

1 **Changing Gender Roles: Rapunzel's Marginalized but** 2 **Fair Witch, retold by Mary Hoffman**

3
4 The study analyses Mary Hoffman's retold fairy tale Rapunzel regarding gender
5 equality by concentrating on the witch and her social status. Although gender
6 issues have been widely studied by many scholars regarding the tale, the witch's
7 function and status in society in delivering justice and equality have not been
8 mentioned or supported. Therefore, the motivation for the study is to support the
9 idea that the Witch, despite her marginalized position in society, once caught a
10 chance to decide on the destiny of the people and behaves in a moral, adequate,
11 and witty way by delivering justice in the tale. The study argues that the witches
12 even punish Rapunzel's parents for their third stealing activity, which gives a
13 hint about her patience, maturity, and justice. Even her taking Rapunzel as her
14 captive by punishing Rapunzel's parents benefitted Rapunzel in growing more
15 freely, devoid of any social and cultural pressure above her. The study further
16 argues that unless Rapunzel was not captivated by the witch, there would be no
17 chance for Rapunzel to meet a prince due to differences in their social status.
18 The choice Rapunzel adopts during her stay in the tower to talk to and let them
19 climb near her by her hair is an important revolutionary act in a patriarchal and
20 socially status-oriented society. The story supports the idea that even though the
21 witch was othered and marginalized by society, she was trying to foster a change
22 within the society by captivating, in other words, adopting Rapunzel and raising
23 her without any social pressure. The study concludes with the idea that the witch
24 challenges social norms, the class system, and women's place in society and
25 gives a moral lesson to the people of her time in the tale. The study is designed
26 to utilize the qualitative textual analysis method.

27 28 29 **Introduction**

30
31 It is already very easy for people to say what is expected of the community,
32 but what makes a piece of written text is the core of the message engraved beneath
33 it. Therefore, textual analysis of the texts should not be restricted with the message
34 given on the surface of the text that is already very much easy to understand. A
35 manuscript should possess what is not easy to say or, in other words, exhibit a
36 guiding message for a society to question their everyday rituals and habits. That
37 does not necessarily mean it is didactic. A literary work should not necessarily be
38 didactic. Still, it should include at least a different angle towards life and the
39 company of its readers on their voyage to seek the unknown, unvisited places of
40 thought and ideas. Other than that, life is already full of transcripts that people
41 negotiate and get in contact with each other to pursue their social, cultural, and
42 daily needs. A literary manuscript should nurture both while watering the desolate
43 areas of the barren on earth and should equally plant the seeds, nurture the soil,
44 and nourish it with fertilizers. The text should include "what is expected to be said
45 beside what is to be said for the community's welfare and future. This does not
46 have to have solid ground. Even a thought or a new word may nourish this
47 expectation. Other than the written piece of paper, it would have nothing to do
48 with the aesthetics of arts and literature. Playing the words with the words on the

1 way to nurturing and engraving meaning and message is not an easy task that is
2 expected by the writer. Therefore, in this regard, folklore helps a community and
3 the narrator to say what is not easy to be accepted by the community. This is not to
4 say that there is always an author of anonymous manuscripts, as many of them are
5 structured and compiled over time with changes made. However, claiming that
6 anonymous texts were produced over time would also be a reductionist and
7 restrictive perspective. There may also be authors of the anonymous texts that are
8 today regarded as folklore whose names were forgotten or intentionally not given.
9 It is important to know that any manuscript on earth should at least have a writer to
10 pen, regardless of the changes later added to them. In this regard, it would not be
11 misleading to further claim that words are more than what they reference since
12 each word in its lexical and semantic form has a long history as well. Therefore,
13 words are important tools for carving a manuscript. Not all arts need instruments
14 to carve and shape, such as architects; a piece of art and manuscript can well be
15 compiled and constructed by the words and their connotations. That is what is
16 expected of a manuscript. Therefore, within the routine of daily and hectic life, it
17 is unfortunately not always possible to catch the engraved meaning behind and
18 within the texts. Therefore, textual analysis is important to carve the message of
19 the texts and bring out the message it connotes. Therefore, this study aims to
20 analyze important German folk tales, on which dozens of studies have already
21 been conducted. However, as scientific jurisprudence, just like blocks of a
22 building rise one on another, it is crucial to re-read the manuscripts of folks' tales
23 since there are already many important messages embedded. Folklore, which is
24 already a multidiscipline as other spectrums of life, also contributes to literature
25 and arts on their way to finding the best and more aesthetic on earth, as Aristotle
26 says in his mimesis by re-crafting the already perfectly created manuscript.¹

