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# Magical Realism in Fantasy Literature with Special Reference to C.S. Lewis 'The Chronicles of Narnia

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**ABSTRACT:** This research is aimed to explain the aspects of fantasy in The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The objectives of this research are (1) to describe the characteristics of fantasy represented in Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, and (2) to describe the functions and kinds of fantasy in it. This research is a descriptive qualitative research using a content analysis technique. It places the researcher as the main instrument of the research. The secondary instruments are data cards and data sheets in the form of tables. The subject of this study is Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe published by Collier Books, Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York in 1970. The object of this study is all things taken from the novel in the form of words, phrases, clauses and sentences related to fantasy. To gain the credibility of the analysis, the writer uses the triangulation and discussion method. To gain the transferability of his analysis, the writer read and reread the novel comprehensively and then collected the data in the form of words, phrases, clauses and sentences related to fantasy in the novel as many as needed. The findings of the research show that the novel is included into fantasy literature based on its aspects. Those are the (1) characteristics, (2) functions and (3) kinds. The characteristics of fantasy found in the novel are (1) story, (2) common characters, (3) evocation of another world, (4) the use of magic and supernatural power, (5) a clear sense of good and evil, and (6) quests. The functions of fantasy found in the novel are (1) fantasy used to escape from reality, (2) fantasy used to create reality, and (3) fantasy used to reflect reality. The kinds of fantasy found in the novel are (1) high fantasy, (2) portal fantasy, and (3) heroic fantasy. To conclude, from the findings above, it is clear that this novel can be categorized into fantasy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**The Chronicles of Narnia:** The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is one of the novel series written by Clive Staples Lewis. It was first published in 1950 in UK. It was the first-published book of The Chronicles of Narnia and is the best known book of the series. This book tells about the story of four siblings who accidentally travel into a fantasy world called Narnia. They are children who become victims during the World War 2 and evacuated from London to escape from the air raid by Nazis. They are sent to the house of Professor Digory Kirk located in English countryside. In this house, they find the wardrobe which leads them into the fantasy world of Narnia. The adventure begins soon after they meet the magical creatures who live in Narnia.

Fantasy is a genre that uses magic and other supernatural phenomena as the primary element of plot, theme, and/or setting. Fantasy can be called as a creative imagination. It also can be something, such as an invention, that is a creation of the fancy. Actually, there are two ways to understand fantasy. First, adults can understand fantasy through children's everyday thought and behavior. Second, adults can underline fantasy found in fairy tales or other literary works, daydreams and other products of imagination. The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is a form of literary works which mainly presents fantasy. Since literary works play an important role in shaping and changing attitudes of the readers, therefore, this novel needs to be studied. The researcher is interested in studying fantasy in the book because of two reasons. First, Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe contains many fantastic things, such as its magic and marvels (1970: 20-22).

The magic wardrobe (1970: 5), the land of Narnia (1970: 10), the magical creatures such as the Faun (1970: 7-8), the talking animals such as the beaver (1970: 62), the White Witch (1970: 27-28), and Aslan (1970: 64), are some examples of the magical things in this book. Aslan is a talking beast, the great lion, the King, the Lord of the whole wood, the former ruler of Narnia, and the savior of the "Narnians" (magical creatures who live in the country of Narnia). All those things become the inspiration in analyzing other fantastic elements and things in this book deeply. The study about those elements is conducted, studied, and described completely. Second, fantasy as a part of literature has a strong association with human development. The world of fantasy and imagination is with human beings throughout their waking and sleeping lives. It does not only influence the way of life of human, but also is needed for its development. The literary fantasy is useful for adults as readers because it can fuel the ongoing process of reality

acceptance. It is also useful for adults as teachers because literary fantasy may extend the reassuring notion that reality can be sufficiently mastered to be passed down, as a cultural endowment, to the next generation, to the child reader. For children, literary fantasy and other forms of creative play are necessary to discover the self and to adjust to reality. Based on those two reasons and considerations, the study about the aspects of fantasy in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is conducted.

### Objectives of the Study

In relation with the formulation of the problem above, the objective of the study are as follows:

1. to describe the characteristics of fantasy represented in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; and
2. to describe the functions and kinds of fantasy in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

## II. DISCUSSION

### Fantasy used to Escape from Reality

Fantasy as the device for the readers to wander into another world created by the literary works has strong characteristics that can give pleasure and another different kind of experience. Fantasy as escapism leads the readers' imaginations flee from the world of reality. In the novel the researcher found so many aspects that lead to the function of fantasy as an "escapism".

And really it was a wonderful tea. There was a nice brown egg, lightly boiled, for each of them, and then sardines on toast, and then buttered toast, and then toast with honey, and then a sugar-topped cake. ... He told about the midnight dances and how the Nymphs who lived in the wells and the Dryads who lived in the trees came out to dance with the Fauns; about long hunting parties after the milk-white stag who could give you wishes if you caught him; about feasting and treasure-seeking with the wild Red Dwarfs in deep mines and caverns far beneath the forest floor;... jollification for weeks on end.... (Lewis, 1970: 13).

