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Introduction

George MacDonald (1824-1905) wrote in a letter to his father that "I [was] writing *a kind of fairy tale* in the hope it will pay me better than the more evidently serious work" (Sadler 102, emphasis added). The fairy tale, which MacDonald finished writing just in two months, is *Phantastes* (1858).[1] It can be considered his masterpiece alongside *Lilith* (1895), and later, C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) praises *Phantastes*, saying that "[w]hat it actually did to me was to convert, even to baptize (that was where the Death came in) my imagination" (XXXVIII). This work starts with the next day when a young man called Anodos reaches his 21st birthday, and therefore he becomes an adult. After having various encounters and overcoming great difficulties in Fairy Land, he experiences pseudo-death while exposing the evil ceremony of human sacrifice that pretends to be a sacred one in the forest, and at last he returns to the real world. Anodos' stay at Fairy Land is twenty-one days, but it seems to him that he is there for twenty-one years that correspond to his life.[2]

Previous studies tend to see *Phantastes* as Bildungsroman like Johann Wolfgang von

Goethe (1749-1832)'s *Wilhelm Meister* (1795-96, 1821-29), focusing on the growth of the protagonist Anodos. For example, in annotated *Phantastes*, Nick Page, an annotator affirms that "*Phantastes* is a *Bildungsroman*, a story of personal development" (15), and C. N. Manlove also states that "*Phantastes* is a Bildungsroman, Anodos's experience gradually bringing him nearer true selfhood and humility" (84). Moreover, Bonnie Gaarden points out that "*Phantastes* is, in the *bildungsroman* tradition of German Romanticism, a story of the spiritual maturation of a poet, a young man following the Way of Imagination" (*The Christian Goddess* 26), juxtaposing this work with Novalis (1772-1801)'s *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1802) and E. T. A. Hoffman (1776-1822)'s *The Golden Pot* (1814).[3] Previous studies have focused on Anodos' growth, especially the process that he becomes the "true" poet even if they do not clearly define *Phantastes* as Bildungsroman. As a consequence, these studies seem to leave two issues of the portrayal of the image of women. First of all, seeing women who Anodos encounters in Fairy Land as submissive—the mere promoter or barometer of his growth—they have not examined women themselves enough. Secondly, by mainly focusing on Anodos' spiritual growth—how he becomes the true poet—previous studies have regarded women's bodies and sexuality negatively that should be conquered or denied. In particular, they look at the seduction by the femme-fatale like Alder Maiden, and Anodos' sexual desire for the White Lady and his renunciation.[4] In this case, like the first problem, women are only secondary figures who bring Anodos opportunities to grow. In this

way, previous studies have not only seen women just as secondary and submissive, but also reduced the woman image to the dichotomized, oppositional one from the male viewpoint, that is, good attractive women who support men and bad women who seduce, oppose, or threaten them. The former is "the Angel in the House," an ideal woman image in the Victorian period,[5] and the latter is a femme-fatale, or "the New Woman." Denying the female body and sexuality can also lead to the underestimation of the view of life—birth, growth, and our limited mortal life—scattered in MacDonald's works.[6]

Indeed, since MacDonald was a pious Christian and ex-pastor, and wrote about the Christian-like view of life and death, to wit, the better and fuller life after death in his works, we can say that "death" is one of the most important themes for analyzing them, as J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1983) clearly points out that "Death is the theme that most inspired George MacDonald" (68). Especially, in *Phantastes*, as Anodos feels supreme bliss of union with the Mother Earth and attains the state of selfless love after experiencing pseudo-death at the evil ritual in the forest in chapter XXIII,[7] previous studies have focused on "good death" or "fuller life after death" that we can see in MacDonald's other works.[8] However, just before and after publication of *Phantastes*, MacDonald saw both births and deaths of his family alternately many times, and there was no other period except this,[9] and therefore, analyzing his view of life as well as that of death is essential for understanding this work deeply.

The purpose of this article is to cast a new light on the image of woman by considering

women who have been seen as secondary—mere supporters or indicators for Anodos' growth—to be women that have independence and subjectivity as well as revealing an overlooked view of life. For this purpose, we pay attention to the "antenatal tomb" (37) that confines the White Lady, and singing women in *Phantastes*. "Antenatal tomb" is the quotation from "The Sensitive Plant" (1820) written by P. B. Shelley (1792-1822).[10] Anodos, who sees "a block of pure alabaster" (36) enclosing the White Lady as the "antenatal tomb," also calls it "her tomb or cradle" (115). Therefore, we define this "antenatal tomb" as the state of not being born or not living in a true sense—the state of a kind of approximate death—in this article. This concept—Anodos regards the alabaster as both her tomb and cradle—can show his self-consciousness that he gives life to or gives birth to the White Lady by freeing her from the "antenatal tomb" through his songs. Then, he sees himself as "her deliverer" (43), but in fact, Anodos, who does not live in a true sense, is also in the similar state like her. Moreover, in this work, we can see other women who remain in the "antenatal tomb." Focusing on the process how Anodos and these women are liberated from "antenatal tombs" and begin to live truly, can cast a new light on the underestimated but important issues, to wit, the image of woman and the view of life.

Next, we explain the significance of focusing on singing women in the work. As mentioned above, previous studies lay stress on Anodos' growth as a true poet while considering the theme of imagination and his songs. However, in fact, imagination and

women have a close relation, and we must not miss the fact that there appear some women who sing songs. As many scholars have pointed out, Fairy Land can be seen as the world of imagination.[11] MacDonald sees the human imagination as subordinate to God's creation, and since he especially attaches great importance to poetry (songs) as the first language created by imagination, it is an essential factor for understanding this work.

> To inquire into what God has made is the main function of the imagination. … The imagination of man is made in the image of the imagination of God. Everything of man must have been of God first; ("The Imagination" 311-12)

> All words, then, belonging to the inner world of the mind, are of the imagination, are originally poetic words. … Thus thousands of words which were originally poetic words owing their existence to the imagination, lose their vitality, and harden into mummies of prose. (313)

> … while the imagination of man has thus the divine function of putting thought into form, it has a duty altogether human, which is paramount to that function—the duty, namely, which springs from his immediate relation to the Father, that of following and finding out the divine imagination in whose image it was made. (314)

In this sense, poetry is the language that can describe God's creation most proximately or the best one that humans can use for displaying the essence of things.[12] Therefore, we will focus on singing women who use this first language that is the nearest to God, the origin of all

lives, especially on the mysterious wise old woman with young eyes who Anodos meets in chapter XIX.[13] Then, paying attention to the liberation from "antenatal tombs," we will examine women independently—not as mere objects but as subjects—and in this way cast a light on the overlooked view of life.

In section I, we will survey how the beech lady, the beautiful maiden who has a globe, and especially the White Lady remain/are confined in the "antenatal tomb," and will show that Anodos causes some changes in them and gives opportunities to free from their states.[14] In section II, we will show that Anodos himself remains in the similar state by referring to his life's stagnation and his desire for death scattered in the work, and reveal that he is freed by the Wise Woman, a singing woman, coming to live a life truly. Moreover, in section III, referring to the close relation between women and imagination, we will also pay attention to other singing women. Then, we will reveal the connection between the Wise Woman and other women, including the fact that she has Anodos admit the White Lady to be a corporeal, real, living existence, not the mere ideal beauty. Considering women independent from Anodos—they should not be considered only in along with him—and hearkening to women's voice and their songs, this article will throw the underestimated themes like the female corporeality, the relationship between women, and the view of life into relief.

I. Women Confined in "Antenatal Tombs" and Their Liberation

U. C. Knoepflmacher, referring to "The Light Princess" (1864), asserts that MacDonald

"prefers to locate the feminine in an anterior state of being that also brings out his fascination with death and transcendence" (118). "An anterior state" in Knoepflmacher's article can be applied to the "antenatal tomb" in *Phantastes*, but it does not just show the author's "fascination with death and transcendence." That is because, as we will examine later, in chapter XII, people living in the mysterious planet far from our Earth—Akio Hachiya, a translator, interprets the planet as Saturn (139)—who can be considered to be staying in the "antenatal tomb" in a way seem to be those before being born into our human world. That is to say, we can interpret those who stay being unborn as the author's strong desire to express how people (should) exist and live their lives. Therefore, in this section, we will firstly survey the life of women confined in "antenatal tombs," which is incomplete and stagnant. Showing that Anodos gives them opportunities to free from the tombs, we will reveal that these women hold the key for reading MacDonald's overlooked view of life deeply.

i) The Beech

First of all, we examine the Beech, who Anodos meets in chapter IV. As she saves Anodos from the Ash, who is described as a vampire and related with the masculine voracity, as well as showing the maternal tenderness for the youth,[15] previous studies have underlined her maternal aspects.[16] However, in fact, she cannot/should not be limited in this stereotyped interpretation. Generally, in the study on the image of woman, researchers tend to dichotomize women from the male viewpoints: they just consider whether women are good

or bad for men. In the Victorian period, women are dichotomized into a good wife and wise mother called "the Angel in the House," an ideal woman image, and a femme-fatale who seduces men and brings their destruction or "the New Woman" threatening the male authority. As a consequence, the Beech, who shows the maternal love and saves Anodos from the dreadful vampirish Ash, has been seen as a motherly woman in a directly opposite position to the femme-fatale like Alder Maiden. However, as we will discuss in this part, the Beech should not be merely regarded as "mother" because she is an immature being confined in the "antenatal tomb," and besides, she shows her desire to become a woman and a kind of love for Anodos. Actually, she is one of the complicated portrayals of women in *Phantastes* that cannot be simply dichotomized from the androcentric viewpoint.

