takes the form of traditional gendered tasks, protection, and emotional support. Cassy's gesture of cheek kissing and Nan's response of putting "the back of her hand softly against Cassy's cheek" show mutual affection (Cross, 1990, p. 9), overwhelming Cassy with "gentleness," when Nan assures Cassy that she is "a good girl" and that everything will be alright. When Nan instructs Cassy to write to her while at her mother's and hands her a bundle of stamped postcards, Cassy finds them "comforting" since they affirm Nan's care and relationality (8). Nan is sensitive to Cassy's growth, too, when insisting that "Maybe it's time you were growing up" (7), giving Cassy more responsibilities by traveling alone to her mother's, recreating their relationship. Although Cassy senses that something is wrong, her and Nan's relationship remains strong. By contrast, Nan appears hostile and fearful in her other relationships, as Cassy recalls Nan saying, "Mind your own business" and concludes that "You can't make Nan do anything" (4, 57). Robert, a school dropout who is Cassy's age and son to Goldie's boyfriend, calls Nan "The terrifying Granny Phelan" because Goldie fears her (57), claiming that Nan bereaved her of Cassy when Mick bombed a shopping center. Markedly traumatized by her son's crimes, Nan forced Goldie into silence.

Goldie exemplifies Kristeva's distinction between mothers and mothering. Kristeva argues in an interview with Birgitte Huitfeldt Midttun (2006, pp. 171–172) that not all physical mothers are capable of mothering. Cassy clearly dislikes staying with her mother, shown in her recalling of an earlier visit that ended in a fight, and Cassy ran away (Cross, 1990, p. 10). Goldie's reliance is poorly developed, as Cassy tells herself, there is "no use relying on Goldie," to which Nan adds that Goldie's kitchen is always empty, wherefore Nan packs a meal in a bag for Cassy to bring to her mother (9), resembling the basket with food in the other focal tales and the LRRH tradition. In Cassy's view, Goldie behaves like a child. She cannot care for herself, nor for a daughter, as Nan claims "*You have to tell Goldie what to do! Or she'll just sit there and let the mess pile up around her*" (6). Goldie drifts from squat to squat, seemingly unable to sustain relationships. While Goldie claims to be wise, Cassy argues that "Whatever Goldie was doing, it must be stupid" (72). In some measure, Nan defends her, stating that Goldie is okay if she stays calm, and also saves her from trouble, "Whenever she gets into a real muddle, Nan comes" (57). Concurrently, Nan exploits her situation when she tells Cassy to ignore Goldie because of her "*fairy stories*" (75). Goldie's weak maternal and relational capabilities goad conflict and neglect.

Cassy confronts conflict and chaos using maternal and interpersonal skills. In the beginning of the novel, Cassy tries to mother Nan, "Don't you want me to stay and look after you?," who, however, rejects Cassy's offer (Cross, 1990, p. 5). Determined to find her own mother, Cassy signals relationality, too, "if she's moved. I'll track her down" (9). It takes Cassy the whole day to locate Goldie in a squat on Albert Street, where she lives with Lyall and Robert. Cassy quickly befriends Robert, who like Cassy, demonstrates femininity through friendship and caring feelings. Yet, the squat where they live is in ruins and no different from the other slums, in which Cassy had previously stayed with Goldie "with greasy floors and cobwebby ceilings, where smells hung on the stairs and the corners were clogged with dirt" (14). Cassy's first reaction is to restore the squat to life, ergo, expressing life-preserving maternal energy (see, Kristeva, 2019, p. 6), acquired from Nan. Yet, without Nan's "scouring powder and scrubbing brush and disinfectant, ready to clean

everything up" (Cross, 1990, p. 14), Cassy must straighten the squat herself with some help from Robert and, thus, excels in responsibility, reliance, and relationality.

Despite good intentions, Nan's protection appears controlling, limiting Cassy's sense of selfhood and demanding more autonomy. Joosen (2021, p. 178) argues that she stops Cassy from critical reflection and questioning. However, Nan's overprotection relates to hiding Mick's crimes, "*We won't talk about him now . . . It'll be time enough when you're grown up*" (Cross, 1990, p. 48). Cassy has clearly absorbed Nan's disapproval of Goldie (Beckett, 2009, p. 301), viewed in her anger and disappointment: "I have to be here, in this—this slum . . . Not having proper meals. Not sleeping in a proper bed. Not behaving like a real person" (Cross, 1990, p. 82). Moreover, Nan projects her own need for order and sensibility onto Cassy, berefting her of imagination and a sense of self. Cassy's inability to play becomes obvious when Lyall wants her to playact for a show he is setting up, "For heaven's sake, girl! Imagine!" (89). When Goldie instructs her to imitate her grandmother, Cassy "felt exactly like Nan," imitating Nan's gestures after cleaning (89). Even while parted, Nan controls Cassy's actions, provoking a confusion of Cassy's development of a sense of self that is perceived as distinct from the (m)other, resembling codependency, and occurring in the maternal object relation if the boundary between a mother and her daughter is weak, "the other who thought she was I, of me who thought I was the other" (Kristeva, 1980, p. 163). Noted by Joosen (2021, p. 180), Nan has also imprinted the idea into Cassy that she cannot dream, "Cassy never dreams . . . She has more sense, to be sure. Her head touches the pillow and she's off" (Cross, 1990, p. 1).