The quotation above reveals the imaginary world that gives a kind of pleasure. The main character who really enjoys her beings in the magical world seems so nice and good. The comfort feeling in the house of the faun who is really kind leads to another kind of pleasure. The way the story describes the great dinner that serves a wonderful tea, a nice brown lightly boiled egg, sardines on toast, buttered toast, and then toast with honey, and then a sugar-topped cake makes the readers feel so satisfied. The faun's story of the dancing in the middle of the night, the joy in the woods, and the feasts which make a jollification for the weeks on end leads the other satisfactory of the story which makes the reader taste the same feeling. The purpose of the story is to provide enchantments, satisfactions, and pleasant. This implies the function of the novel to give satisfaction for the readers.

Edmund felt much better as he began to sip the hot drink. It was something he had never tasted before, very sweet and foamy and creamy, and it warmed him right down to his toes (Lewis, 1970: 31). The experience achieved by Edmund can become something that pleases the readers.

The quotation tells about how Edmund accidentally comes into Narnia where the weather is really cold and then a cup of something steamed that he had never tasted before really satisfies him and makes him feels warm. The satisfaction felt by Edmund can become so real for the readers.

said the Queen presently. "What would you like best to eat?" "Turkish Delight, please, your Majesty," said Edmund. The Queen let another drop fall from her bottle on to the snow, and instantly there appeared a round box, tied with green silk ribbon, which, when opened, turned out to contain several pounds of the best Turkish Delight. Each piece was sweet and light to the very centre and Edmund had never tasted anything more delicious. He was quite warm now, and very comfortable. ... (Lewis, 1970: 31-32).

The satisfaction of Edmund continues as he requests the best meal of his favourite food that is Turkish Delight. Turkish Delight is a family of confections based on a gel of starch and sugar. Premium varieties consist largely of chopped dates, pistachios and hazelnuts or walnuts bound by the gel; the cheapest are mostly gel, generally flavoured with rosewater, mastic, or lemon. It feels so real that normally a very young child prefers something sweet like candies. Turkish Delight is considered to be sweet, soft, and very delicious. It becomes the only choice that can please and satisfy Edmund.

### Fantasy used to Reflect Reality

The function of fantasy as a reflection of reality is often found in the work of fantasy literature which uses the world of fantasy as the main theme. A reflection is a strange thing: it is the same, but opposite, and it cannot exist without the original; the original generates the reflection. It is clear enough that this novel uses the world of fantasy as the main



theme. The world of Narnia is clearly defined as the world which is identical with the real world but has the differences in the kind of creatures dwelled in it.

Next moment she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly. "Why, it is just like branches of trees!" exclaimed Lucy. ... .. A moment later she found that she was standing in the middle of a wood at night-time with snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air (Lewis, 1970: 6-7).

The quotation above tells about the appearance of the fantasy world, Narnia. It is described as the land of woods in winter season time. In the real world, the condition of winter season is the same. The falling snow and the cold air are some characteristics of winter season. The same condition of the winter season in the fantasy worlds is the reflection of winter season in the real world.

Lewis introduces readers to the land of imagination by showing them what kinds of creatures live in, how the creatures live, and what kinds of problems they encounter. The way Lewis gives an understandable story makes the readers experience reality more than imagination. The items described in findings show that the magical creatures have harmony of life as human creatures in the real world. The essence of all fantasy described in findings displays ordinary things happened in the real world which is told in a different way adapted in the magical world of Narnia. Therefore, when people especially children and young adult read the novel, the story of the book is automatically believable. The fact that Lewis is intended to write the book for children makes the book obviously suitable for children. It means that the book does not harm children. The readers know that fantasy in it is unreal, but they know that it is true seen from the context of the magical world. When they relate the things to the real world, then it will create satisfactions. That feeling of satisfaction makes this book enjoyable to read.

The evocation of another world is another characteristic of fantasy. It can enrich the experiences gained by the readers. Narnia as the magical world in the novel can make the readers find something new because the magical world appears to be different with the reader's real world. Indeed, the new experiences about the magical world can satisfy the readers. Another characteristic of fantasy is the use of magic and supernatural power. It is clear enough that magic and supernatural power is not something that the readers can possess in the real world. It means that the novel brings another kind of satisfaction toward the readers. A clear sense of good and evil described in the novel is very clear. This characteristic of fantasy can teach the readers, especially children, to define what is best between good and evil. The moral message of the novel mostly lies in this characteristic.

### III. CONCLUSION

According to the findings, the conclusion can be drawn. The writer of the thesis concludes that Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe is included into a work of fantasy literature. It is well-marked by its characteristics, functions, and kinds. 1. Characteristics The six types of characteristics which characterize the novel as a work of fantasy literature are story, common characters, evocation of another world, the use of magic and supernatural power, a clear sense of good and evil, and quests. The evidences found in the novel are clear. 2. Functions The functions that mark the novel as a work of fantasy are fantasy used to escape from reality, fantasy used to create reality, and fantasy used to reflect reality. The evidences found in the novel strengthen the functions of fantasy used in the novel. 3. Kinds The novel can be categorized into three kinds of fantasy out of fifteen kinds of fantasy. They are high fantasy, portal fantasy, and heroic fantasy

### IV. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher thinks that it is safe to read The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The book is not a threat. There is nothing to worry about the book. There is no danger in the book that can harm anyone. On the contrary, the book contains so many moral messages which are good for readers of any ages, including children. It is suggested to academic society particularly those who come from English Department majoring in literature to learn about this genre of literature. By studying it, the readers can explore the ability to reveal more important aspects towards the work of literature. It is suggested to other researchers to conduct different studies about other kinds of literature genres.

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