27 It would be misleading to neglect the importance of literature in the
28 community as it has the power to influence, narrate, and advise the people in
29 communities regardless of their identities. Literature, although it may spring from
30 a culture in which there may be cultural, national, and ideological ingredients of
31 the community it emerged, should be restricted to the community it was produced
32 in. Therefore, any kind of jar or pieces of literature contribute to the earth's
33 welfare. Although it would not be easy for the world's people to get the message
34 beneath the texts without contextual analysis of the time, place, and action that
35 nurtured the literature contributes, it is important to see the manuscripts as a
36 contribution for the people on earth. The reforms of the Renaissance of Europe
37 after the devastating effects of the Puritans in the Middle Ages and their textual
38 analysis of the Greek philosophers, thinkers from Socrates to Aristotle, Homer to
39 Horace credit the importance of textual analysis of the manuscripts since they
40 were not spontaneously prepared and presented to the interest of the world
41 heritage. Any kind of manuscript, regardless of its language and cultural
42 connotations, contributes to the welfare of the world heritage. Therefore, an
43 ancient text, regardless of its time, place, and action, can equally provide answers
44 and solutions to the problems of the 21st century and even provide hope for the

¹Aristotle, *Poetics*. J. Sachs (trans). (Focus Publishing, 2006): 19-25.

1 coming centuries of humanity. In this regard, producing a manuscript is one of the
 2 best ways to curb his and the community's expectations. This was moved and
 3 practiced on the same premise by Aristotle to Sadi Shirazi, Homer to Feriddun
 4 Attar, and Shakespeare to Arundhati Roy. The same ideas can also be attributed to
 5 folkloric manuscripts as well. The fairy tale Rapunzel was compiled by the Grimm
 6 Brothers in 1812 under the title of Children's and Household Tales in Germany. In
 7 this regard, it is important to use textual grounds to observe the messages and
 8 ideas fostered and supported.² This study uses Mary Hoffman's Rapunzel tale
 9 within the book entitled "A first book of fairy tales" as the primary source of the
 10 study. As for the name of the story "Rapunzel," there are various ideas. In some
 11 versions of the tale, the plant is considered an herb; in others, it is a bitter green
 12 salad, while in some other tales, the plant is parsley. There are also some other
 13 scholars who regard the plant as like spinach or lettuce.³ However, nearly all the
 14 varying ideas defining Rapunzel unite on the idea that "Rapunzel," which gives its
 15 name to the tale, is a plant in the German language. This study, dwelling on
 16 Hoffman's narrative, regards the plant as wild garlic. The study argues that the
 17 connotations, messages, and ideas fostered in Rapunzel are beyond that and do not
 18 only bind the people living in Germany, but its messages encapsulate whole
 19 people living on earth. Meanwhile, the themes and motives portrayed in the tale
 20 encapsulate universal values that are timeless. The messages in Rapunzel as a tale
 21 in this regard should not be reduced to be digested by children. But for its themes,
 22 advice, and messages, it possesses revolutionary ideas that are directed to adults
 23 more than children.⁴ Many people have closed their eyes to many mythical and
 24 supernatural events occurring in the corridors of every walk of life. It is more
 25 fantastic not to see those realities happening around us. In this regard, the tales,
 26 with their simple and short narrative form, can motivate those blinded by life's
 27 daily routines⁵. It should also be noted that the fantastic instruments and
 28 characters are no less real than the characters and incidents we observe in nearly
 29 every corner of the world⁶.