The Beech can be seen as a typical motherlike woman, for she protects Anodos from fear and shows maternal love to him, who has lost his mother just after he has been born, making him in the state of bliss temporarily. However, she is just a "tree": although she has lived very long, it is a monotonous, immature life compared to humans' lives.[17] Like the White Lady, the Beech also remains in the "antenatal tomb." This is shown in "an old prophecy in our woods that one day we shall all be men and women like you" (29), to wit, she can be seen as the unborn. Robert Lee Wolff refers to the evolutionary theory of the German mystics: "in the mystics' hierarchy, trees were destined to become animals before they achieved human nature" (54). Although the Beech, omitting the animal state, has a

desire to become a woman, Wolff then states that "[i]t seems more likely that he [MacDonald] intended Beech to be a hamadryad, and thus for the moment only echo the evolutionary theory of the German mystics while returning to the ancients for his imagery" (54-55), finding the evolutionary theory—humans' life is higher than trees'—in the aforementioned prophecy and the Beech's longing. We can see this in what Anodos says about the Beech, who returns to a beech-tree the next morning after they spent the whole night together: "At my head rose its smooth stem, with its great sweeps of curving surface that swelled like *undeveloped limbs*" (31, emphasis added). She, as a tree, can be regarded as the unborn state of human, remaining in the "antenatal tomb."[18]

Before going on the examination of the Beech, in order to back up our assertion that she stays in the "antenatal tomb," we should consider the story of a far planet in chapter XII which Anodos reads in the Fairy Palace's library and retells. Inhabitants on the planet are very different from us: women have beautiful, splendent wings instead of arms, and babies are not born in an ordinary way. Just like children looking for flowers, maidens go looking for children, and they find babies "under an overhanging rock, or within a clump of bushes, or, it may be, betwixt grey stones on the side of a hill, or in any other sheltered and unexpected spot" (84). The first thing a maiden who finds her baby always does is report the finding to her mother—"I have got a baby—I have found a child!" (84)—and this is their way of childbirth. After the men and women on this planet grow up, they "are but little together"

(85), having no physical relationship. As mentioned above, in a way, nature plays a role of their surrogate mother, and therefore we can see that body/physicality is unnecessary for them to give life. In addition, that only girls can find babies in nature and let their mothers know their "childbirth" first emphasizes not only the close relationships between mothers and daughters but also men's unnecessity. Also, young females who go finding children are mentioned as "maidens" synonymous with virgins, not as "girls" or "young women/ladies," laying emphasis on the fact that no physical relationship involves with their reproduction, and their lives lack corporeality. People on this planet can be considered to be similar to angels digging up stars who seem to be the unborn in Diamond's dream in *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871).[19] That is because, as well as the Beech's body being called as "undeveloped limbs" (31), women on that planet have "their wings, glorious as they are, but undeveloped arms" (87), indicating that these women also remain in "antenatal tombs" and live stagnant, immature lives.

Anodos gives people on the planet an opportunity to live their lives truly leaving "antenatal tombs." He is "assailed with a whole battery of inquiries" (86) about how babies are born on the Earth by them, which can be seen as their desire for life. He tries to avoid answering that question, but at last he is compelled to explain, though in this work there is no overt description, that babies are born by sexual, physical intercourse "in the vaguest manner" (86) unlike them who find babies in nature. People react strongly to his explanation

of childbirth.

> Immediately a dim notion of what I meant, seemed to dawn in the minds of most of the women. Some of them folded their great wings all around them, as they generally do when in the least offended, and stood erect and motionless. One spread out her rosy pinions, and flashed from the promontory into the gulf at its foot. *A great light shone in the eyes of one maiden, who turned and walked slowly away, with her purple and white wings half dispread behind her. She was found, the next morning, dead beneath a withered tree on a bare hill-side, some miles inland*. (86, emphasis added)

What is remarkable here is that Anodos only refers to women's reactions. As stated above, the transmission of life—the surrogate birth by nature—is done in the female line. Besides, in nature, women are active and men are inactive: in contrast to women who find babies in nature and play in the sea actively, men almost do nothing, emphasizing their dullness and inactivity. Moreover, women's wings reflect seasons and nature when/where they are born. These things display that women are much more closely connected with nature. As we stated before, women's wings are "undeveloped arms" (87), suggesting that they stay in "antenatal tombs," but their wings show the strong relationship with nature, that is, their mother, the source of life. Therefore, their undeveloped traits can also clarify their corporeality and life.

Women's various reactions to Anodos' explanation for childbirth reflect the gendered view circulated at that time and the author's own idea about gender. That most women do not

like Anodos' answer with sexual/physical connotation, hiding their faces with their wings, reflects the Victorian ideal of how a woman should be, that is, "the Angel in the House," a good wife and wise mother, and a pure woman. These women certainly have gorgeous wings that can be seen as those of angels, and when Anodos says to them that women on the Earth have arms instead of wings, they, staring at him, state that "how bold and masculine they must look" (87). They have some similarities with the obedient, ideal "Angel in the House," and we can catch a glimpse of the Victorian norm of morality and gender—women should not know about sexuality—in these chaste "angelic" women. However, at the same time, we should pay attention to one maiden, who comes to have a strong longing after hearing what Anodos says about the human world. She is found dead beneath a withered tree the next morning, but it is suggested that "death" on the planet is equal to "birth" into the human world: longing and strong desire for life, body and sex lead them to being born.

On this planet, the cause or sign of coming death is "an indescribable longing for something" (87), and especially, it refers to the romance between man and woman: "When a youth and a maiden look too deep into each other's eyes, this longing seizes and possesses them" (87). After that, instead of drawing nearer to each other, they wander away, dying of their desire alone in solitary places. As for their "death" caused by their longing, Anodos concludes that "it seems to me, that thereafter they are born babes upon our earth" (87). As it is shown in the episode of a maiden mentioned before who comes to have a strong desire

after hearing Anodos' explanation for childbirth in the human world, we can see that MacDonald grapples with "taboo" at that time: the female sexuality and corporeality. They are also demonstrated in the song that Anodos sings for the White Lady for making her body manifest itself, which many scholars view as highly erotic—he sings her whole body from her feet to her head (119-23)—and in "The Light Princess" (1864)'s swimming scene of the Light Princess and the Prince in the lake that John Ruskin (1819-1900) regarded as sexual and inappropriate.[20] Accordingly, we should pay more attention to the female sexuality and corporeality in MacDonald's works in which descriptions rather go against the contemporary norm *passim*. People on the far-off planet, before they die of their desire, "instinctively search for a spot like the place of their birth" (87) and pass away there as if they slept, suggesting that "death" on the planet means "new life" in the human world. In *At the Back of the North Wind*, it is a metaphor of birth that angels plunge into holes where they dig up stars. Interestingly, they leap into holes only when they come upon stars of their favorite color, or more precisely, "the colour [they] care about [themselves]" (207). Although death and life after death have been focused on for discussing MacDonald's works, these episodes show his positive view of life—the strong feeling and yearning for being born—that should not be dismissed.

As well as making people on the far-off planet, especially women, have yearning for the human world—life with corporeality and sexuality—Anodos intensifies the desire to become

a woman in the Beech, who has lived a long but asexual and monotonous life remaining in the "antenatal tomb." She sings "I may love him, I may love him; for he is a man, and I am only a beech-tree" (28, 31) when she meets Anodos and before he leaves her, showing a kind of feelings of love for him. On the far-off planet, as we said before, Anodos mentions the romance between man and woman as the cause of being born into the human world, and the Beech's feeling seems to be similar to theirs. However, her feeling cannot be seen as the ordinary heterosexual "love." That is because she says to Anodos that "[s]hall I be very happy when I am a woman? I fear not; for it is always in nights like these that I feel like one. But I long to be a woman for all that" (29), showing the desire to become a human, and as for the above citation, the reason why she may love him is that "he is *a man*" (28, 31, emphasis added). To wit, her "love" for Anodos can be regarded as a yearning for the human corporeal life. In fact, on that planet, what is needed to be born as a human is not necessarily romantic love (with sexual desire) between man and woman. The maiden mentioned before whose "an indescribable longing" (87) aroused by Anodos' saying about the human world and another maiden who is born at the close of autumn and looks for spring, weary of the endless, dreary winter—as four seasons are likened to life and death, we can interpret winter and spring as death and life respectively—show that their desire which leads them to be born is the desire for "life" in a broader sense. The latter maiden searching for spring/life also dies at last, and Anodos states that "I almost believe that a child, pale and peaceful as a snowdrop, [i]s born in

the Earth within a fixed season from that stormy afternoon" (89). As for the possible subsequence of people who will be "born" in the Earth, he comments that "if, when grown, they find together, it goes well with them; if not, it will seem to go ill. But of this I know nothing" (87), suggesting the uncertainty of the human life. In the same way, he also tells the Beech, who asks him whether she can be very happy when she is a woman, that "I could hardly say whether women [a]re happy or not" because he knows "one who ha[s] not been happy" (29). However, the Beech answers that even though she cannot live happily, she "long[s] to be a woman for all that" (29). She cannot be content with her long, calm, but monotonous life as a beech-tree. In her deep yearning, we can see the affirmation of our mortality, corporeal life full of both sorrow and delight.

We can also discern the author's positive view of this life in what Anodos hears in the boat on the way to the Fairy Palace. He perceives that "in all sweetest music, a tinge of sadness was in every note" and thinks that "[n]or do we know how much of the pleasures even of life we owe to the intermingled sorrows. Joy cannot unfold the deepest truths, although deepest truth must be deepest joy" (71). To wit, in this scene Anodos reflects the importance of sorrow as well as that of joy, revealing MacDonald's rather positive attitude toward this tumultuous but rewarding life which echoes the Beech's longing. Anodos needs to leave her because in Fairy Land, where "there is no way of going back" (55), he must accomplish his journey there: he thinks that "my unfinished story urge[s] me on" (31).

Therefore, though Anodos ponders the possibility that he may meet the Beech somewhere after she becomes a woman, they cannot look into each other's eyes with "an indescribable longing" (87) and die separately, being born into the Earth together like couples on the far-off planet. However, Anodos intensifies her longing for the human life—her desire to become a woman—serving as an aid to free her from the "antenatal tomb." The Beech's deep yearning is one expression that affirms corporeality and the human life.

ii) The Maiden

Next, as a woman confined in the "antenatal tomb," we will look at the Maiden, who has a mysterious globe emitting beautiful light and sound. Interestingly, MacDonald repeatedly describes girls whose growth is hindered in some of his works. Since their more difficult growth compared to their male counterparts' one shows not only the difficulty of life but also that of becoming a woman, these girls' growth can be the key for understanding the author's view of life and the image of woman.[21] Especially, the Princess in "The Light Princess" and Nycteris in "The History of Photogen and Nycteris" (1879) clearly show the theme of these difficulties because they are seventeen and sixteen years old respectively, namely, they are on the threshold between an adult woman and a girl. In *Phantastes*, the Maiden's age is not clearly mentioned, but like the Light Princess and Nycteris, "she seem[s] almost a woman" (65). Therefore, we should pay attention to her as the prototype of girls whose growth is hampered in later works.

That a girl with a beautiful globe is mentioned as "a little maiden" (65) can show the lack of sexuality and corporeality, as those who look for babies are "maidens," synonymous with "virgins," in the far-off planet where the Mother Nature becomes a surrogate mother in a way. It demonstrates the unnecessity of sex and sexuality, or more broadly, of the body in life reproduction. The Maiden's virginity is emphasized by the fact that although they travel together for three days, she always leaves Anodos "when twilight c[omes] on" (65) and joins him again at noon. We can see that her growth is checked, living an immature life from Anodos' observations of her first appearance: "She came along singing and dancing, happy as a child, though she seemed almost a woman. … I felt a wonderful liking to the child—for she produced on me more the impression of a child, though my understanding told me differently" (65). She has a beautiful, crystal-like globe that seems both "her plaything and her greatest treasure" (65), immersed in the globe. On the third day, after Anodos' Shadow enwraps the Maiden, he cannot suppress "[his] desire to know about the globe" (65), and keeps grasping the globe in spite of her prayers and tears, breaking it at last.