Away from Nan, Cassy's imaginative capabilities grow through dreaming, readable as her initiation, disclosing the workings of the feminine, which enables a transformation of Cassy's paternal relation. Despite knowing better, Cassy dreamt every night on Albert Street about LRRH, which Nan read to her as a child, and her life begins to alter. In her dreams, Cassy confuses Little Red Riding Hood with the wolf, conflating Cassy's recalling of her father with a call to nature, like the other tales here. Her dreams appear pictureless, opening to her instinctual drive: "Everything came to her through other senses" (50), epitomizing the engineering of the feminine. Kristeva describes the feminine as an individual's instinctual drive (Kristeva, 1980, p. 162), sensorial knowing (Kristeva, 2019, p. 7), and imaginary through "sounds" and "sensations in the flesh" (Kristeva, 2000, p. 120), limning an "*instinctual/sexual disjunction*," a drive-governed sexuality, denatured from the body (Kristeva, 2019, p. 1). Cassy's dreams in *Wolf* awaken curiosity and playfulness, "*We could play a little game*" (Cross, 1990, p. 35). Some nights, Cassy perceives herself as one with the wolf and nature, like Smith's LRRHS or as her father, seen in Mick's admiration of wolves: "Her right hand gripped the handle of the basket, feeling its familiar smoothness. But under her left hand was thick hair, springy and strange. It was so deep that she could run her fingers through it" (51). Like in Carter's and Smith's tales, hands and hair participate in Cassy's transition into maturity. Making sense of Nan, the wolf, dead bodies, and bombs, Cassy realizes with horror that her dreams are real, finally remembering watching the wolves at London Zoo with her father (128–9). Although she blames Mick for abandoning her, they establish some reconciliation, renewing their relationship.

Cassy's relationships with Goldie and Nan improve, too, indicating Cassy's growing up. Goldie proves her worth to Cassy by heroically rescuing her and Nan from Mick, who has kidnapped them, by leading the police to him. Nearly losing Cassy upgrades Goldie's mothering abilities while Cassy admits that although her and Goldie's relationship is difficult, the care is mutual. Whereas Joosen acknowledges Goldie's newfound strength, she disregards Nan as an "ineffectual crone," weakened and hospitalized by the ordeal (2021, p. 180). However, her character is explainable in terms of girls' passage, requiring a daughter to step away from the mother into adulthood, and maternal reliance, leaving room for a daughter to become an autonomous subject (Kristeva, 2011, p. 47), recreating Cassy and Nan's attachment in *Wolf*. This is seen in Robert's advice to Cassy to assume full responsibility for her own life since, from hereon, Nan will depend on her (Cross, 1990, pp. 136–138). Cassy's maternal and

Figure 4. Crones and Granddaughters I–III (own photos).

grandmaternal attachments are, essentially, recreated for the better, reflecting Cassy's growth and enhancement of relationality and reliance.

Conclusion

From the perspective of adolescent daughtering, the feminine dimensions of reliance and relationality were examined to reveal conflicts and possibilities in the intergenerational female relationships, providing new insights into the workings of such female dynamics. The author displays the results in the photographic series *Crones and Granddaughters I–III* in Figure 4, showing a resemblance between the crone in the entangled forest, popular in girls' initiation in old lore, and the focal tales' grandmothers, receptive to changes in the granddaughters' grandmaternal attachments. While in Cross's tale, Cassy's grandmaternal attachment continues in a transformed way, providing healing of parental attachments and enabling friend attachments, the granddaughters in Carter's and Smith's tales find their own ways through matricide. The former recreates the grandmaternal attachment by bonding with the grandmother's spirit and the natural world, whereas the latter creates idealized object relations with Eve and animals. The results show that although the heroines' grandmaternal object relation demonstrates female bonding, conflict through ambivalence, trouble, and even matricide is near during the heroines' transition into maturity, resulting in changed relationships. Yet, a recreation of the heroines' grandmaternal bond is necessary for growth, healing, and opens to viewing time as new beginnings, facilitating the heroines' maturity and development of the feminine, enhancing their skills in reliance and relationality with an environmental twist, which opens to an inclusion of nature as another object relation. Through its fostering of creativity, maintaining relationships while keeping them open for transformation, and responsibilities in the form of mothering, traditionally relating to female gender, together with a willingness to preserve life, trust in oneself, and a sense of belonging, transcending traditional gender, a well-developed, balanced feminine captures the very essence of what it means to be mature.

Note

1. Emphasis is in the original texts throughout.

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Notes on contributor

Carola Maria Wide is a University Lecturer and Doctoral Student in English, writing her dissertation on "Little Red Riding Hood" and Kristevan genius-ness, subjectivity, and femininity. Her research interests include English language, culture, and literature, visuality, subjectivity, fairy tales, and Kristevan theories. She has published two articles and has one forthcoming.

ORCID

Carola Maria Wide http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4738-8837

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