30 Therefore, fairy tales may enhance the awareness of the people they are
 31 already in, besides developing their consciousness towards themselves and their
 32 surroundings. Lanham & Shimura regard tales to appeal to children's interest
 33 towards the authority free of any restrictions. Therefore, for Lanham & Shimura,
 34 tales are a way for children to escape from the realities of everyday life, enjoy the
 35 joy of restrictions towards them, and become the masters of their destinies.⁷ At
 36 first glance, fantastic instruments gather much of children's attention and alienate
 37 adults from reading them since they think those narratives to be unreal, fantastic,
 38 or "fake, produced" narratives for children. The fairy tale's first important

²Marina Wagner, "After "Rapunzel". *Marvels & Tales*. 24(2), (2018), 329-335.

³Ibid, 334.

⁴William. R. Bascom., Introduction, *Frontiers of Folklore*. W. R. Bascom (Ed.), (Routledge: 2018), 5., Şükrü Elçin, *Halk edebiyatına giriş*. (Akçağ Basım, 2004), 314.

⁵Harold Scheub, *Performance of oral narrative*. William. R. Bascom ed. (Routledge:2018), 76.

⁶Elçin, Halk, 315.

⁷Betty B Lanham & Masao Shimura. *Folktales commonly told American and Japanese children: Ethical themes of omission and commission*. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 80, no: 315,(1967): 37.

1 message, from its first sentence to the last one, is to comprehend the ties,
2 connections, motives, messages, and symbols within the narrative and characters
3 as portrayed in the tales. Those characters in fairy tales are more than what they
4 are portrayed; they are the hub of a culture nurtured by varying experiences and
5 compiled by the adults and took its latest form after a hurricane of adjustments and
6 updates done on it. It is rare for an adult to show interest in a fairy tale and read it
7 at home by herself/himself. Many varying cultures may view that act as weird
8 unless they were motivated to analyze the themes, motives, and ideas beneath
9 them. Nevertheless, the aim and the motivation of the children and adults towards
10 reading a fairy tale may differ. While some children may well be overwhelmed by
11 the unnatural and fantastic instruments in the tales, some children may prefer to
12 read them solely to find something out of themselves within the tales. Rapunzel,
13 with its symbols and themes, corresponds to this expectation.

14 15 16 **The Rapunzel** 17

18 In the fairy tale, there are few characters, and nearly all the characters revolve
19 around Rapunzel and the Witch, who are the stirrings of the tale. There is a father
20 and mother figure in the tale whose name is also not mentioned. They are
21 Rapunzel's parents. There is a prince in the tale whose name is not mentioned in
22 the tale. So, in the tale, no names may reference any section of society other than
23 Rapunzel, whose name connotes a kind of green vegetable in German culture.
24 So, the tale is produced in its simplest form. However, this simplicity in itself does
25 not mean it is free of important themes and messages, as the tale encapsulates and
26 resonates with quite surprising revolutionary ideas fostered and practiced at the
27 time in the tale. The relationship between the characters is constructed in its
28 simplest form. The Witch in the tale is a neighbor of Rapunzel's parents. Rapunzel
29 as the beautiful girl at the start of the tale, is broadcasted to be in the womb of her
30 mother, on whom the decisions are taken before her birth that he would be
31 delivered to the Witch in exchange of their stealing act by taking wild garlic
32 (Rapunzel as a plant) from the garden's of the witch for third times. After the birth
33 of Rapunzel there is no specific information giving accounts of her dialogue and
34 relations with her parents other than her relation with the witch who captivates her
35 into a tower when she becomes twelve years old on which there is neither ladder
36 nor any place to climb on it other than Rapunzel's long hairs that she can enable
37 the people who would like to climb the tower near her. So, the witch decided the
38 only character in the tales who was allowed to do this. Only she would bring
39 Rapunzel the necessary things to survive there on the tower all alone until a prince
40 comes, and they decide to escape together. The prince comes out throughout the
41 end of the tale whose name, age, and any more specialties are not mentioned. The
42 only information regarding the prince was his white and prosperous horse and his
43 being the Prince as a candidate to rescue Rapunzel from the tower. Five characters
44 in the tale have symbolic references. The mother and Father of Rapunzel
45 symbolize the ordinary villagers of the time who were living on a limited budget
46 in a small house in the district of the town. The witch, whose name is not