Anodos' violent attitude toward the Maiden and her globe may be seen as negative, but in fact, it also turns out to give her the opportunity to be free from the "antenatal tomb." The Maiden, who "seem[s] almost a woman" (65) but stays in the child-like state of mind, engrossed with the beautiful globe that emits light and sound, is similar to a child in the first stage of development in "A Sketch of Individual Development" (1890) in which MacDonald

discusses the growth of individuals. In this immature stage, a person (MacDonald assumes a boy), inseparable from his mother yet, is satisfied and immersed with the status quo where she gives him everything, being unconscious of surroundings and other existence.[22] Here, we should mention another girl, Nycteris, whose growth is hampered. She has been raised up in the underground tomb in the castle by Watho, who desires "to know everything" ("The History of Photogen and Nycteris" 304) so that the girl only knows the night and becomes its personification in contrast to Photogen, the Day Boy. In this fairytale, day/light and night/darkness are identified with life and death respectively, and therefore, it can be said that Nycteris, who knows nothing about day and night outside, remains ignorant of both life and death, staying in the state of the unborn. Then, she feels that the lamp on the ceiling, her only light given by Watho, provides everything for her, never thinking of going out of the confined room. From the above, we can say that Nycteris' lamp plays a role of the mother in "A Sketch of Individual Development," and the mysterious globe that the Maiden cherishes also serves a similar function. Then, Nycteris comes to "be born" to the outside world—going out of the "antenatal tomb"—when there is an earthquake, breaking the lamp.[23]

Like Nycteris, the Maiden also comes to grow by dint of Anodos, who unexpectedly breaks her globe. However, in her case, as some previous studies have pointed out, we should pay attention to the sexual implication in this scene. For instance, referring to the scene where Anodos breaks her globe in defiance of her entreaty and tears, Roderick McGillis and John

Pennington, annotators of *Phantastes*, state that "[i]t is an excellent example of how Victorian writers dealt with delicate, even taboo, subjects. … The action here is akin to a deflowering of the young girl, a rape. And the breaking of the globe is akin to the tearing of the hymen" (66). Wolff also indicates that "[t]he episode of a little maiden's globe can easily be interpreted sexually: the breaking of a bowl or pot is a symbol universally understood, and the girl's preference for gentle treatment is entirely clear" (67). When Anodos meets the Maiden again, she becomes "a beautiful woman" (174), and therefore, to break the globe can be seen as a kind of a rite of passage that is accompanied with pain for becoming a woman. As previously mentioned, there is the similarity between her globe and the mother that gives everything—for a child in the first, immature stage, the mother is his/her only "world"—and we can also consider the Maiden's growth to be the daughter's independence from her mother. Marianne Hirsh states that the story of Demeter and her daughter Persephone in Greek mythology is "not only the story of intense mother-daughter attachment and separation, but also the story of both the mother's and the daughter's reactions and responses" (35). However, Hirsh also points out that "[t]his unique mother-daughter narrative exists, however, only as a function of male intervention" (35). That is to say, the story of mother and daughter which is blissful and satisfied but suspended begins to move and "comes into being" (35) only after the male intervention, more precisely, the intervention of heterosexual love, to wit, the abduction of Persephone by Hades, the god of the underworld. This satisfied but

suspended state of mother and daughter bears a resemblance to that in the "antenatal tomb" in this article. Therefore, the sexual implications accompanied with Anodos' breaking of the globe can be seen as the aforementioned male intervention. Page, an annotator of another edition, who spots "an undeniably sexual undertone" in this scene, points out that "MacDonald, although working within the conventions of the Victorian world, was not coy about sex and its potential both for good and evil" (119). Although Anodos' attitude toward the Maiden (and her globe) can be regarded as violent at first glance, in fact the youth, like Hades does for Persephone, brings motion to the Maiden's satisfied but suspended state, accelerating her growth.[24]

The Maiden thanks Anodos for breaking her globe in their reunion, and so it can be said that her still life becomes vibrant because of his action, and she grows into a woman. As we will minutely consider it in section III, we can clearly see her growth in the fact that she becomes a singer—she says to him that "I have something so much better. I do not need the globe to play to me; for I can sing" (174)—and Anodos' words: "The light and the music of her broken globe were now in her heart and her brain" (175). Moreover, she has been described as "a little maiden" or "the child," but when Anodos meets her again, she grows so much that at first he cannot perceive that "a beautiful woman" (174) is the Maiden herself. Only after she mentions that they have met before, Anodos "now fully recognize[s] the face of the child, glorified in the countenance of the woman" (175). The Maiden is, though she has

to undergo hardships and pain, freed from the "antenatal tomb" by him, growing into a mature woman.

iii) The White Lady

Finally, we examine the White Lady, who is *truly* enclosed in the "antenatal tomb," the key word in this article. After Anodos meets her confined in alabaster, he encounters many people and experiences various things, but pursuing the White Lady, who he thinks that he frees, is the main plot of this work. We can say that she is the thread going through *Phantastes*, whose inconsistency has been often pointed out. Previous studies, paying attention to the episode that Anodos liberates the White Lady, in other words, gives life to her in the cave, interpret the relationship between Anodos and her as that between the artist and his artwork. Then, they assert that the process in which he admits her existence and renounces the desire to possess her shows his development as a true poet. For instance, Joseph Sigman, by basing his discussion on the Jungian psychology, classifies women into four archetypal woman images—"the good mother, the terrible mother, the muse, and the temptress" (29)—considering the White Lady to be the third image, the muse. Sigman relates Anodos with Pygmalion and Orpheus, the traditional types of the artist in the cave-scene, and moreover, he connects the White Lady with "a marble statue, an odd image that appears occasionally in the nineteenth century as a means of describing a woman as a representative of ideal beauty" (30). Then, Sigman concludes that she is "an anima figure, and the scene of

her discovery seems to derive from similar scenes of an artist's vision of his ideal in the work of Shelley and Novalis" (30). Gaarden regards what befalls Anodos through his encounters with the White Lady and the Alder Maiden as a kind of allegory of MacDonald's view of imagination discussed in "The Imagination."[25] In this way, Gaarden sees the White Lady as "[Anodos'] anima, the Jungian 'inner woman'" or, in older terms, as "the personification of his Muse" ("George MacDonald's *Phantastes*" 295). Gaarden proceeds to state that "[t]o identify the White Lady as Anima explains both Anodos's fascination with her and his final necessity of relinquishing her as a sexual love object" and then concludes that "[a]s part of himself (in imagery of the book, almost his own child) the White Lady, like Anodos's grandmother, is not an appropriate object for a mature, sexual love" (295). Indeed, Gaarden's discussion is persuasive because she relates the White Lady with the imagination, the keyword and the main theme in this work, but as we will examine, the White Lady should not and cannot be seen allegorically as the mere personification of the imagination.[26] By viewing her as a real, corporeal woman, we can cast a new light on the image of woman and the view of life and death in *Phantastes.*

When Anodos meets the White Lady in chapter V, she is not just confined in alabaster, but she herself is the lifeless, impersonal marble: she is referred as "the marble woman/lady" many times as well as "the white lady" that symbolizes both the ideal beauty and lifelessness. Therefore, we can say that she is an immature existence, stopping the flow of life, or living a

dead-like life. Anodos describes her dead-like state by calling the alabaster that encloses the White Lady "her alabaster tomb" (36) and "her tomb or her cradle" (115). In addition, when he later goes through the second door of the Wise Woman's cottage and watches over the White Lady and the Knight similar to Sir Percivale, her husband, they also talk about her dead-like state. They call her state "the death-sleep of an evil enchantment" (148) and "worse than death" (149), and she states that Anodos wakes her from this terrible state, saving her.

At their first encounter, Anodos regards the White Lady as a kind of artwork that reflects his ideal and is created by his own imagination, not considering her to be a real, corporeal woman. We can see his view in the citation (32) from Thomas Lowell Beddoes (1803-49)'s "Pygmalion" (1825) and "a strange, time-worn bas-relief" that "represent[s] Pygmalion, as he await[s] the quickening of his statue" (34) engraved in the side wall of the cave. Moreover, in his song, Anodos regards the White Lady's state as "vainly sleeping / In the very death of dreams!" (37). He has to cope with "primal Death" (38) for waking her from that state, finally calling out to her: "Or art thou Death, O woman?" (39). Briefly, she is closely related with "death" in his song for waking up her enclosed in alabaster, or, giving life to her. However, it is remarkable that Anodos hits upon the story of Orpheus when he thinks what he should do for freeing her, as a kiss that awakes the Sleeping Beauty "cannot reach her through the incrusting alabaster" (36). In this scene he clearly mentions that Orpheus, who sings songs with his lire and attracts nature, so that trees and stones follow him. However, speaking of

Orpheus, we cannot stop thinking about his wife Eurydice, and his descent into the underworld for restoring her back to life.[27] This implication is also seen in the Wise Woman's first song: she sings about Sir Aglovale and his dead wife Adelaide, who are reminiscent of Orpheus' failure in reviving his beloved Eurydice. As we will make a detailed explanation in the next section, the Wise Woman teaches Anodos many things and gives him consolation through her songs, and therefore it can be said that the relationship between Sir Aglovale and Adelaide is closely related with that between Anodos and the White Lady. In this sense, that Anodos markedly sings about death also demonstrates his strong desire to give her life or restore her to life like Orpheus and Sir Aglovale do. Moreover, the cave is traditionally the symbol of the womb,[28] and MacDonald definitely describes the cave as such in some of his works, especially in *Lilith*.[29] In addition, MacDonald often closely relates water with life, and in *Phantastes* water that implies Anodos' birth/rebirth spouts forth in the cave, and he describes his attempt to free the White Lady from the coffin-like alabaster as "labour" (35) which also means childbirth, showing that this scene is filled with birth-images.[30] From the above, we can say that Anodos, even though it is insufficient yet, gives life to the White Lady, or, makes her be born from the "antenatal tomb."

Next, we consider Anodos' song in the Fairy Palace for making the White Lady's body manifest itself (119-23), which holds the key for examining her corporeality. He feels her existence strongly in the center hall in the Palace, so that he begins to sing about her body

from her feet to the top of her head in order to visualize her invisible body. In this way, as he sings, her body comes to appear as if he lifted the veil that conceals it. We cite parts of his song about her feet, buttocks, and abdomen that seem the most sexual and erotic for the standard view held by many Victorians of the time.

