

**THE BEGINNING OF THE END: AN ECOCRITICISM ANALYSIS
ON CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS' *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LAST BATTLE***

(Awal sebuah Akhir: Sebuah Analisa Ekokritisisme Pada Novel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* Karya Clive Staples Lewis)

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Abstract

This article deals with environmental issues represented in C.S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, 1956. There are some environmental issues which are represented clearly in *The Last Battle*. There are three problems to discuss in this research. The first is about representation and treatment to the nature and the animals. The second is about natural disaster which make Narnian world destroyed. The last is about ideological position of the author. The research use Ecocriticism theory by Greg Garrard to analyze the problems. The result of this thesis proves that the author has certain purposes in writing his novel. Firstly, give representation about environmental damage caused by exploitation. Second, warns people using the representation of natural disaster if people does not care of the nature. Last, spreads the messages from holy Bible by narrated the apocalypse in Narnia that similar with the holy Bible describing about it.

Keyword: Ecocriticism, Environment, Exploitation, Animals, Apocalypse, Ideology.

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang masalah lingkungan yang digambarkan dalam novel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* karya C.S Lewis yang dipublikasikan pada tahun 1956. Terdapat beberapa masalah lingkungan yang digambarkan dengan jelas di dalam novel *The Last Battle*. Ada tiga masalah yang dibahas di dalam penelitian ini. Pertama tentang representasi dan perlakuan terhadap alam dan hewan-hewan. Kedua tentang bencana alam yang mengakibatkan kehancuran dunia Narnia. Terakhir tentang posisi dari ideologi pengarang. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Ekokritisisme oleh Greg Garrard untuk menganalisa masalah-masalah yang muncul. Hasil dari penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa pengarang memiliki tujuan-tujuan tertentu dalam menulis novelnya. Yang pertama memberikan gambaran tentang kerusakan lingkungan yang diakibatkan oleh eksploitasi. Kedua, untuk memperingatkan orang-orang melalui gambaran dari bencana alam jika orang-orang tidak menjaga alam. Terakhir, menyebarkan pesan-pesan dari kitab Injil dengan menceritakan kiamat di Narnia mirip dengan yang dideskripsikan di dalam Injil.

Kata kunci: Ekokritisisme, Lingkungan, Eksploitasi, Hewan, Kiamat, Ideologi.

INTRODUCTION

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle is last series of seven fantasy novels for children written by Clive Staples Lewis. In this novel, environmental issues become a major content. The story of *The Last Battle* begins with a donkey, Puzzle, and an old ape, Shift, sitting on the banks of Caldron Pool on the Western Edge of Narnia beyond Lantern Waste. They find a lion skin and use it to present Aslan. Shift manipulates all of Narnian with that fake Aslan to obey whatever his rules and orders. Shift give orders to Narnian to cutting down the forest and sell it to Calormen country. The Narnian forest is exploited by Calormenes, they also treat the animals badly. Now, the beautiful world is destroyed, the freedom animals become slaves. In the end of the story, Narnia is devastated by natural disaster.

I am interested in analyzing Clive Staples Lewis' novel because the series have incredible and unique things to read. This novel tells more about deforestation, animals exploitations, and apocalypse than the other series in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In *The Last Battle*, Lewis bring the story *The Chronicles of Narnia* to the end. The power of nature, apocalypse, makes beautiful Narnian world destroyed as a result of greediness and high rate of deforestation. That is why I consider Ecocriticism as a suitable theoretical perspective to analyze the novel, particularly to expose some critical environment issues.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The type of this research of this study is qualitative research and the data are in form of sentences or words. Library research is also conducted in this study. "The library research is a simple and effective strategy for finding information for your research paper and documenting the sources you find" Based on Cornell. It means that the data and other information are taken from books.

The data collection in this thesis is divided into two kinds: primary data and secondary data. The primary data are collected from statements and narration from the novel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* by Clive Staples Lewis. The secondary data are used to support the analysis in order to obtain in-depth analysis. They are collected from references such as the previous research of similar object like environmental issues that the other thesis discussed and other resources from Google search engine or other internet sources.

This thesis uses Ecocriticism theory by Greg Garrard. He concerns on ecocriticism, developed a multitude of courses on poetry, environmental writing, and critical animals studies. Garrard explores related concepts about ecocriticism, as follows: pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, and earth. Basically the foundation is that literature has a relationship with the environment. This relationship can be explained by seeing the relation between nature and culture, their relationship on both sides, mutualism symbiosis. Here, culture is literature. Through literature, nature is used as the complement of the story in such away that the nature become a contemplation for

writers to create a literary work. Whereas the nature can use literary work as its conservation tool.

RESULT

The bad treatments to the nature can cause big problems to the ecosystem, like apocalypse. It is shows in the end of the story about the destruction of the Narnian world. In this novel, the author also implicitly put a message to protect the nature and treats the animals properly. And the last result is the ideology of the author always influence toward his literary work.