1 mentioned in the tale, has sexual connotations since witches, as an institution, are
 2 generally defined to be composed of women who are enhanced in knowledge,
 3 science, and magic in society⁸. This enabled the researcher to research analyzing
 4 gender issues and roles in the tale. Moreover, this enabled the researcher to delve
 5 into the tale and analyze the gender roles and their representation in the tale.
 6 Within the tale, the witch's gender goes beyond her identity. Since it was her
 7 gender that caused her to be labeled as a witch.⁹

8 Witch represents the status of female who had by their self-education become
 9 the scholars however due to their gender were excluded and marginalized by the
 10 society they were living in. The study's argument delves into this premise and
 11 questions the status of a witch in a society where females were reduced to home
 12 tasks, rejecting their visibility and intellectual capacity in society other than being
 13 a wide or a potential wife. The argument on this issue will be elaborated in depth
 14 on gender and the witch section of the study. The prince's name is also not
 15 mentioned in the tale. The reader knows about a prince figure in the tale who has a
 16 white horse and falls in love with Rapunzel. The prince here represents the rich
 17 and royal life of the period. Other than stressing their name or character, their
 18 lineage is prioritized, which hints to the reader about the social system of the time
 19 people lived by taking it for granted without questioning.
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⁸Haydar Akın, Ortaçağ Avrupası'nda cadılar ve cadı avı. (Dost: 2001): 143., Cansu Koç Başar, Ortaçağ Avrupası'nda cadı yargılamaları, Dokuz Eylül University Law Review, 24, no:2 (2022): 941.

⁹Başar, Orta, 939.

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 26 rich and royal life of the period. Other than stressing their name or character, their
 27 lineage is prioritized, which hints to the reader about the social system of the time
 28 people lived by taking it for granted without questioning. Although the story
 29 entitled Rapunzel suggests that Rapunzel will come to the fore, the story does not
 30 take a stance by the criteria of gender representation and representation of genders
 31 according to the principle of equality. As the only female character, Rapunzel
 32 symbolizes the femininity of the women pictured passively in the tale. That's why
 33 the narrator from Rapunzel pours the word "stupid" while stressing the heaviness
 34 of the witch during her climbing to the tower through Rapunzel's hair.¹²

35 36 37 **Gender Roles**

38
39 Human nature and physiology have found populations in two different bodies
 40 on earth which are namely male and female.¹³ According to the Abrahamic
 41 religions, the first body belongs to Adam in the order of creation Eve comes as

¹⁰Akın, cadiavi, 143., Başar, orta, 941).

¹¹Başar, orta,939.

¹²Rapunzel, Prerna Grewal, Kathleen Teece (ed), 19. A first book of fairy tales and a first book of myths: Stories retold by Mary Hoffman, (Dorling Kindersley: 2018), 19.

¹³Simon De Beauvoir, Second sex, H. M Parshley (ed & trans.) (Lowe and Brydone: 1956):19.