> Feet of beauty, firmly planting / Arches white on rosy heel!
>
> Whence the life-spring, throbbing, panting, / Pulses upward to reveal!
>
> Fairest things know least despising; / Foot and earth meet tenderly:
>
> 'Tis the woman, resting, rising / Upward to sublimity. (119)
>
> Bands and sweeps, and hill and hollow / Lead my fascinated eye;
>
> Some apocalypse will follow, / Some new world of deity.
>
> Zoned unseen, and outward swelling, / With new thoughts and wonders rife,
>
> Queenly majesty foretelling, / See the expanding house of life! (120)

Since artists like painters and sculptors use the religious and mythological theme as an excuse for describing naked women, Anodos proposes the White Lady's body both sacred and sexual by sanctifying it as well as singing aloud every part of her naked body. Wolff states that "[t]his song achieves the effect it describes, and lifts the veil. And no wonder! Few poems so explicitly and thoroughly erotic can exist in English" (85), emphasizing his song's bold eroticism for the Victorian age. Helena Michie points out that although "[h]eroine description would seem to be an important focal point in the Victorian novel. … so many Victorian

novels focus on the adventures of a physically beautiful heroine and consider for so many pages the disposition of her body in marriage or death" (85), heroines' corporeality is deprived by the overuse of metaphors like dead metaphor (cliché), synecdoche, and metatrope.[31] For example, Michie states that synecdoche, a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa, divests woman of her corporeality by taking her body into pieces. According to Michie, in the Victorian novels, "language fragments itself as it fragments the female body it undertakes to describe" (97), and she argues that "[i]t would be a long, tedious, and doomed project to list the omissions in Victorian representations of the female body" (98). Then, instead of this, Michie allocates one whole section for discussing "the initiatively synecdochal operation of concentrating on presence to suggest absence; it detaches from the heroine's body the hair and the hand and arms, isolating and fetishizing these parts" (98). Indeed, Anodos also uses many metaphorical words in his song and sings about the White Lady's body part by part, and therefore, as Michie argues, his song can deprive her of her corporeality. However, Anodos sings lustily her whole body from her feet to the crown of her head, saving her from fragmentization, and directing readers' attention toward her body. He is forbidden from touching the White Lady corporealized, and as soon as he touches her body, she frees from him, reproaching him for it: "You should not have touched me!" (125). Besides, at this moment, Anodos comments about her body that "I cannot tell whether she look[s] more of statue or more of woman" (124), and as we will

examine in section III, the White Lady needs the Wise Woman's help so as to become a real, corporeal woman completely. Anyway, it can be said that Anodos still gives her an opportunity to free from the "antenatal tomb" by making her invisible body visible, in other words, giving the White Lady her "body."

As many scholars have indicated, the White Lady is Anodos' ideal of feminine beauty, and has some aspects of the Muse that gives him inspiration. However, at the same time, as McGillis and Pennington, annotators, point out that "Anodos's song acts both as a creative force and a strip tease. It is remarkable in its erotic intensity. At the end, like Pygmalion's creation, the woman stands before Anodos naked and alluring" (122-23), his song in the Fairy Palace reveals overtly sexual aspects. In this song, Anodos sings aloud about the White Lady's whole body, and while he sings, her body becomes visible as if the veil that conceals her body was lifted. She does not just affect him spiritually; she is in fact a fleshlier existence, making him face life and sexuality. Only when he confronts them, he can grow and live in a true sense. We can say that Anodos turns the White Lady from a sleeping, dead state to a living one by delivering her from the "antenatal tomb" and making her invisible body manifest itself. However, as discussed later in section III, we have to wait for the advent of the Wise Woman so that he can make the White Lady a complete corporeal woman that allows him to face life and sexuality.

II. The Wise Woman, a Singing Woman, and Anodos' Liberation from the "Antenatal

Tomb"

i) Anodos in the "Antenatal Tomb": His Stagnant Life and Desire for Death

In the previous section, we highlighted how Anodos liberates women confined in "antenatal tombs"—at least he gives them an opportunity for leaving the tomb—but actually, he himself stays in the "antenatal tomb" like them and needs to be set free from it. In this section, we take a closer insight into Anodos' state locked in it by looking at his stagnant life and his desire for death scattered in this work, and then, we examine the process that the Wise Woman, a singing woman, liberates him. His stagnant life is partly caused by his lack of meaningful relationships with his ancestors including his parents. *Phantastes* starts with the scene where Anodos, reaching adulthood, inherits his dead father's property. When he enters his father's study where he has kept his private papers, Anodos thinks that "[p]erhaps I [am] to learn how my father, whose personal history [i]s unknown to me, ha[s] woven his web of story" and regards the property that he inherits as "coming down from strange men, and through troublous times, to me who kn[o]w little or nothing of them all" (2), revealing his alienation from his father and ancestors. In addition, as his fairy grandmother says to him, Anodos never mentions his female ancestors and seems to "know very little about [his] great-grandmothers on each side" (5). We can see that his father, like the author's father did, marries again after his first wife dies, because Anodos has siblings. However, he never refers to his stepmother and he touches upon one sister just for answering to his fairy grandmother's

question (5). As for his mother, he only "remember[s] somehow that my mother died when I was a baby" (5) while looking in his grandmother's eyes eagerly for letting her tell him the entrance of the Fairy Land.

To be secluded from his parents who give him life can be one cause for Anodos' stagnant and inactive life. In *Lilith* (1895), as the first woman, Lilith, Adam's former wife, does not have her mother, her own flesh and blood, and even rejects the fact that God, the Father, gives life to her,[32] living "*Life in Death*" (205) under an illusion of self-creation. Indeed, in contrast to Lilith, Anodos does not deny God who makes him come into existence, but Anodos, who is severed from not only his parents but also his ancestors, is somewhat similar to her. Max Keith Sutton, focusing on "psychology of the self" advocated by Heinz Kohut, refers to the absence of the mother who plays an essential role for making her child establish "cohesive self," a foundation of a person's normal development, and states that Anodos "grows up with no mother to serve as a 'mirror' and help him gain a strong self-concept by loving attention and encouragement" (125). Further, Sutton argues that "[h]is father fails to fill this role and to provide the other basic experience that might have compensated for the lack of 'mirroring'" (125), leading Anodos to an unstable, inactive life without a distinct identity. The Wise Woman fulfills her role of "mirroring" that his parents fail to fill, having him establish his identity and live a life truly: liberating him from the "antenatal tomb."

We can see Anodos' desire for death—his wish to commit suicide—here and there,[33] which demonstrates that he stays in the "antenatal tomb." Also, he ponders about death and even sees the White Lady as "Death" in the song by which he liberates her from the tomb that has incarcerated her. Certainly, we mentioned that this shows his strong desire for life, the Orpheus-like desire for recalling his beloved woman to life. However, at the same time, Anodos wishes her spell to be on him: "Let thy slumber round me together, / Let another dream with thee!" (38). Her sleep is described as "the very death of dreams" (37) and "the death-sleep of an evil enchantment" (148), and therefore it can be said that his desire reveals his obsession with death. Besides, after Anodos clasps the White Lady corporealized in defiance of the caution "TOUCH NOT!" (113) and then she runs away from him, rebuking him for touching her, he proceeds with his journey gloomily and shows his suicidal tendency again. When Anodos reaches the end of the low promontory, he "plunge[s] headlong into the mounting wave below" (135), demonstrating his desire to commit suicide. McGillis and Pennington, annotators, while considering death to be a central concern in MacDonald, comment on this scene that "Anodos attempts to kill himself, which in MacDonald's world defies the sanctity of death as life, where death is something that must be earned after a journey through life" (135). Anodos' behavior is a representational example of the way of living that a person looks for death, being tired of living his/her life, which MacDonald considers negative. We can clearly see this negative view of life in an old man in *Lilith* whom

Vane meets at the end of the story: like Anodos, the old man, weary of life, desires to sleep in Eve's House of Death, in other words, wishes to die, but is rejected by her.[34] As a consequence, Anodos, who does not live his life in a true sense, leading an inactive, dead-like life, needs to be liberated from the "antenatal tomb."

ii) The Wise Woman, a Singing Woman Liberates Anodos from the "Antenatal Tomb"

Talking of the traditional image of singing women in literature, we may hit upon Siren in Greek mythology (especially in Homer's *Odyssey*), a typical femme fatale, who seduces men and often brings their destruction. However, the Wise Woman is in a directly opposite position to singing femme fatales like Siren because she gives Anodos lessons and consolation through her songs, showing him the way to go. Hereafter, we focus on the Wise Woman's songs for Anodos, who, grief-stricken, returns to her cottage after facing some ordeals.

Anodos can return back to the Wise Woman by going through the place, a kind of the door, which has the mysterious mark that appears on her palm. The mark looks like a circle, but it is open at the right and left side. It can be related to the stigmata, and some researchers consider her to be a Christ-like figure,[35] but we rather support McGillis' contention that this mark "reflects the idea of an open circle" ("Community of the Centre" 56). McGillis points out that "the circularity of this mark is countered by its open ends that stretch outward. The sign suggests *embrace, but not enclosure*" (56, emphasis added). What the mark represents

also reflects the Wise Woman's attitude toward Anodos, and the form of love that he should understand and obtain at last. Going through the first door, he returns to his boyhood and has a good time with his younger brothers near an old barn on his father's estate. However, Anodos quarrels with his favorite younger brother about minor issues and he is found drowned next morning, and Anodos is convinced that he "ha[s] gone through the very same once before" (146). The Wise Woman sings to Anodos, who, devastated, returns to her: "Form, with its brightness, / From eyes will depart: / It walketh, in whiteness, / The halls of the heart" (147). Through singing this song, she assures him that the existence and love of beloved people will remain even after they die. Sutton, referring to Kohut's psychoanalysis, points out that "any progress toward healing depends less upon interpreting the old experiences than upon 'repeatedly' reliving them," and describes the Wise Woman as a kind of "a therapist in allowing him [Anodos] to face once more the key figures from his past" (127). Anodos must have felt that he caused his younger brother's death, and this sense of guilt can make him regard his life as negative, leading to his stagnant, dead-like life. However, thanks to the Wise Woman, who allows him to face his oppressed past and relive it, he, perceiving that his younger brother will keep living in his heart, comes to approve both life and death.

