THE MYTHS IN THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA:
“THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE”
MOVIE BY ANDREW R. ADAMSON
(A Semiotic Approach)

ZEINAB MAHDANG
Princhess_Jane@yahoo.com
Gorontalo State University

Pembimbing I: Dr. H. Syarifuddin Achmad, M.Pd
Pembimbing II: Titien F. Mohammad, S.Pd, M. App. Ling

Abstract

The main problem of this research was how the myths reflected in the Chronicles of Narnia: “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe” Movie by Andrew R. Adamson. It is used Semiotic Approach to be able to explain things that do not appear on the surface, but beyond the text. Three elements of semiotic system (sign, signifier, and signified) is able to recover the hidden meanings of symbols. This research used descriptive qualitative analysis method. The aim of the research are to describe the myths that are reflected in the movie, and to find out the aspects of life of the movie. The result of research shows that the movie has many Christian messages, hate and myths. It also discovered that some of the characters, an object, and a place from different mythologies that can be interpreted as characters with very different levels of meaning, they are Aslan, Jadis (White Witch), Mr. Tumnus, Stone Table, and Narnia. The result also covers the aspects of life of the movie itself, such as political opinions, children’s education, social rules and proper behaviour. Based on the result of the research, the suggestions that could be references to the people who are related with this study, such as myths are really important to learn because they are existed in our environment, even in modern society myths always appear in our surroundings.

Key words: myths, semiotic in literature, aspects of life, Narnia’s movie.

Basic Consideration

A literary work is not separated from the social activities and culture. It means that the author does not suddenly present the elegant and mysterious thing in creating a literary work. Literature and the values of life are two things
complementary one each other in social phenomena. As an art form, the appearance of the values are derived from literature, and literature on other side will also contribute to the formation of values. This will be happened because every literary creation is made from sincerity, because it contains a strong attachment of human life, and the poet as a creator of literature is part of human life itself Suyitno (1986, p. 3).

One of the value aspects in society life is the notion of myth. The myth is considered as one element from the society and culture, that should be considered as part of recording the history from the culture. Myth is a communication system which delivers a message regard to the rules of the past, ideas or memories or the decisions that are believed Barthes 1981 (in Sunardi. 2002, p. 105).

Thus, the myth is not an object, concept, or idea, but it is a symbol in the form of discourse. The myth is not a real object, but it can be represented by objects. Therefore, the myth always comes in the form of symbolic Hasanudin (1998, p. 2).

In a semiotic perspective, the myth is considered as a semiotic system, namely the existence of signs, signifiers, and signified. In the mythical semiotic system can be decomposed into three elements: signifier, signified, and sign. To distinguish the terms have been used in the first level of semiotic systems (linguistic) Barthes (1981) used different terms for the three elements, namely, forms, concepts, and signification. The signifier, the signified and the sign have parallel concept to the signification. The distinction of the term as an effort to explain differences in the process of signification semiotic system of the first and second levels. Semiotic system is the first level of linguistic, semiotic system of the second level is the mythic system which has a unique Sunardi (2002, p. 104).

As a semiotic system of the second level, the myth took the first level of the semiotic system as its foundation. Thus, the myth is a kind of dual system consisting of the semiotic system of linguistic and semiotic systems. To generate the mythic system, the two semiotic systems take up the whole system of first degree mark and serve as a signifier (form). Sign is taken over by the second system into the form. The concept was created by the makers or users of myth. Sign the form is taken to be given another name, the meaning. Meaning emphasized that we know the only sign of its meaning. In the
understanding of myth, meaning standing on two feet, which is above the level of language (as sign), and on top of the mytic system (as form) Sunardi (2002, p. 105).

As a part of life’s values, of course myth is also can be ingredient in the birth of literary texts. The author often uses myth as the basis of his work creation. However, as the assumption of the relationship between reality and literature, the presence of myth in literature also goes beyond the creative process. The myth is presented through the understanding and interpretation.