1 female figure.¹⁴ However, this order of creation does not put the woman in a
 2 position where the man is the priority. On the contrary, according to Islamic belief,
 3 the creation of a man from the most delicate and fragile bone, such as a rib. The
 4 fact that women have physiological and physical differences with men on earth
 5 does not define women as passive on earth; on the contrary, the fact that the
 6 fertility of the earth, such as fertility and production and the continuation of
 7 generations, are entrusted to women distinguishes women from men in a positive
 8 sense. From this point of view, the argument that women are equal to men is
 9 refuted both in the field and in the academic literature. Still, this innate
 10 physiological feature of women makes them superior to men. However, it is worth
 11 noting that this superiority of women should be accepted as a well-deserved
 12 superiority, and the burden, psychology, and physiology of carrying a life in its
 13 body for nine months should be considered on this axis. Therefore, before looking
 14 at gender principles, attention should be paid to the protection of this innate
 15 superiority of women. This situation eliminates absolute equality and invalidates
 16 the idea of keeping women in an equal position with men. It is important and
 17 necessary to consider this when defining the rights of women and men in the
 18 context of gender. However, when both social life and literary life are carefully
 19 evaluated, this natural superiority of women is perceived in the opposite direction,
 20 As the reason for the childbearing of women should be attributed to her, as well as
 21 the right to speak, express and represent should be in both the social and literary
 22 worlds, women have either been ignored or their existence has been made
 23 ordinary, despite this innate physiological and sublime feature of women. This
 24 situation has become such that almost all the nations of the world, except for a
 25 very few, have not accepted this situation of women and have not cared about their
 26 representation. When defining gender, it should be noted that this is not a women's
 27 movement. However, since women are the group whose rights are usurped the
 28 most in society, on the one hand, the superior position of men in a male-dominated
 29 society with an undeserved superiority without superiority has spread to life in
 30 general, Not defending the situation of women, whose primary rights are distilled
 31 or given in a limited way, and whose innate sublime characteristics are ignored,
 32 does not really comply with both human rights and the principle of generality and
 33 equality of rights.¹⁵

34 35 36 **Rapunzel's Parents Roles in the Story** 37

38 Regarding the status of parents in the tale, it is important to see that
 39 Rapunzel's parents do not have an active role like the witch does in Rapunzel's
 40 life. They are mirrored in a passive way. They are portrayed as the thieves whose
 41 guilt has been descended to their children for their wrong attitude towards the
 42 witch, which can be regarded as a reference to total depravity in Christianity in

¹⁴Al-Ar'af Surah, verse: 189, 7: 189. Presidency of Religious Affairs., Genesis. The Holy Bible, New King James Version Reference Edition, (Thomas Nelson: 1982): 1–47.

¹⁵Mesut Gülmez, İnsan haklarında ayrımcılık yasaklı eşitlik ilkesi: Aykırı Düşünceler, Çalışma ve Toplum, 2, no:25 (2010): 217-266.

1 which Adam and Eve’s eating the forbidden fruit caused them to be exempted
 2 from heaven were finally sent to earth. Meanwhile, Rapunzel’s parents are not
 3 idealized in the tale, and in other readings, they are portrayed as thieves stealing
 4 wild garlic, referencing the name “Rapunzel.” That witch, by captivating Rapunzel
 5 in a way, would get what has been taken from her garden. Mother’s passivity here,
 6 referenced in the text, is another representation of women’s passivity in the tale.
 7 While the witch is drawn in a strong and powerful shape, the same is not true for
 8 Rapunzel and his mother in the tale.¹⁶ Motherhood in the tale is restricted to
 9 carrying Rapunzel in her womb for nine months and taken by the witch and grown
 10 by the witch taken to a tower when she becomes 12 years old. She captures her in
 11 a tower that nobody but she can climb with the help of Rapunzel’s hair.¹⁷ This is
 12 another example of the passive representation of women in the story. However,
 13 here, a woman who was marginalized by society for society to see her condition
 14 and status gives a lesson to society by using another woman by both captivating
 15 her without her guilt and torturing her every time she wants to climb the tower
 16 with her hair. In the tale, the witch tries to draw people’s attention to her plight
 17 since she is living in the same social isolation and without any of his guilt. Here,
 18 the witch represents the wisdom and wit whose decisions are undertaken by logic.
 19 The witch, while referencing Adam and Eve’s execution from heaven, equally
 20 represents her plight to the people and develops a social satire of the community
 21 she is living in but does not become its partner. That’s why the tower Rapunzel
 22 stays has neither a door nor a ladder to reach her. The position of the witch is the
 23 same. She can neither be visited nor pay a visit to develop friendships with her
 24 community but is not part of it. Therefore, it is important to see the similarities
 25 between them. Rapunzel is captivated by the tower, and there is no door or ladder
 26 to climb on other than Rapunzel’s long hair. Witch’s place and status are no more
 27 different from Rapunzel in this regard.