Anodos leaves the Wise Woman's cottage through the second door, so that he faces the fact that the White Lady, whom he pursues throughout the story, is a wife of the Knight

reminiscent of Sir Percivale. We will minutely examine the relationship between the White Lady and the Wise Woman and the lady's corporeality in the next section, and therefore, we just briefly explain what Anodos learns from the Wise Woman's song. In this time, she sings about the state of love that he must attain: she tells him to be not "a cistern of love" that only receives love but "a well of love" that gives love, "[f]lowing, and free, and sure" (150). Hearing her song, Anodos feels that he can love "the white lady as I ha[ve] never loved her before" (150). This state of love resembles "embrace, but not enclosure" (McGillis, "The Community of the Centre" 56) that the aforementioned mystic mark of the Wise Woman's cottage symbolizes. Later, when he dies a pseudo-death in Fairy Land, he thinks that "I kn[o]w now, that it is by loving, and not by being loved, that one can come nearest the soul of another" (191). Anodos acquires the state of love that he learns from the Wise Woman, and comes to "love without needing to be loved again" (191), showing people "love that healeth" (192).

When Anodos goes through the third door, he visits the house of a lady, perhaps his ex-lover—she may be "one who ha[s] not been happy" (29) mentioned in his answer to the Beech's question: "Shall I be very happy when I am a woman?" (29)—and his ancestors' mausoleum. He follows the lady, "a form well known to [him]" (150), entering her room, and to his surprise, he finds that he stands "in a great solemn church" (151). He goes to the lady lying on the bed, but it turns out "a tomb" (151). Besides, her body turns into cold marble,

which suggests that she has already been dead. However, in contrast to the White Lady, who Anodos is prohibited from touching, he touches this woman's face, bare hands, and feet tenderly. After that, he visits the chapel over the burial-vault of his race. Although there is no clear description, it seems that "[a] warm kiss alight[s] on [his] lips" is his mother's, and "a great hand" (151) that grasps his mightily and tenderly is his father's. In addition to the isolation from his ancestors mentioned in section I, that Anodos has no involvement with people in the real world can be one primary factor in his inactive, stagnant life, staying in the "antenatal tomb." With the aid of the Wise Woman, however, he is able to face those people and reconnect with them. Anodos, who has revealed a kind of a suicidal tendency at times before meeting her, now comes to feel fear about death.[36] To put it the other way round, this can show that he begins to desire to live: he is about to leave the "antenatal tomb." As soon as he returns to the Wise Woman, she sings about this life filled with joy and sorrow, mentioning that "[w]e weep for gladness, weep for grief; / The tears they are the same; / We sigh for longing, and relief; / The sighs have but one name" (152). In her song, death is not viewed as that should be feared, and she considers its pangs to be "throbs of life" (152), and when the person wakes up, there is no tomb and instead, "… the dead ones smile above, / With hovering arms of sleepless love" (152), giving consolation to Anodos.

Thanks to the Wise Woman, Anodos, who had up until that point lived a monotonous, stagnant, and lifeless life, becomes liberated from the "antenatal tomb," and he can "do

something worth doing" (154) as she has encouraged him at their parting. After he leaves her, he achieves worthwhile things for the first time: he exterminates malicious giants with royal brothers with whom he ties the brotherly knot, and lays bare the vice of the "sacred" ceremony in the forest. Anodos' reckless action at the ceremony can be seen as a suicidal tendency, but he enjoys "perhaps, something of an evil satisfaction, in the revenge I [am] thus taking upon *the self* which ha[s] fooled me so long" (187, emphasis added). As well as the Shadow that keeps tormenting him from chapter VIII, we can regard the wolf-like monster devouring people at the ceremony as his bad, lower self. Therefore, his struggle to conquer or destroy it corresponds to MacDonald's view discussed in "Self-Denial" in *Unspoken Sermons Series II* (1885) that a person must deny and conquer his/her own inner lower self again and again in order to keep developing. This view of life is seen in what Anodos says just after the Maiden releases him from the dreary tower where he is trapped with his Shadow: "Doubtless, this self must again die and be buried, and again, from its tomb, spring a winged child; … Self will come to life even in the slaying of self; but there is ever something deeper and stronger than it, which will emerge at last from the unknown abyss of the soul" (176). As Anodos happens upon the evil ceremony of a human sacrifice after he is liberated from the tower, his action at the ceremony can reflect his quoted words about self. Therefore, his daring action of revealing the truth and slaying the monster is differentiated from his suicidal tendency scattered in the story before he meets the Wise Woman. We can interpret his bravery

as the author's ideal and positive view of life that a person must conquer his/her lower self and keep improving.

Anodos becomes a bodiless, spiritual being after he experiences pseudo-death while suffocating the monster at the ceremony, and has a time of supreme bliss temporarily as a spirit. Then, he unexpectedly comes to be "born" into the real world again. He feels "a pang and a terrible shudder" and "a writhing as of death convulse[s]" (192) him. This acute pain can emphasize corporeality, and Anodos becomes "once again conscious of a more limited, even a bodily and earthly life" (192). Now he has fear about this life filled with both sorrow and joy, where he cannot be sure whether the Beech becomes happy as a woman. However, whenever he is oppressed by "any sorrow or real perplexity" (194), he feels as if he only left the Wise Woman for a time and could soon return to her, which comforts himself. In addition, since there is a mysterious mark of her cottage's entrance in his ancestor's tomb, he thinks that after he dies, he "shall find it one day, and be glad" (195). As clearly shown in the song which the Wise Woman sings to Anodos, who returns from the third door that leads to the real world, she gives him comfort in both life and death, and her existence becomes a foundation for him to live a life positively and with might and main.

III. The Wise Woman and Other Women: Rereading the Image of Woman and the View of Life

i) Woman and Imagination: Singing, Voice Reminiscent of Nature, and the View of Life

As we mentioned in introduction, for MacDonald, who views the human imagination as subordinate to God's creation, poetry (song) is the best language that humans can use for describing God's creation most proximately and grasping the essence of things. Therefore, poetry is an essential factor in *Phantastes*, whose setting is Fairy Land conceived to be the world of imagination. According to Yasumasa Oguro, who examines extensively the tradition of "woman of water" like Siren, Undine, and Melusine, the seduction by these femme-fatales' songs can be divided into three categories: aural (sweet voice and musicality), intellectual (giving knowledge and omniscience), and both.[37] In this section, we also give ear to both singing women's voice itself and the contents of their songs, but as the Wise Woman clearly demonstrates, women considered here are not singing femme-fatales. They sing songs not for seducing men and bringing them destruction and death; instead, their songs are sweet ones that liberate them and give life to them.

Previous studies have paid attention to Anodos' imagination and songs, regarding *Phantastes* as the story of his development as a true poet. However, we should not overlook the fact that MacDonald describes the imagination as woman, and women actually personify the imagination in this work.[38] Especially, we need to focus on following things: Anodos' fairy grandmother, who grants him a wish by showing him the way to Fairy Land, may be his maternal ancestor and he seems to have inherited the fairy blood from her;[39] it is his younger sister who reminds him of Fairy Land before he who has been doubtful about its existence is

actually allowed to go to it; entering Fairy Land, Anodos firstly comes across the fairy-blooded mother and daughter; a family of four living in the second cottage clearly demonstrates the gendered division, namely, man / woman = reality and rationality / Fairy Land and imagination.[40] Then, although they have not been taken seriously by previous studies, what emphasizes the relationship between women and imagination most is singing women.

In order to examine singing women in *Phantastes*, first of all, we should focus on the aural, that is to say, their voice reminiscent of nature with musicality. The Beech's voice reminds Anodos of "the sound of a gentle wind amidst the leaves of a great tree" (28), and is described "like a solution of all musical sounds" (29). According to Anodos, who is trapped in the dreary tower with his Shadow, the singing voice of the Maiden is "[l]ike a living soul, like an incarnation of Nature, … It bathe[s] me like a sea; inwrap[s] me like an odorous vapour; enter[s] my soul like a long draught of clear spring-water; sh[i]ne[s] upon me like essential sunlight" (173). Her voice is closely related with nature and its healing power. Anodos marvels that the Wise Woman's voice, "the sweetest voice I ha[ve] ever heard" and "such melody" issues from "those lips of age" (138). In brief, these singing women have a sweet voice reminiscent of nature with musicality. We mentioned that MacDonald saw *Phantastes* as "fairy tale," and we should note that in "The Fantastic Imagination," he states that "[t]he true fairytale is, to my mind, very like the sonata" (326) and "[n]ature is mood-

engendering, thought-provoking: such ought the sonata, such ought the fairytale to be" (328). It is noteworthy that MacDonald thinks that the true fairytale has musicality, relating it with nature. Moreover, he describes his own fairytales as "broken music" (329), which shows that he greatly values musicality that appeals not to rationality but to emotion and feelings. As a consequence, in *Phantastes*, a "fairy tale," we should hearken to those singing women's musical voice reminiscent of nature for obtaining the deeper understanding of this work.

Before examining the overlooked connection between the Wise Woman and other female characters, we take a close look at the contents of female songs except the Wise Woman's in order to deepen our discussion on women and poetry. First of all, we mention the Beech, who is also a singing woman. Like singing, she murmurs that "I may love him, I may love him; for he is a man, and I am only a beech-tree" (28, 31) over and over when Anodos meets her for the first time and he leaves her. Also, Anodos verbalizes a part of what she sings: "I saw thee ne'er before; / I see thee never more; / But love, and help, and pain, beautiful one, / Have made thee mine, till all my years are done" (30). Gaarden states that "[t]he renunciation of the Beech-Woman, who goes on loving but doesn't cling to her beloved, parallels and foreshadows the renunciation of his beloved white lady that Anodos will have to make later in the story" (*The Christian Goddess* 29) and points out the similarity between the Beech's love and "love that healeth" (192), the state of love that Anodos finally obtains after experiencing pseudo-death in Fairy Land. In addition, "till *all my years* are

done" (30, emphasis added) can mean her life as a beech-tree, which suggests that the Beech will keep loving him until her extraordinary long life is done. This is similar to Anodos' view of love that "it is by loving, and not by being loved, that one can come nearest the soul of another" (191), and moreover, we can read her strong desire to become a woman after her long, monotonous, ligneous life is done.

Anodos describes the Beech's song as "a strange sweet song, which I could not understand, but which le[aves] in me a feeling like this" (30) and tries to verbalize it. As for his reproduction (verbalization), he comments that "I cannot put more of it into words" (30), implying that her song goes beyond our ordinary, existing language. It can remind us of écriture féminine, proposed by some French feminists like Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, which differs from traditional masculine styles of writing and can defy the male order, granting women some power to speak/write. We can see some similarities between écriture féminine and women's words and voice reminiscent of nature that cannot be verbalized, and give listeners not meaning but impression and feeling in *Phantastes*.[41] Besides that, MacDonald often describes a profound knowledge, especially the secrets of life and death, as indescribable in our ordinary language. Its prime examples are the singing river's song that Diamond tries to verbalize time after time in *At the Back of the North Wind* and the book in which Lilith talks about her origin and corporeality in some indescribable language before alphabet.[42] They are about the mysteries of life.[43] In a similar way to them,

the Beech's song tells Anodos "the secret of the woods, and the flowers, and the birds" (30), and while hearing her song, he, wrapt in a trance of still delight, feels the four seasons and thinks as if he relived his life from his early childhood to the present time. As clearly shown in chapter XII, MacDonald connects a turn of season with life and death. Therefore, by singing songs that cannot be turned into words with her musical voice reminiscent of nature, the Beech initiates Anodos into the mysteries of nature and life.