Andrew R. Adamson’s movie the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is based on the novel/book which is written by C. S Lewis. The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is the first in a seven-book series entitled, “The Chronicles of Narnia”. This movie is rich with myth aspects in every its narration because it contains the element of Greek and Roman myths, as well as British and Irish fairy tales. The chronicles of Narnia will always be, first and foremost, a wonderful fantasy series for children. Based on such this facts, I would like to find out the myths in Adamson’s movie “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe”, because I need to know the aspect that support this movie not only from inside but also from outside or beyond this movie based on the first series of movie itself. So this research title becomes The Myths in The Chronicles of Narnia: “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe” Movie directed by Andrew R. Adamson.

**Literature Review**

*Definition of Myths*

Myth is a communication system that delivers the message with respect to the rules of the past, ideas, memories, or the decisions that are believed. Myth is not an object, concept, or idea, but it is a symbol in the form of discourse. The myth is not a real object, but it can be represented by objects. Therefore, the myth always comes in the form of symbolic. The symbol of the myth is not always written, but it may be a film, objects, or specific equipment, pictures and so forth Hasanudin (1998, p. 2).
Myth in Semiotic Perspective

The myth always comes in the form of symbolism, by Barthes 1981 (in Sunardi. 2002, p. 106) myth is considered as part of a semiotic system. In the mythical semiotic system can be decomposed into three elements: signifier, signified, and sign.

Myth in Literature

The use of myth in literature aims to address the current reality, namely the notion that people today believe that what is in truth what one considered a myth. Yet the myth of the world is basically not a question of right and wrong, or did not happen. World of myth is actually a suggestion to keep the social balance Hasanudin (1998, p. 4).

The Concept of Movie

Turner (1991, p. 128) states that “the movie is also a medium of communication, does not reflect or even record reality; as another representation of the movie medium only construct and bring back picture of reality through the codes, conventions, myths and ideology of cultural as a way to practice the special significance of the medium”.

Methodology Of Research

Research Method

This research used descriptive qualitative analysis method which is aimed to describe the data.

Research Approach

This research used semiotic approach. Semiotic approach was chosen because semiotic is considered to be able to explain things that do not appear on the surface, but beyond the text. Semiotic is able to recover the hidden meanings of symbols which are containing in The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe movie directed by Andrew R Adamson, so that the depth information about signifier, signified, and sign can largely determined and described.
Source of Data

a) Primary data source of the research is the movie itself; The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe movie directed by Andrew R Adamson.

b) Secondary data source take from other sources such as books, internet, and the other relevant information.

Technique of Collecting Data

The data collecting technique that used in this research were as follows:

a) watching the movie for several times.
b) reading the script of the movie
c) determining the character that is analyzed
d) classifying the data into several parts
e) summarizing based on the analyzed data

Technique of Analyzing Data

Adamson’s movie “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe” is adapted from the first of seven series of C. S Lewis’ children fantasy novel. This movie is produced and first released in 2005. In analyzing this movie, it used the insight of mythology aspect in literature review performed by interpreting the data obtained by further classifying data containing mythology facts that reflected in the movie.

In determining the myths, it used the semiotic concept by looking closely at the signifier, signified, and sign of each items which are probably containing myths. Besides, in supporting the data, the analysis is also focused to describe some of the aspect of life of the movie.

Findings and Discussions

The Myths Which are Reflected in The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe Movie by C. S Lewis

1. Characters

   a. Aslan is Great Lion which can talk. He interprets as symbol of Christ and he was the creator of Narnia world.