28 This situation does not conform to gender representations of equality, justice,
 29 and gender. In this story, which conveys that women can have a say and influence
 30 in society only with their superhuman powers and characteristics, the witch is
 31 represented with power even above men. In contrast, conflicting and paradoxical
 32 population and power elements are included in the story. The mother, who is
 33 given as an average woman, is almost unrepresented in the story as if she were
 34 given as a subject dummy, in a sense, pushing her husband to buy wild garlic, just
 35 as Eve provoked Adam. In the story, which is not defined beyond the fact that the
 36 most important feature of Rapunzel is a beautiful baby and then a beautiful lady, it
 37 gives the message that women can’t be represented in society if they do not have
 38 extraordinary features and gives the message that men can also have a say in
 39 society with the criteria of wealth and title, which are different versions of this
 40 situation. It is observed that a status quo, limiting, classifying, and status quo
 41 perspective dominates the overall and basic of the story. In this status quo attitude
 42 and attitude, it is observed that while the rich and nobles constitute the first class,
 43 the average man is second class. The woman who has received knowledge,

¹⁶Ayşegül Hançer, Toplumsal cinsiyet öznesi olarak kadının “Annelik” kimliğine eleştirel bir bakış. Akdeniz Kadın Çalışmaları ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet Dergisi, 1,no :2 (2018) : 177-202.

¹⁷Rapunzel,16-17.

1 science, and magic is excluded from this equation as a witch, and a caste system
 2 consisting of women dominates the story. The fact that the story contains so many
 3 themes, short and intense, has been the motivation for the evaluation of this study
 4 on the axis of gender. In this work, the individual characteristics of the characters
 5 are not included; only their status is included. In this categorization, women are
 6 given the pale status of the third class. This is also the case with the witch being a
 7 scholar, scholar, and perhaps a monk if she is a man, but because she is a woman,
 8 she is given a sorcerer and a bad status. Although character definitions can be
 9 given more space in the work, the fact that only titles with social messages are
 10 given here: father, mother, daughter, prince, and witch instead of such a definition
 11 reveals the fact that the society in which it is located attaches importance to titles
 12 and naming rather than persons. In the story where such a social background is
 13 given, Rapunzel is taken hostage, and a prince's attempt to save her fails. In a
 14 sense, the fact that Rapunzel is punished in a second way because of a man
 15 reinforces Rapunzel's passivity. The woman's passivity in the story gives another
 16 important message, both the fact that Rapunzel is punished in absentia for her
 17 father's mistake and that she is punished for meeting a man. Here, the witch, who
 18 is not accepted by society and is marginalized and punished, is almost the only
 19 figure in the story who distributes justice and equality.
 20
 21

22 **The Prince**

23
 24 The prince, who has no other characteristics than his title with his white
 25 horse, is drawn in the story as a profile who has enough free time to be impressed
 26 by Rapunzel's beautiful voice wandering around the country. The fact that the
 27 Prince, who is influenced by Rapunzel's femininity and shares her situation,
 28 climbs to the tower by the help of Rapunzel's hair just like the Witch did, without
 29 making any effort, puts the Prince in a position far from a profile that strives,
 30 struggles and attempts to achieve what he desires, and like Rapunzel's femininity,
 31 the fact that the Prince is reflected in the story with his title and wealth without
 32 specifying his name, body and feature is a reflection of a status quo The fact that
 33 the white horse of the prince is specifically stated to be white and that he is a
 34 prince rather than his name is also a result of this attitude and attitude. The prince,
 35 also drawn as a hero of the tale here, is not a hero but, more than that, represented
 36 as the victim of the witch who was equally punished by the witch.

37 Although the punishment of Rapunzel in this process, beyond her father after
 38 Rapunzel catches her father in her garden, corresponds to a situation that is
 39 opposed to the principle of ethics, justice, and equity, it is trying to provide a
 40 principle of equality, and equity according to its own logic. Since he sees the witch
 41 garden and Rapunzel, who draws a profile that does not harm anyone who does
 42 not harm him, and Rapunzel as his own, he perceives all the ideas there without
 43 her permission as a threat to him and thus punishes them according to the rules he
 44 has drawn, in line with his knowledge and knowledge. Although the effects and
 45 jurisdictions of these punishments and their equivalence are controversial issues,
 46 the witch should not be informed that she has harmed anyone except in these

1 cases. The fact that there is no such situation in the subtext of the story shows that
2 the Witch observes a principle of justice in her own way. In this respect, the fact
3 that the real name of the witch is not given has caused her to be not accepted by
4 the society just because of her gender.