Next, we examine the Maiden as a singing woman. As mentioned in section I, she becomes mature after Anodos breaks her precious globe, so that she integrates the light and music for which she has depended on the globe, and can sing songs by herself. Besides, Anodos describes her as "a sunset" and "a radiance" (175), and she delivers people who wait for her arrival in the dark forests by "bearing the sun to the unsunned spots" (175). In "The Fantastic Imagination," MacDonald explains about the intellect and the imagination as follows:

> The region belonging to the pure intellect is straitened: the imagination labours to extend its territories, to give it room. She sweeps across the borders, searching out new lands into which she may guide her plodding brother. *The imagination is the light which redeems from the darkness for the eyes of the understanding*. (315, emphasis added)[44]

The Maiden, who is considered to be "light," and guides and redeems people through her

songs, can be the exact personification of the imagination discussed in this critique.

The relationship between Anodos and the White Lady seems to be similar to that between the Maiden and Anodos in terms of the fact that Anodos and the Maiden liberate those who are confined in the place seen as "tombs" by singing songs. However, in fact their attitudes are really contrastive. Anodos liberates the White Lady for his own egoistic, sexual desire, and McGillis aptly states that "Anodos' desire, the male desire, is to free the female in order to reconfine her to his wishes" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*" 42). On the contrary, the Maiden delivers Anodos confined in the dreary tower with his Shadow, which is considered to be his double and lower self, in a way making him be re/born. Then, after releasing him, she leaves him so that she can liberate other people awaiting her arrival through the dark forest. She does not fit in with typical singing femme-fatales, and besides, she goes far beyond a subordinate female role, that is, the mere indicator of Anodos' growth: it is the Maiden who releases him and shows him the state that he should finally attain. Relating to our discussion, McGillis mentions that "[h]er suffering has 'uplifted' her into the realm of joy, and she has become a complete poet singing songs which 'do good, and deliver people' … She offers Anodos an example of the female poet, one who, as Hélène Cixous suggests" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*"43). Cixous asserts that although a woman has to doubly resist in "the masculine-conjugal subjective community," losing "a part of herself without losing her integrity," at the same time, "secretly, silently, and deep down inside, she grows and

multiplies" because "she knows far more about living and about the relation between the economy of the drives and the management of the ego than any man" (259). As for this reason, Cixous explains as follows:

> Unlike man, who holds so dearly to his title and titles, his pouches of value, his cap, crown, and everything connected with his head, woman couldn't care less about the fear of decapitation (or castration), adventuring, without the masculine temerity, into anonymity, which she can merge with, without annihilating herself: *because she's a giver*. (259, emphasis added)

This can remind us of the Maiden, who, integrating the beautiful sound and music that her precious globe has uttered, does not cling to that globe anymore, in contrast to Anodos immersed in his vanity, clad in the splendent armour, and likening himself with Sir Galahad. After she relieves him from the tower, he realizes that "I am what I am, nothing more" (176), stripping off all his resplendent, gorgeous, heavy armour, the symbol of his vanity and the desire to hold to his title. Instead of appropriating the light and music integrated in her to herself, the Maiden *gives* them to people and does good deeds. Then, she tells Anodos that "[n]ow I go about everywhere through Fairy Land, singing till my heart is like to break, just like my globe, for very joy at my own songs. And wherever I go, my songs do good, and deliver people" (174-75), and immediately leaves him so that she can extricate people awaiting the advent of the Maiden. She is *a giver* by singing songs, and embodies "a well of

love" (150) and "the love that healeth" (192), the state of love that Anodos must learn and obtain.

Then, let us hearken to the contents of the Maiden's songs. Her first song is about the mother Earth. Anodos openly shows his desire to die and become united with the mother Earth time after time through this work, and he achieves this cherished desire temporarily after pseudo-death in Fairy Land: "Now that I lay in her bosom, the whole earth, and each of her many births, was as a body to me, at my will. I seemed to feel the great heart of the mother beating into mine, and feeding me with her own life, her own essential being and nature" (190). In contrast to him, the Maiden sings about not the union with the mother Earth after death but the Mother treating her children tenderly in life. The Maiden tells people devastated to go forth to the Mother and weep beside her, and states that "[a]t least she will press thee to her knee, / And tell a low, sweet tale to thee, / Till the hue to thy cheek and the light to thine eye, / Strength to thy limbs, and courage high / To thy fainting heart, return amain, / And away to work thou goest again" (174). She asserts that the mother Earth, reminiscent of the Wise Woman, gives people courage to live earnestly again when they have a difficult time and become depressed, and leads them to a positive life. By singing this song, the Maiden makes Anodos "be born" from the tower. It seems that she reenacts the scene where Anodos wakes the White Lady in a death sleep and delivers her from the "antenatal tomb" through his song. In her second song, the Maiden mentions that each person goes

his/her own way but "[e]nding is one end," that is, "home" (175) and conveys that it is important to fulfill his/her life to the end. In *Lilith*, Eve, the Mother of all, sings the second half of this song (228), and mysteriously enough, Vane thinks that "I ha[ve] heard the song before" (228). That MacDonald takes up the Maiden's song very late in his life again and makes Eve sing this song can demonstrate that the Maiden plays an essential role in *Phantastes* and her songs reflect the kernel of his view of life and death.

ii) The Resonance among the Wise Woman, a Singing Woman and Other Women

In this part, we examine the Wise Woman, the most important singing woman, again, by paying attention to her relations to other women. Considering how they are related—how they resonate—mutually, we will cast a new light on, or more precisely, add a new sound to both the view of life and death, and the image of woman in *Phantastes*. Especially, we minutely discuss the fact that the White Lady becomes corporeal after the Wise Woman makes Anodos face the lady in her true colors and accept the truth. By reading the female relationships deeply, we will reinforce our discussion about the mortal, corporeal life that has been overlooked, and throw the relations between women, their corporeality, and the independent woman-image into relief.

First of all, we briefly examine the interrelation between the Wise Woman and the Beech. At the end of the story, Anodos lies down in the shade of a great, ancient beech-tree, and listens to the sounds of the leaves overhead, which at first make "sweet inarticulate music

alone" (195), but by and by the sound begins to take shape and turn into words. Anodos seems able to distinguish these "half-dissolved in a little ocean of circumfluent tones: 'A great good is coming—is coming—is coming to thee, Anodos'" (197). As examined in the first part of this section, this obviously shows that women's voice is closely connected with musicality and nature. Hearing these words, Anodos opens his eyes, so that he discerns "her [the Wise Woman's] face, with its many wrinkles and its young eyes, looking at me from between two hoary branches of the beech overhead" (195). Mysteriously, the Wise Woman and the beech-tree are united in the real world and they give Anodos an important message of life, heartening him. Besides, if this ancient beech-tree is really the Beech, who Anodos meets in Fairy Land, then, she can partly make her dream come true. As for flower fairies, a fairy and his/her flower can be seen as a soul and a body respectively. In this scene, by uniting with the Wise Woman, the Beech becomes the "body," manifesting herself in the human world, and partially realizes her dream to become a woman.

Next, we proceed to discuss the Wise Woman's connection with the Maiden. When Anodos sees off the Maiden, who leaves him for delivering other people, he thinks that "[s]he [goes] like a radiance through the dark wood, which [i]s henceforth bright to me, from simply knowing that such a creature [i]s in it. She [i]s bearing the sun to the unsunned spots" (175). "The dark wood" is a metaphor for this life where something gloom and hard often happens, and just knowing that she will bring the light, "the sun" to those dark places encourages and

gives him consolation. In section II, we mentioned that the Wise Woman allows Anodos to fulfill his life and live positively even when he becomes inconsolable and devastated, because he knows that he may meet her again both in and after his life. We can discern the similar feature in the Maiden, who leads him to a positive life. Moreover, it is remarkable that the Wise Woman shares common features with "the mother Earth" and "home" sung in the Maiden's songs. Like the mother Earth in her first song presses those depressed to her knee and tells "a low, sweet tale" to them so that they "return amain, / And away to work [they] goest again" (174), the Wise Woman gives Anodos some lessons and consolations through her songs, bringing him hope for this life. In her second song, the Maiden mentions that "[m]any a wrong, and its curing song" (175), and this is reminiscent of the Wise Woman, who sings comforting, curing songs to sorrowful Anodos. Besides, "home" in the Maiden's second song is the place where people finally reach, and therefore, it is also similar to the Wise Woman, who Anodos can meet after death. The Maiden's songs about life resonate with the Wise Woman, accentuating the view of life in *Phantastes*.

Finally, we look into the relation between the Wise Woman and the White Lady. By sending Anodos off from the second door of her cottage, the Wise Woman makes him face the fact that the White Lady, his ideal woman who he has pursued with sexual and egoistic desire to possess her, is a flesh-and-blood woman and the wife of the Knight reminiscent of Sir Percivale. Then, they rise and each looks towards Anodos in passing, so that they go to "a

rich chamber, hung with gorgeous arras" (149), that is, their bedroom. Unable to endure remaining where he stands any longer, thinking that the White Lady is "near me in the arms of one loved better than I, and I would not see her, and I would not be by her" (149), he longs to return to the Wise Woman's cottage. He finds the mark of its entrance at the place where he avoids looking: "There the dull red cipher glowed, on the very door of their secret chamber" (149). Wolff sees the world in *Phantastes* as dream, and by using Freudian psychoanalysis, he explains that "we shall realize that the knight is the father, 'the better man,' and that the white lady was all along forbidden to Anodos-Oedipus" (98). Like Wolff, David Holbrook, who also examines the work from the psychoanalytical viewpoint and discusses the issue of woman and death in particular, regards the Knight as Anodos' father, the White Lady as his mother, and perceives the author's yearning for his mother in the relationship between Anodos and the White Lady. After Anodos hears the lady regard him as the moon of her night and the Knight as the sun of her day, he, submitting to her words, states that "[l]et me, them, be the moon of thy night still, O woman! And when thy day is beclouded, as the fairest days will be, let some song of mine comfort thee" (149). Referring to these words, Holbrook asserts that "[t]his cry of Oedipal jealousy is virtually a direct expression of the infant MacDonald's claim on the dead mother" (228). However, in this scene, it is unsuitable to see the White Lady as the mother, the object of desire in Oedipus complex. When Anodos first sees her in her residence with her husband, he mentions that "[t]he lady wonderfully

resemble[s] my marble lady, but [i]s *altogether of the daughters of men*, and I c[an] not tell whether or not it [i]s she" (147, emphasis added). She is no longer the marble lady that reflects the Pygmalion-like artist's ideal: she is an ordinary flesh-and-blood woman. McGillis points out that Anodos "can only conceive of woman as dominated or dominating" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*" 43) and he "must learn to value earthly woman for what she is" (42). Up to that time, she is, as "the white lady" and "the marble lady[woman]," deprived of her corporeality, and Anodos adds "my" when mentioning her, turning her into a mere object of desire. However, thanks to the Wise Woman, Anodos can accept the White Lady as a real, corporeal woman and value her for what she is.

