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MAGICAL GIRL IN KELLY BARNHILL'S *THE GIRL WHO DRANK THE MOON*

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Abstract

This article is the study of magical girl in the novel using magic theory and descriptive qualitative as the method. Through such a method, the researcher analyzes and describes the words and the author's description regarding magical girl in the novel; Luna's childhood that is full of magical life, the elements of fantasy portrayed in the novel, and comparison of Luna's magic to Xan's magic. The finding is that Luna as the main character learning magic from her foster parent, Xan, is really a magical girl since her magic is stronger than her teaching foster parent, Xan, the witch. Besides, the elements of fantasy shows magical situation in which Luna lives.

Keywords: fantasy, magic, and a magical child

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang anak yang mampu menyihir dengan menggunakan teori sihir dan metode deskripsi kualitatif. Melalui metode ini, peneliti menganalisa dan mendeskripsikan kata-kata dan uraian pengarang tentang gadis yang mampu menyihir di dalam novel; masa kanak-kanak Luna yang penuh dengan sihir, unsur-unsur fantasi dalam novel, dan perbandingan antara kemampuan sihir Luna dengan sihir Xan. Hasil yang didapatkan yaitu tokoh utama, Luna, yang telah belajar sihir lewat Xan, orang tua angkatnya, malah lebih kuat sihirnya



daripada sihir gurunya yaitu orang tua angkatnya, Xan, si penyihir. Di samping itu, unsur-unsur fantasi menunjukkan keadaan yang ada sihirnya, keadaan tempat tinggal Luna.

Kata kunci: fantasi, sihir and anak ajaib.

Introduction

Two things become characteristic of a good literature, that is, the reflection of real life and values. An author, through his literary work, pours a social problem. A social problem in which the author himself is involved because he is the member of the society. Therefore, a literary work and a society cannot be apart. On one hand, a literary work influences a society. On the other hand, a society influences a literary work. On the other words, the researcher dares say that a society and a literary work have a relation for each other. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren discuss the relationship between literature and society. They state that literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. They are convention and norm which could have arisen only in society. But, furthermore, literature represents life; and life is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary imitation. The poet himself is a member of society, possessed of a specific social status; he receives some degree of social recognition and reward; he addresses an audience, however hypothetical (1963:94).

In his Sociology of literature, Damono states that literature presents a picture of life which is a reality in society in that it involves relations among society, relation between society and personalities, relation among people, and among events in human's feeling (2009:01). Instead of the aforesaid delineation of the literature and real life, a good literature always talks of something valuable in that it gives us further understanding of life. It talks of something well-said. Little states that one quality of all good literature is that it says something worth saying. Good literature adds to our understanding of life in the world around us. It embodies thought and feeling on matters of human importance (1966:02).

Therefore, the researchers would like to discuss a literary work, in this case, a novel, which gives us further understanding of life through a fictitious character which the researchers strongly believe is a reflection of a life; for thousand years, man has lived hand in hand with magic. The story of holy people in holy books such as Torah, Bible and even Quran are against people with magic; Moses is against the Pharaoh's magician who defends the king to deny the God's revelation. The ability of the baby Jesus to speak to the Jews who accuse his mother of doing adultery has entitled Jesus a magical baby. Likewise, the denial

of the Quraish tribe of the God's revelation to Muhammad has entitled Muhammad the real magician (Al-Quran Indonesia, <http://quran-id.com>). The explanation of the close relationship between human being and magic as well as religion matches with what Bronislaw Malinowski's statement that states human beings, even though very primitive, cannot go away from religion and magic (Malinowski, 1948:01). Thus, through the philosophy of life of the religion and magic that are linked to human being, the researcher analyzes magic in this article, a magical girl to sacrifice but saved by a good witch.