7 **The Witch**

9 Prioritizing the individual identity over existence and affiliation before self
10 from the top to toe, the tale fosters the witch as the most powerful of all characters,
11 which glimpses to think over it. In essence, ordinary women's images are drawn in
12 a passive, internal, and deficient tale, creating characters such as a witch
13 marginalized by the society, she was living in without being part of it. The witch
14 here is important to think about. The definition of the witch becomes important,
15 including who are called witches and who are saints. The Saints and Witches weld
16 from the same premise: science, knowledge, and experience. When a man
17 develops his knowledge of science and religion, he becomes a Saint, but the wise
18 when a woman develops her knowledge, which is not that easy in a patriarchal
19 society where there was no time for them to read and search for while growing the
20 children, doing households and caring about her wife. The ordinary man was not
21 at all the superior race society as well unless they were part of a royal family and
22 could not earn a coat of arms such as Shakespeare or a Knight. However, few
23 people could even be men with their talents jumped out of the hierarchical ladders
24 of the society where many of them were farmers or were running a shop. Only
25 after those colonization activities could people change their status to become
26 bourgeoisie, even though many of them could not change their status in
27 society ¹⁸(Fanon, 1965, p. 48). To make it briefer where, while women were not
28 represented in society on equal terms to men, men were not enjoying the same
29 rights as aristocratic men. However, at the bottom of the layer, women were
30 residing. Therefore, it was uncommon for women to choose whom to marry, live,
31 and how many children to have. The women who were not part of an aristocratic
32 family or did not hold a lineage could not even have a word on their lives for
33 whom the decisions were already taken by the husbands on whom the society, the
34 aristocrats, and the royals had the power in their hands. To make the study more
35 concrete, aristocrats were considered equal to the royal family. Other than the
36 royal family, it was nearly impossible for a family to be landlord, rich, and
37 aristocratic without their allowance. That's why aristocrats were regarded as on
38 equal terms with the royal family. However, the royal family was restricted to the
39 family of the king and queen. The siblings, relatives, and confirmed or approved
40 people with their skills and abilities were also regarded to be under the Royal
41 family's protection, which is why the aristocrats were regarded as royal in the
42 study. Therefore, for a woman to pursue her studies and conduct research unless
43 she was part of a royal family was nearly impossible. There were a bunch of
44 people whose population could be accounted for easily and could jump over this

¹⁸ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, C.Farrington (trans.), (Grove Weidenfeld: 1965):48

1 restriction and develop their skills and knowledge without being part of an
2 aristocratic lineage. Those women were considered witches even though a man
3 could be regarded as a Saint with the same skills. Therefore, the institution entitled
4 witch in this regard is already a humiliating, degrading, and marginalizing act for
5 society and gives a hint about society and their attitude towards women. Unless
6 women marry, give birth, and become mothers, and what's more, she is from a
7 royal family, it is nearly impossible for those women to pursue education, increase
8 their literacy, and become Saint. There are very few women saints in the history of
9 Europe, although the mother of Jesus was already a Saint. It would be very much
10 likely that Mary, the mother of Jesus, would be regarded as a witch to be disposed
11 from society unless she was not known for her chastity and her father was not
12 already Saint Joachim. Therefore, drawing a powerful witch who makes just
13 decisions and even punishes a prince is a revolutionary act when the time at least
14 the tale was composed of. The tale is expected to be earlier since it evolved into a
15 tale to become a script before getting registered by the Grim Brothers.