After Anodos lays bare the vice of the "sacred" ceremony in the forest, and is killed by / kills the wolf-like monster, the White Lady reappears and attends his funeral with her husband in chapter XXIV. She is described as "the lady I [Anodos] loved" (189). She is no longer related with "white" and "marble" that symbolize ideal beauty but remind us of impersonal, lifeless life, even of death: she becomes a real, flesh-and-blood woman. Seeing Anodos lie in his coffin, the White Lady says that "[h]e has died well" (189), weeping over him, so that her tears fall on his face. It is in a way the first physical contact between Anodos and the White Lady, who he has been inhibited from touching throughout the work. Then, although she does not sing songs like the Wise Woman and the Maiden, her mouth is described as "… the tender portal / Of the home of melody" (121) in Anodos' song for

making her body manifest itself. She is somewhat likened to a singing woman, and her words "[h]e has died well" (189) becomes a kind of requiem—Anodos thinks that his "spirit rejoice[s]" (189)—for pacifying and comforting his spirit.

As a spiritual being, Anodos cannot utter a word anymore, and thinks that "I c[an] manifest myself in the primrose; that it sa[ys] a part of what I [want] to say; just as in the old time, I ha[ve] used to betake myself to a song for the same end" (191).Then, he enters the flower—as for flower fairies, he observes that "[f]or just what the flower says to you, would the face and form of the fairy say" (16)—in order to express his thoughts to the White Lady. The flower catches her eye: "She stopped and plucked it, saying, 'Oh, you beautiful creature!' and, lightly kissing it, put it in her bosom. It was the first kiss she had ever given me" (191). Then, as the flower soon begins to wither, Anodos forsakes it. As for the relation between flowers and fairies, he stated before: "The flowers seem a sort of houses for them, or outer bodies, which they can put on or off when they please … Whether all the flowers have fairies, I cannot determine, any more than I can be sure whether all men and women have souls" (16). That is to say, he connects flower with body, and fairy with soul, respectively. Therefore, although Anodos is not a fairy, we can see the flower that Anodos enters as the metaphor of body. In this scene, the White Lady, who has lacked her corporeality and been related with death, mentions the beauty of the flower that symbolizes the body, and touches and plucks it with her own body. This can demonstrate transience and beauty that our mortal,

physical life has, as well as underlining her acquired corporeality and the importance of this life. Besides, there are more noteworthy things in this scene. First, although the White Lady has been sung by Anodos and been a kind of his Muse, this time she sings to Anodos in a way: her words become a requiem for comforting and fulfilling his spirit. Second, the White Lady, whose body has been prohibited from touching, and despite the prohibition, has been touched forcibly, *touches* by her own will: she turns from a mere passive object to a positive subject.[45] Their positions—active, touching subject / passive, touched object—are reversed at the last scene, which displays the independent, active aspects of woman who has been considered to be submissive and secondary to Anodos. The White Lady has been an inhuman marble, and a sacred, untouchable existence, but with the help of the Wise Woman—by resonating with her—this Lady becomes a flesh-and-blood woman with life and sexuality.

Conclusion

In this article, we focused on an "antenatal tomb" (37)—the dead-like state of not being born or not living in a true sense—and singing women so as to cast a new light on the image of women who have been considered to be submissive and secondary as the mere supporters or indicators for Anodos' growth, and instead, to see them as active and independent. In this way, we revealed some overlooked things like women's corporeality, the female relationships, and the view of life. First of all, we considered how Anodos liberates women stayed/confined in "antenatal tombs" in section I. In section II, we showed that Anodos

himself remains in the similar state, by referring to his stagnant, lifeless life and his desire for death, and that he is freed by the Wise Woman, coming to live a life truly and positively. Finally, we mentioned the close relation between women and the imagination, and we threw, although it never appears obviously in the work, the interrelation between the Wise Woman and other female characters into relief as well as hearkening to their songs. While those women do not see each other personally, in fact they are interrelated like a resonant music. Then, when we listen to their songs, we can feel the resonance buried deep in *Phantastes*, that is, the female independence and relationships, and the view of life.

Endnotes

1. In this article, we reference *Phantastes* edited by John Pennington and Roderick McGillis.

2. Nick Page, an annotator, points out that "[o]ne day for each year of his life. Anodos's story in Fairy Land is linked, therefore, to the story of his own life" (271). It is one reason why previous studies have regarded *Phantastes* as Bildungsroman.

3. *The Christian Goddess* 84.

4. The woman who Anodos finds confined in alabaster and frees from it by singing is called "the [my] white lady" and "the [my] marble lady [woman]" in *Phantastes*. Previous studies call her a variety of names, so for convenience, in this article, we refer to her as "the White Lady."

5. "The Angel in the House," an ideal woman image—a good wife and wise mother—derives from the long poem of the same name written by Coventry Patmore (1823-96). In *The Angel in the House* (1854-62), Patmore praises and sanctifies married love.

6. Yukiko Konosu, making a survey of literature and social issues, aptly points out that "the underestimation of body and the contempt for women have been somewhat connected" (my

trans.; 144). We will focus on these underestimated things for casting a new light on the view of life and the image of woman in MacDonald's works.

7. *Phantastes* 190-92.

8. In particular, see Hein and Sigman.

9. Although previous studies often mention that MacDonald's father and younger brother, John Hill, died just before the publication of *Phantastes*, they seem to rather overlook the fact that many children were born to the MacDonalds just before and after he published the work. In 1856, Greville, the fourth child and the eldest son, who wrote his father's biography *George MacDonald and His Wife*, was born. After that, the fourth daughter Irene, the fifth daughter Winifred Louisa, and the second son Ronald were born in 1857, 1858 (the year of *Phantastes*' publication), and 1860 respectively. Death of the author's beloved ones has been emphasized for discussing *Phantastes*, but as mentioned above, he also experienced many births and must have felt the power of life, which should be paid attention to for understanding this work more deeply.

10. Shelley describes a chrysalis in which a butterfly waits to be born as an "antenatal tomb": "And many *an antenatal tomb*, / Where butterflies dream of the life to come, / *She* left clinging round the smooth and dark / Edge of the odorous cedar bark" (24, emphasis added). This "She" who is "a Power in this sweet place" is "[a]n Eve in this Eden; a ruling Grace" (20). When this woman dies, flowers and plants lament, which might not a little influence on Snow Drop's death and the funeral of Primrose in *Phantastes* (18-20). Moreover, we can see a resemblance between the Sensitive Plant's selfless love—"It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full" (16)—and Anodos' state of love after his pseudo-death in Fairy Land, and both works relate four seasons with the life cycle (Part III in "The Sensitive Plant" and chapter XXII in *Phantastes*). In consequence, we should not overlook the influence of "The Sensitive Plant" on *Phantastes*, and "antenatal tomb" is worth considering for understanding this work.

11. Fairy Land can be seen as the world of imagination with a higher order than our ordinary world. That is because MacDonald cites some parts about poetry and imagination from *Schriften* written by Novalis (1772-1801), and *The Purple Island; or, The Isle of Man* (1633) by Phineas Fletcher (1582-1650)—an allegorical poem about human's mind and body—influenced by Edmund Spenser (1522?-1599)'s *The Fairie Queene* (1590; 1596) in which Phantastes, the personified imagination appears. Fletcher himself mentions "Phantastes" in his poem, and MacDonald quotes that part (xliii). These quotations at the opening page of *Phantastes* indicate beforehand that this work is about imagination. On the whole, scholars agree with the interpretation that Fairy Land where Anodos grows is the world of imagination. For instance, McGillis states that "Anodos's journey takes him into the realm of the imagination in all its enticing and alluring forms. Although MacDonald values the imagination, he also follows Shelley in stressing the dangers inherent in the pursuit of the image for its own sake" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*" 39), pointing out both the attraction and danger of imagination that Anodos experiences in this work.

12. All songs are sung in verse in *Phantastes*. Therefore we consider these songs to be "poetry" that MacDonald argues is the original of all words and is created through the imagination, which is subordinate to God's creation. From now on, all "songs" which we will refer to are this "poetry."

13. Anodos describes the old wise woman's eyes as follows: "[T]hey were absolutely young—those of a woman of five-and-twenty, large, and of a clear gray" (138). It can be said that she is a foremother of powerful, goddess-like women in later works like the great-great-grandmother in the *Princess* Books and Grandmother in "The Golden Key" (1867). After this, we will mention this mysterious woman as "the Wise Woman" for convenience.

14. From now on, we call the beech lady who saves Anodos from the vampirish Ash tree in chapter IV "the Beech," and the beautiful maiden with a mysterious globe that emits light and

music in chapter IX and XXII "the Maiden" as a matter of convenience.

15. McGillis points out that "[t]he male Ash clearly represents the grasping desire to possess, the will to power associated with a sexuality based on violence, represented by the Alder-maiden" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*" 41).

16. David Holbrook, regarding the Beech's "low, musical murmuring voice" as "the presence of the mother to her infant" scattered in some of MacDonald's works, and considering the Ash to be "the threatened father, who threatens Oedipal retaliation, for the son's guilty love for the mother" (187), infers some Oedipal elements from the scene where the Beech saves Anodos from the vampirish Ash. McGillis sees the Beech as "the male ideal of woman as self-sacrificing nurturer" ("*Phantastes* and *Lilith*" 41) reminiscent of the Angel in the House, the ideal woman image during the Victorian period. Robert Lee Wolff also views her as the mother, grasping that her hair which she gives Anodos for saving him from the Ash is "an element of maternal love and protection" (54). Moreover, Wolff connects her hair with "the 'golden brown' lock of MacDonald's mother's own hair that he kept in the secret compartment with her letter about weaning him" (54), emphasizing the author's longing for his dead mother. As for his mother's hair that MacDonald has kept for his life, see Greville MacDonald 33.