Further, the novel belongs to Kelly Barnhill *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*. Kelly Barnhill has written such genre as children literature, fantasy and science fiction. This novel was awarded the (2017) *Newbery Medal*. The witch's boy received four starred review and was a finalist for the *Minnesota Book Awards*. Barnhill starts writing this novel on her own. The illustration of the book is made by her self. The most important of this novel tells about dead wizards and sorrow eaters and ruined castles and impertinent eleven-year-olds and swamp monsters who should know better. Praise for *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* from The New York Times Book Review "Impossible to put down... this novel is exciting and layered as classics like Peter Pan of The Wizard of Oz." From San Francisco Chronicle "Heart-stopping and heartrending.. Poetic turns of phrase, intriguing subplots and fast pacing yield a rich mix of suspense, surprise and social commentary, splendidly exploring 'memory, hope, love, and the weight of human emotion.'" From Minneapolis Star Tribune "*The Girl Who Drank the Moon* is a story of love, curiosity and the magic of everyday world... This is a novel about the journey, not the destination-one filled with wisdom and heart."

Further, sometimes, as a narrator, the author explains all knowing that happens in the story. The main character is Luna. She is not an ordinary person. She has characterizations such as the crescent moon on the child's forehead, an energetic child, a curious child and a naughty child. Here, the researcher uses the novel from the genre of children literature. Barnhill's *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* tells about the sadness to the people of Protectorate leaving a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest to keep her from terrorizing their town. The witch does not kill that baby but keeps that baby, saves the baby from bad people. The poor baby lives in the forest brought by the witch and shown to her family. The baby grows with magic because the witch feeds the baby with the moonlight every day. That baby becomes a magical child or a miracle baby. The moonlight is magic. The mother becomes the mad woman. There is magic in Luna's mother. Luna and her mother are separated in life. But with Luna's ability in imagination, she is able to meet her mother until she becomes teenager. The people of Protectorate and the Council of Elders have a wrong traditional event

such as the Day of Sacrifice. The child must be sacrificed to a witch but the witch is empathetic to all babies. Luna is happier than the society of Protectorate because there are sorrow eaters and dead wizard. The people of Protectorate are anxious of a wizard. They think that the wizard will destroy the town of Protectorate and as well as kill the youngest infant as a sacrifice. In this article, the researcher analyzes Luna's childhood that is full of magical life, the elements of fantasy portrayed in the novel, and compare Luna's magic to Xan's magic.

Theory

The theory is magical theory referring to the people's skills or extraordinary magic from nature or a special talent or a person's ability learning to knowledge of magic. According to Marcel Mauss in published "the anthropological classic: *A General Theory of Magic*" a study of magic throughout various culture. Mauss declared that

"... In order to be considered magical, a belief or act must be held by most people in a given society. In his view, magic is essentially traditional and social: WE held that sacred things, involved in sacrifice, did not constitute a system of propagated illusions, but were social, consequently real" (Mauss, 2001, P. 71)

Most people believe that the traditional or culture in society is from ancestor's knowledge of magic. Usually people's knowledge about magic comes from fairy tales, myths from ancient stories. A magic story tells a witch, a monster or an ordinary human being who learns magic by himself or from the genetic.

Fantasy refers to an imaginative form of the author. The literary works does not exist in the real worlds or only imagination of the author. The features of fantasy novel involve an imaginary setting, conflict, and magic world, good and bad characters, likely talking with animals, a problem and solution. Unlike science fiction which is generally set in the future, fantasy is generally set in the past. Example of fantasy novels like *Peter Pan or The Wizards of Oz*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hobbit*, *The Once and Future King*, *Susan Cooper's Dark*, and *Lloyd Alexander's chronicles of Prydain*, and *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*.

The Elements of fantasy such as setting, tone, characters, theme, ect. are divided into three main elements including a place, time, and society. Setting of place is about location or geographical condition in the novel such as state, region, community, neighborhood, building, Institution, or home. Setting of Time refers to the period of time, factual time, historical events (a year, the time of day, even the weather). Setting of Society is about the behavior of social life in certain place and certain time in the novel: habits, costumes, religion, ideology and the people's way of thinking. Tone or Mood is the author feeling recognized

in humor, joy, sad or happy, serious, optimism while mood is what the reader feels in the story.