16
17

18 **Conclusion**

19

20 The tale depicts the witch as a patient, knowledgeable, just, and courageous
21 profile. She is patient since she does not hesitate to punish her parents for their first
22 stealing wild garlic from her garden, and she is patient again in punishing them in
23 the third attempt by asking Rapunzel in exchange for their theft. The witch as a
24 symbol of wit could easily catch from a sentence poured from Rapunzel that she
25 was having an affair with a Prince and settled a plan to capture the prince and
26 show courage to punish him on equal terms with Rapunzel, whose parents were
27 villagers and who was under the custody of the witch. With that, it is clear and
28 concrete that the tale Rapunzel is more than a tale but a kind of text that challenges
29 the norms of patriarchal society and questions the place of women within society.
30 Rapunzel, as a symbol of femininity and beauty and like the 9 Muses in Greek
31 mythology, sings to gather the attention of the males. In this regard, it is equally
32 important to see why Rapunzel accepted Prince as her company while it was
33 impossible for those men from her parent's class to like her voice and propose the
34 company to her. In this regard, Rapunzel's choice is also important. However, she
35 was captive, and it is quite clear that she had the preference to choose her
36 company since she did not make a plan to escape or offer her hair to climb the
37 tower to a villager boy but to a prince; in this regard, there is also a sarcasm to
38 social norms of the time since the choice of a husband was granted to girls who are
39 part of the aristocracy here the witch can be regarded to change the status of
40 Rapunzel while captivating her under custody. In this regard, the witch, unlike
41 what is seen in the tale, is the symbol of change and challenges social barriers and
42 norms that were drawn for ordinary villagers and women in society. On the one
43 side, the witch challenges the norms and shows how a villager can choose her
44 husband from a prince, although they were equally punished. Even with this
45 punishment, there is a just and equal attitude the witches pursued against them. By
46 equally punishing Rapunzel and the Prince, the witch equalizes them and

1 disregards. She challenges the socially constructed barriers among people and on
 2 the wise, enable them to find each other in another part of the world to pursue an
 3 equal, happy and respectful life on equal terms as they neither had any identity or
 4 title in the place where the witch had sent them to as a punishment. This place can
 5 also be associated with the world when Adam and Eve were fired from heaven
 6 upon eating fruit from the forbidden tree. From another perspective, this place
 7 where Rapunzel and the prince were sent can be associated with the American
 8 dream, where there was no discrimination against the old Europe had on it.

9 The witch-just attitude is important from another perspective when her being
 10 marginalized from society is considered. Even though she was unjustly
 11 marginalized from society, the witch does not draw a profile to revenge from or
 12 show the equal attitude that was conducted on her by the society but behaves with
 13 patience punished equally. As the witch very well knows that Rapunzel's father
 14 was instigated by his wife, she does not punish him only. Still, she punishes them
 15 both, but it is rewarding. She rescues Rapunzel from a thief low-income family,
 16 causing her to rise the social ladder and enabling her to meet with the prince. As is
 17 stated, by this punishment, Rapunzel was provided the preference to have a word
 18 on her husband so she could decide on her husband. Since it was already
 19 impossible for any man to reach her unless she let her hair climb on. Therefore, it
 20 is clear and neat that the witch offered Rapunzel a free marriage choice. Even the
 21 punishment of the witch helps Rapunzel to marry the prince she was planning to
 22 marry. Then, the other question arises: would Rapunzel continue to love the prince
 23 when he is no longer rich and part of an aristocratic family? This is not answered
 24 in the tale and is open-ended. In this regard, Rapunzel as a tale does not seek to
 25 answer the following question but actively performs the answer on the stage by the
 26 witch character.

- 27
- 28 1. Why is there a social rank among the people in the society? Why should
- 29 anyone be graded above or below others even though they are already
- 30 created equally? The answer is the punishment the witch exercises on
- 31 Prince and Rapunzel
- 32 2. Why were women not from the royal family not provided equal
- 33 conditions? They can make just and right decisions even though they are
- 34 marginalized by society.
- 35 3. A witch who was disposed of by society solely because of her gender can
- 36 help people have justice in their lives.
- 37 4. An equal and just life among people is possible on this earth; everybody
- 38 needs a glimpse of hope. Therefore, people should not forget the equal
- 39 terms they were created on.
- 40

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