17. Seeing that Anodos is only twenty-one years old, the Beech exclaims, "[w]hy, you baby!" (29), kissing him tenderly. Her words suggest that humans and trees have different senses of years and the Beech must have lived several hundred years.

18. The incarnate nature as a corporeal woman that we should consider most in MacDonald's works must be North Wind in *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871), who has mystic power. By turning the wind that can neither be seen nor touched into a beautiful woman with her body, the author, consciously or unconsciously, deals with the difficulty and impossibility of expressing the female body. Therefore, we can say that the Beech, who is seen as the

foremother of North Wind, is essential for understanding the image of woman in *Phantastes*. As for the minute discussion on North Wind's corporeality, see Kumabe, "Being Born into the World through the Female Body as a Door in *At the Back of the North Wind*."

19. We can say that angels in Diamond's dream that North Wind gives him—she admits that "I g[i]ve you that dream" (289)—are humans before being born on the Earth for two reasons. First, welcoming Diamond, these angels treat the boy as "a lost playmate" (206). Secondly, when Diamond is very worried about an angel who plunges into the hole from which he digs up a star because of the angel's useless bud-like wings, their captain assures him that "[h]e's lost them [wings] by this time. They all do that go that way. You haven't got any, you see" (207). That is to say, springing into the hole where angels find stars of their favorite color is the metaphor of childbirth.

20. Ruskin had a highly conservative view of gender as we can see it in his *Sesame and Lilies* (1865). Therefore, he disliked "the tinge of eroticism he found in MacDonald's story for young children" (Raeper 222), and in his letter to MacDonald, Ruskin commented that "The Light Princess" was "too amorous throughout," and "the swimming scenes and love scenes would be to many children seriously harmful" (222). Ruskin further suggested that although these scenes do not have to be cut out, they should "be done in a simpler and less telling way" (222). As for the relationship between MacDonald and Ruskin, and their different views of gender, see Raeper 214-23.

21. As for the girls whose growth is hindered in MacDonald's works, we can list the Princess in "The Light Princess," Fairy in "The Carasoyn" (1867), Tangle in "The Golden Key" (1867), Nycteris in "The History of Photogen and Nycteris," and Lona in *Lilith*. Except *Lilith*, a girl and a boy make a pair—in order, the Prince, Colin, Mossy, and Photogen are male counterparts to aforementioned girls—underlining girls' more difficult and complicated growth.

22. "A Sketch of Individual Development" 24-25.

23. "The History of Photogen and Nycteris" 310-12. As for the discussion of rereading the image of woman and the view of life and death in this work by focusing on how Nycteris gets out of the state of "the unborn"—similar to staying in the "antenatal tomb" in *Phantastes*—by herself, see Kumabe "Day and Night Observed by the Girl with Innocent Eyes and the Existence of Her Blind Mother."

24. As for the further discussion of the Maiden's growth focusing on the image of woman and the view of life and death, see Kumabe, "The Growth of the Maiden Who Has a Globe" 50-51, 60.

25. "George MacDonald's *Phantastes*" 204.

26. In general, MacDonald considers allegory rather negatively, and he asserts that "[a] genuine work of art must mean many things; the truer its art, the more things it will mean" ("The Fantastic Imagination" 326). Besides, he clearly states that "[a] fairytale is not an allegory. … The true fairytale is, to my mind, very like the sonata" (326). As MacDonald sees *Phantastes* as "a kind of fairy tale" (Sadler 102), we should not read this work allegorically, and instead, we must listen to its musicality that allows readers various interpretations.

27. As previous studies tend to consider *Phantastes* to be the story of Anodos' development into a poet, the reference to Orpheus the minstrel, as well as Pygmalion the artist, can lead to the interpretation that the White Lady is Anodos' artwork and his ideal created through his imagination. However, as for mentioning Orpheus, MacDonald, who has a profound knowledge of Greek mythology and religion, must have noticed his wife Eurydice, and therefore, this reference can demonstrate the inseparable relation between life and death in this scene. Sigman also points out that "as well as Pygmalion's statue, she is Eurydice" (31) for Anodos. About MacDonald's deep interest in Greek mythology and religion, see Soto.

28. Walker 330.

29. In *Lilith*, when Vane finds Lilith—in the Talmud this demonic woman is the first wife of Adam, dispossessed by Eve—dead-like near the river, he takes her to the cave and tenderly looks after her there. In this cave, the mysterious river flows: it is hot and has strange metallic taste, reminiscent of blood or amniotic fluid. Although the direct cause for Lilith's recovery is that she sucks Vane's blood nightly, we can say that this cave plays a role of womb that gives life because she returns from almost skeleton to a physically attractive lady (100-08). There are some common points between *Phantastes* and *Lilith*: the cave that contains water, the symbol of life, and male trying to give life to female (he attempts to restore her to life). Therefore it can be said that the cave in *Phantastes* also symbolizes the womb. Like our interpretation, Sigman regards the cave as the maternal body, mentioning that "[t]he cave, the vegetation, the well, and the rather sexual description of the cave entrance all suggest the mother archetype" (29-30).

30. We can see the close relation between water and life in many of MacDonald's works. For instance, in *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), Princess Irene feels bliss and comfort as if she returned to her mother's womb in the mysterious silver bath in the great-great grandmother's room, and after taking a bath, Irene's wound is completely cured, accompanied with the image of rebirth. In "The Golden Key" (1867), Tangle and Mossy have the similar experience of rebirth in their bathing scenes. Gaarden, who sees *Phantastes* as Bildungsroman, the story about Anodos' growth, and divides the story into four turns, states that "[e]ach turn is introduced by birth or rebirth imagery" ("George MacDonald's *Phantastes*" 291). Then, Gaarden points out that "[e]ach of these turns is introduced by water imagery: a torrential rain, a stream that grows into a river, the ocean" (292), underlining the close connection between water and life/growth.

31. Especially, see Michie 88-97 (Dead metaphor (cliché)), 97-102 (Synecdoche), and 102-23 (Metatrope).

32. *Lilith* 200.

33. For example, see *Phantastes* 69, 134-135.

34. *Lilith* 224-25.

35. For example, Gaarden, mentioning that the Wise Woman has both divine and human aspects, relates her to Christ, and asserts that she leads Anodos to his maturity. See "George MacDonald's *Phantastes*" 301-04.

36. *Phantastes* 151-52.

37. Oguro 9-19.

38. MacDonald states that "[l]icence is not what we claim when we assert the duty of the imagination to be that of following and finding out the work that God maketh. *Her* part is to understand God ere *she* attempts to utter man" ("The Imagination" 314, emphasis added), likening the imagination to woman.

39. Although Anodos' fairy grandmother does not clearly mention that she is his "maternal" ancestor, she may imply it by telling him that "you know something of your great-grandfathers a good deal further back than that; but you know very little about your great-grandmothers on either side" (5). Reaching his adulthood, Anodos inherits the paternal property as the official heir to his dead father's patrimony, and at the same time, he realizes that he has succeeded to the maternal fairy blood. Actually, an old woman living in the cottage with her daughter tells him that "[y]ou have fairy blood in you" (11) but "you may be further removed too from the fairy race" (12), and hearing her words, Anodos remembers what his fairy grandmother says about his grandmothers. Sigman also mentions that Anodos inherits the different kinds of property—lands and moneys from the paternal line and fairy blood from the maternal line—pointing out that "[o]ne important thing he does not know about his great-grandmothers is that they came from Fairy Land … Anodos takes an intense interest in this [matriarchal] inheritance, even though he does not yet know of its existence"

(24). Moreover, there is the close and strong relationship between women and the imagination that Fairy Land symbolizes, and we can see the gendered division—man / woman = reality and rationality / Fairy Land and imagination—clearly shown in a family of four living in the cottage in chapter VII. These things can reinforce our interpretation that Anodos' fairy grandmother is his maternal ancestor. As for this discussion, see Kumabe, "The Growth of the Maiden Who Has a Globe" 61.

40. *The Princess and the Goblin* also distinctly shows the gendered division: man / woman = reality and rationality / imagination. Princess Irene can build the close ties reminiscent of that of mother and daughter with her great-great-grandmother through the imagination, which plays an essential role throughout the story. In contrast to imaginative Irene, Curdie, a rational miner boy, refuses to believe her story about her great-great-grandmother, and he is even deaf and blind to the lady, whose lap the Princess sits upon, talking with and touching her (120-25).

41. As for écriture féminine, see Jones.

42. In *Lilith*, Vane reproduces what Adam reads, but his reproduction is "not what he read[s], only the impression it ma[kes] on me" (144). Moreover, Vane describes the poem about Lilith's origin and corporeality as follows: "The poem seemed in a language I had never before read, which yet I understood perfectly, although I could not write the words, or give their meaning save in poor approximation. These fragments, then, are the shapes which those he read have finally taken in passing again through my brain" (144). In *Phantastes*, Anodos also has trouble reproducing songs sung by female characters. It can be said that MacDonald gives females some super-language that can grasp the secrets of life, which partly shows his "advanced" view of women.

43. As for the further discussion, see Kumabe, "Being Born into the World through the Female Body as a Door in *At the Back of the North Wind*" and "Gynocentric Consideration on

the Female Body and the Relationship between Mother and Daughter in *Lilith*." The latter also argues that the book in which Lilith tells herself is related with the issue of how indescribable the female body is.

44. In "The Fantastic Imagination," the imagination is described as a woman and the intellect is seen as "her plodding brother" (315), and MacDonald clearly expresses this view in a family of four in *Phantastes*: man / woman = reality and intellect / Fairy Land and imagination. This can demonstrate that women have the close relation to the imagination and poetry (songs) created by it.

45. We should note that, although Anodos is "a primrose" now, the White Lady kisses him for herself, because traditionally, princesses just wait for the arrival of princes who kiss and save them. The prominent examples are Snow White and the Sleeping Beauty. Interestingly, MacDonald lets princesses kiss their male counterparts in his works. In "Little Daylight," after the Prince kisses Princess Daylight, who becomes a withered, old woman because of curse, from his sheer compassion, the Princess, turning into a beautiful lady again, says to him: "You kissed me when I was an old woman: there! I kiss you when I am a young princess" (*At the Back of the North Wind* 235). In *The Princess and the Goblin*, Princess Irene says to Curdie, a miner boy, who saves her and her nurse Lootie from malicious goblins, that "I'll give you a kiss when we get home" (31) in order to express her heartfelt thanks to him. Though her nurse prohibits Irene from kissing him, at last, with permission of her king-papa, she kisses him on the mouth (160). These girls can demonstrate that MacDonald has an "advanced" view of women and gender.

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