Research Method

The researcher uses descriptive qualitative referring to the description of the textual and context meaning or interpretation in the novel (Creswell, 2009:22). DataSources are the novel itself. In Data Collection, the researcher collects the most important data for analysis. The researcher also analyzes the issue, takes notes, and concludes.

Finding and Discussion

Luna's childhood

1. The compassion of the witch

The witch is identified as a bad character in the stories though sometimes a witch is a hero in the story, The people of the Protectorate think that a witch always needs a youngest child to sacrifice every year. The Council of Easters has rules in a day of sacrifice. The day of sacrifice tells the people of Protectorate to leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in forest to keep her from terrorizing their town. They are wrong of course. Barnhill 2016 state in the quotation below:

“For as long as Xan could remember, every year at about the same time, a mother from the protectorate left her baby in the forest, presumably to die. Xan had no idea why. Nor did she judge. But she wasn't going to let the poor little thing perish, either. And so, every year, she traveled to that circle of sycamores and gathered the abandoned infant in her arms, carrying the child to the other side of the forest, to one of the Free Cities on the other side of the Road. These were happy places. And they loved children” (p. 19).

From the quotation above that Xan as a witch has a compassion on the baby. Xan as a witch thinks the mother's baby wants her child to die, so she is not going to let the poor little thing perish but she gives her a life, through travelling to the other side of the forest namely Free Cities in the circle of sycamores and carrying the child to meet with new families. The child is Luna. Xan cares as in the quotation “She reached up one hand and gathered starlight in fingers, like the silken threads of spiders's webs, and fed it to the child” (Barnhill, 2016, p. 20) that implies that the witch adopts the baby, milking her for her life.

2. A caring witch

Every mother gives breast milk to their baby. But on the contrary, this baby does not drink breast milk from her mother but from the rays of stars and moonlight fed from witch with her fingers using her magic. The following quotation verifies the explanation, "Starlight, collection takes a certain knack and talent (magic, for starters), but children eat it with gusto. They grow fat and sated and shining" (Barnhill, 2016, p. 20). Implying that since Luna becomes a baby and the Star children eaten starlight with gusto. They grow fat and sated and shining. The children she cares with her, their skin and eyes bright with starlight, are seen as a blessing.

3. Desire of the witches

Every witch knows about Starlight or Moonlight. Starlight and Moonlight, both are magical. It could be seen in the following quote "Starlight, as every witch knows, is a marvelous food for growing infant." (Barnhill, 2016, p. 20) From the quotation above, Xan as a witch or her grandmother knows the qualities of Starlight as a food for growing infant and a good for baby.

4. Bless of a baby

Starlight has magic, of course. All witches are well known. Moonlight is magic. It is enough to bless, but not to enmagic. Luna often eats starlight food and tastes its tummy, and in very enough quantities, starlight could raise the best in that baby's heart and soul and mind. It is enough to bless, but not to enmagic. Barnhill' 2016 states in the following quotation:

"There is enough magic in starlight to content a baby and fill its belly, and in large enough quantities, starlight can awaken the best in that baby's heart and soul and mind. It is enough to bless, but not to enmagic" (p. 25).

The quotation above implies that the witches often use magic to care for babies, fells happy infants to kind adolescent to gracious adults. Starlight bless the best in that baby's heart and soul and mind. It is enough to bless, but not to enmagic.

b. The Elements of fantasy

1. Setting

Setting of Place

The researcher finds the setting of place in the novel: in the woods, the Protectorate, and the Free Cities. As to the woods, the narrator tells about a witch living in the woods. "There is a witch in the woods. There has always been a witch. Will you stop your fidgeting for once? My stars! I have never seen such a fidgety child. (Barnhill, 2016, p. 1). For the quotation above the people have never seen a witch but a fidgety child heard that story any a witch in the woods. As to the protectorate, Barnhill, 2016 states that:

"Protectorate was called the Cattail Kingdom by some and the City of Sorrows by others. was sadwitched between a treacherous forest on one side and an enormous bog on the other. Most people in the Protectorate

drew their livelihoods from the Bog. There was a future, you understand, but it was better than nothing”(p. 4)