      Sign : Aslan
Signifier : The form of Aslan
Signified : Aslan is Great Lion which can talk. He interprets as symbol of Christ and he was the creator of Narnia world.

b. Jadis is a Witch that symbolized as the enemy in this movie. She is changed Narnia become world that always snow season.
Sign : Jadis
Signifier : The form of Jadis
Signified : Jadis is a white Witch that symbolized as evil. She has white face that gives notion of disease and nausea. Also the absence of blood in her face indicates death, infertility and cruelty

c. Mr. Tumnus is a faun, a mythical creature that half man and half goat.
Sign : Mr. Tumnus
Signifier : The form of Mr. Tumnus
Signified : A mythical creature that half man and half goat

2. Object
a. Stone table is a place for execute traitor, to sacrifice and the role of the “scapegoat” to bear the sins.
Sign : Stone Table
Signifier : The form of Stone Table
Signified : A place for execute traitor, to sacrifice and the role of the “scapegoat” to bear the sins.

3. Place
a. Narnia is the name of place that exist in the movie which talking animal and strange animal who live in.
Sign : Narnia
Signifier : The form of Narnia
Signified : Narnia is a land that inhabited talking animal and have two Different kingdoms, Aslan’s kingdom and Jadis (white witch kingdom) as enemy
The aspect of life lectures is shown in my interpretation of the several events in the movie such as:

- Political opinions: War between two different kingdom and the four sibling visited in Narnia represent the political system like in the British Imperialism.
- Children’s education: Keep telling the truth.
- Social rules and proper behaviour: Don’t trust and follow a stranger to their home.

**Conclusion And Suggestion**

*Conclusions*

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe movie surely is the reflection of the author’s self. The theme and the setting in this movie described how the condition at the time (5 years after the World War II). The adventure story of the characters in this movie (the four siblings) is described based on the author’s experience when the World War II still happened, where at the time children that lived in the town should moved and stayed with their family in other villages for save. Based on Lewis’ desire to created a new world (a fantasy world) for the children so they can lived freely as what they wanted, so this story is born and in 2005 the producer (Andrew R. Adamson) first published this story in a movie.

Andrew R. Adamson’s movie about Narnia has many Christian messages, hate and myths. The purpose of this research was to show that Adamson expresses more things than an ordinary fairy tale in his movie, The Chronicles of Narnia: “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe”. I have concentrated on a few characters and events in the movie where I consider he expresses myths and life value opinions. I have discovered that many of the characters from the different mythologies he was using can be interpreted as characters with very different levels of meaning. Aslan the lion for example can be interpreted as both good and evil in old folklore. He is also surrounded by characters like the fauns (half-goat and half-man) in Greek and Roman mythology, the leopards and the centaurs. The
evil characters also have very different levels of meaning, especially Jadis the
White Witch, ghouls and incubuses are described as half jinn and half giant. Jinns
are supernatural creatures and nature demons from Arabic folklore. Besides, the
other two items (Narnia and Stone table) also contained myths.

The last but not least, the fact that Adamson was expressing his opinions
through the value of life lectures is shown in my interpretation of the several
events in the movie. I have tried to show the moral issues he was trying to
express; for example, the significance of a proper education, never to accept
candy from strangers, and, most important, never to follow a stranger to their
home. This knowledge I believe is important and can never be told too many
times to a child.

Suggestions

1. Myth is related with culture and of course it has an important rule in the
making of literary works. Besides, it also be a main object of a language
because it is contained symbols and these are covered in semiotic field.

2. Myths are really important to learn because they are existed in our
environment, even in modern society myths always appear in our
surroundings. Our social life today always has related with the myths that
already existed in the past time as the history of our culture, tradition,
social, and way of life. Thus, through this research hopefully can open
people minds to think about the history and add they knowledges about
something that does not really can be seen in their eyes but the
existentions of always can we feel.

3. This research is not only contain the myths that reflected in the
Chronichles of Narnia: “The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe” movie
by Andrew R. Adamson but it also contains some aspect of life that can be
usefull for our daily life. It teachs us how to behave as the right person and
how to appreciate other people sacrifices to us, and so on, these points
hopefully can be usefull references for us in living in this world.