The quotation above implies that the setting of place in the Protectorate is called the Cattail Kingdom. Most people look for livelihood from the Bog. “For as long as Xan could remember, every year at about the same time, a mother from the Protectorate left her baby in the forest, presumably to die.” (Barnhill, 2016, p. 19). Every year Xan meets a child in the forest and she thinks that the mother leaves her baby in the forest wishing to die but it is wrong. No mothers want to go far away from their child. However, things happen in Protectorate that every mother is forced to sacrifice their baby.

As to the Free Cities, Xan as a witch undergoes a journey looking for a child, whose life depends on her arrival, in the forest, in whose journey Xan uses a combination of magic and common sense. Barnhill, 2016 states that:

“And, so every year, she traveled to that circle of sycamores and gathered the abandoned infant in her arms, carrying the child to other side of the forest, to one of the Free Cities on the other side of the Road. These were happy places. And they loved children” (p. 19).

From the quotation above, the researcher finds the compassion of the witch to a child. That Xan as a witch hold the child’s arms into her home is obvious. She wants the child to feel happy. Then, Xan as a witch carries the child across the country namely the Free Cities, a happy place, with the people in love of children.

Setting of Time

The researcher finds the setting of time in the novel, in the morning and in the night. In the morning, the Day of Sacrifice has come once a year, Grand Elder Gherland who plays a role in the Day of Sacrifice and does his best during the somber procession to be the cursed house. The following quotation verifies the explanation, “Grand Elder Gerland took his time that morning. The Day of Sacrifice only come once a year, after all, and he liked to look his best during the sober procession to the cursed and during the somber retreat.” (Barnhill, 2016, p. 3). The quotation above implies about how Grand Elder Gerland takes the procession of the Day of Sacrifice. He comes to a mother who does a sacrifice every year. They are sorrow. Barnhill, 2016 States that:

Xan was undeterred. “And then,” she pressed. “One night, Grandmama did not notice the the rising moon, hanging low and fat in the sky. And she reached up to gather starlight, and gave you moonlight by mistake. And this is how you became enmagicked, my darling. This is where your magic comes from. You drank deeply from the moon, and now the moon is full within you..” (p. 108)

The quotation above means how Xan as a witch gives the moonlight to Luna and how Luna becomes a magician. Besides, it implies that Luna's childhood's ability to drink the moonlight until now. She becomes a magical child.

Setting of Society

The setting of society describes what happens to the behavior of social life in a certain place such as habits, costumes, religion, ideology, and the way of thinking. It could be seen in the following quotation: "The Council, as Gherland had predicted, seemed more than happy to see Antain, and used his presence to raise their glasses to his celebrated craftsmanship and fine business sense, as well as his prodigious luck to have wedded the kindest and cleverest girl in the Protectorate" (Barnhill, 2016, p. 200) that implies that the Council Elder has a nephew that has been successful in craftsmanship business from which he can choose the kindest and cleverest girl to marry. Such is the way of thinking of people in certain society that gaining a certain girl to marry is determined by his material success.

2. Tone

Tone refers to happiness, grief and love. Barnhill 2016 states that:

Riding on Fyrian's back, Luna visited each one of the Free Cities in turn. While the residents were happy to see Luna, they were shocked not to see Xan, and at the news of her ill health, the Free Cities grieved as one. They were not sure about the dragon, but when they saw how gentle he was with the children, they relaxed a bit (p. 376-377).

The quotation above implies that the happiness is described by the visit of Luna to Free Cities through the view point of the people around, whilst, the grief is indicated by the absence of Xan, for Xan is a very wise witch who has helped children to survive. That the absence of Xan becomes the people's sorrow is indicated by the existence of other witches that are in contrast to Xan. The following quotation verifies the previous explanation:

Luna told them the story of a town that was under the control of a terrible Witch, who held them prisoner under a cloud of sorrow. She told them about the children. About the other Witch, who found the children in the forest and brought them to safety, not knowing what horrors had delivered them into this predicament in the first place (p. 377)

Whilst, tone referring to love is described by Luna's love to her family. "I was taken from my mother," Luna explained. "Like you, I was brought to a family who loved me and whom I love. I cannot stop loving that family and I don't want to. I can only allow my love to increase." She smiled. "I love the grandmother who raised me. I love the mother I lost. My love is

boundless. My heart is infinite. And my joy expands and expands. You'll see (p. 377)

The quotation above means that Luna is a girl who is lovely because her family and herself loves each other; Luna loves her family, whilst, her family loves her. This kind of relationship forms Luna's character that in other time she is empathetic to others who suffer from eruption.

3. Theme

Magic

The story tells about magic. Luna and Xanas well as Glerk as a mother of Bog use magic. Luna transforms all things by spell, gaze, and touching, whilst, Xan does spell after spell from Luna's magic. The following quotation proves the explanation: "as Luna went running to the swamp to gather the irises into her arms and drink in the scent. As Luna ran, each footstep blossomed with iridescent flowers" (Barnhill 2016, p. 62) that implies that Luna's magic is transformed by touching with her arms and her feet such Luna's each footstep blossomed with iridescent flowers. There is magic on her footstep.

Family and Love

Luna's family involves Xan as her grandmother, Adara as her mother. "Luna," she said. Your name will be Luna. And I will be your grandmother. And we will be a family" (p. 27). From the quotation above the researchers conclude how Xan carries Luna into her family. Luna is the baby abandoned in the forest and Xan take care of Luna with love. Xan names the baby Luna that automatically Xan becomes Luna's grandmother. "And, wrapping the baby securely in sling, Xan marched into the woods, whistling as she walked" (p.24) that implies that Xan loves the baby, well cared for like wrapped in a cloth, and she slings the baby and whistles melodiously.

That the family is in love with one another can be seen the quotation as follows, "She always gave the babies a kiss" (Barnhill, 2016, p. 24) implies that Luna's childhood is loved by a person who is not biologically hers, yet, Luna is kissed by Xan, her foster grandmother.

In years that follow, Luna gently squeezed her hand. "I love you, Grandmama." "I know, darling," Xan wheezed. I love." And she drifted away, loving everything" (Barnhill, 2016, p. 379).

c. Luna's and Xan's magic

1. Power of magic

Luna's magic and Xan's magic are quite different. On one hand, Luna's magic is dangerous as he magic is active like volcano eruption. "Magical children were dangerous. She certainly could not leave the child with just anyone. Infusing

magic into a child is akin to putting a sword in the hand of a toddler so much power and so little sense.” (Barnhill, 2016, p. 27). On the other hand, Xan’s magic is not dangerous because it is protected. Especially protected to Luna’s magic. She does spell after spell. She protects the world. The following quotation verifies the previous explanation, “Xan and Glerk were both mostly immune to the volatilities of magic (Xan because of her arts and Glerk because he was older than magic and didn’t truck with its foolishness) and had less to worry about but Fyrian was delicate” (p. 33-34).

In spite of being dangerous, Luna’s magic is uncontrolled. She can change table into water, “Each day, the magic became more unruly. Luna bumped tables with her elbows and accidentally transformed them to water. She transformed her bed clothes to swans while she slept (they made an awful mess). She made stone pop like bubbles. And once she one of Fyrian’s wings disappear in mid-flight, causing him to fall. Luna skipped away, utterly unaware of what she had done (p. 64) which unavoidably needs the existence of Xan to control everything magically done by Luna.

Conclusion

From the analysis above, the researcher comes to the conclusion that the title magical girl that is linked to Luna really strengthens the researcher’s assumption that Luna really possesses ‘magical power’; on the day that a baby is evacuated to the forest avoiding of the yearly sacrifice, Luna is saved by a wise witch. Through her magical power Luna lives a happy life with her mother after year of separation. Luna’s magical ability is better than her own teacher as well as her foster parent.

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