DISCUSSION

In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Clive Staples Lewis, creates a wonderful world called Narnia. In Narnia the miracle things happen. You will find the trees and the animals can talk like human. Mythological and fantasy creatures such as Centaurs, Fauns, Dwarf, Giants, Naiads, Satyrs, Dryad and Hamadryads also live in Narnia. All of them live in peace and harmony between one creature and other creatures include human too. Narnia is depicted by Lewis as a happy land and joyful.

"whole centuries in which all Narnia was so happy that notable dances and feasts, or at most tournaments, were the only things that could be remembered (Lewis, 76)

The quotation above explains the condition in Narnia which is exciting since centuries ago. It is shown by the existence of party, dance and some tournaments. The peaceful and exiting condition of Narnia world is also indirectly supported by the natural condition of the environment; especially the forest. Narnia has an extremely wild forest. The forest which is still protected from generations to generations up to now by the the Narnians increases the quality of the air. This is similar with the statement from savatree.com, "Trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife." (<http://www.savatree.com/whytrees.html> 17/11/2015 21:09)

Why does the forest increase the quality of the air? The reason is that the trees have their natural process which is called photosynthesis and in that process they need carbon dioxide. Therefore, the trees will absorb the carbon dioxide from the environment around. The result of the process of photosynthesis is oxygen. It is what all the creatures need. So, by protecting the forest, the oxygen will always be sufficient for all the Narnians

At the time when the Narnians go to the country outside the Narnia called the Calormen, they feel a huge difference of the quality of the air between Narnia and Calormen as stated by Lewis (396), "Oh the sweet air of Narnia! An hour's life there is better than a thousand years in Calormen." The Narnians visit the Calormen and stay there

for a while in where they feel uncomfortable because they do not get the sweet air as mentioned in the quotation above. The sweet air represents the good quality of the air in Narnia.

Narnia has a nature with many various kinds of shapes. There are mountains with snow which are very high and the snow starts melting when the spring comes. There are many dense forests where some Narnians live in it. There are also wide rivers that always flow and they are usually used by the Narnian as the road of their transportation or their daily need for live. These rivers empty into the Narnian sea with the white-sanded beach.

“There a beautiful sight met their eyes. The sun was setting behind their backs. That meant that the whole country below them lay in the evening light - forest and hills and valleys and, winding away like a silver snake, the lower part of the great river. And beyond all this, miles away, was the sea, and beyond the sea the sky, full of clouds which were just turning rose colour with the reflection of the sunset (Lewis, 55).”

Based on the description above, this novel uses wilderness as the setting of place. Wilderness or wild land is a landscape which provides natural environment phenomena. Nature in this case is described as the landscape that has not been significantly modified by civilized human activity. The nature in here growing naturally as what Garrard stated in his book, “The idea of wilderness, signifying nature in a state uncontaminated by civilization (2004: 59).”

In *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, C.S. Lewis represents the wilderness start from the beginning of the story. The setting of the chapter one is a big pool under a waterfall on the very edge of the wild, to the west of Lantern Waste as told in the novel, “There were very few Talking Beasts or Men or Dwarfs, or people of any sort, in that part of the wood (Lewis, 1956: 3).”

Then the sense of wildness from the quotation above ascends with the portrayal about Caldron Pool.

“Caldron Pool is the big pool right under the cliffs at the western end of Narnia. The great waterfall pours down into it with a noise like everlasting thunder, and the River of Narnia flows out on the other side. The waterfall keeps the Pool always dancing and bubbling and churning round and round as if it were on the boil, and that of course is how it got its name of Caldron Pool (Lewis, 1956: 4).”

The quotation above shows that the natural condition of Caldron Pool is still protected because that place is rarely visited by the creatures of Narnia including the human. So, the Caldron Pool still shows its wilderness. The atmosphere of the wildness of this place is also strengthened by the sounds of the waterfall which has huge

flow and it creates the rumbling sound like the everlasting thunder. From the description above, it can be imagined how wild the Caldron Pool is.

The less the contamination is given by human to the nature, the less the damage will be got. So, the nature will grow naturally and minimize the potential of the future damages. Contamination in this research means human's bad association to the condition of the nature. The causes of the natural damage are mostly the bad association of human as stated in this statement, “There are two causes of environmental damage, the first is nature itself and the second is human being (<http://alamendah.org/2014/08/01/kerusakan-lingkungan-hidup-di-indonesia-dan-penyebabnya/> 18/11/2015 1:25).”

Animals in Narnian world are represented by Lewis as the same as animals in real world. Some kinds of the animals living in Narnia are horse, dog, rat, buffalo, otter, monkey, squirrel, hare (rabbit), porcupine, ape, and hog. Animals in Narnia can talk and communicate each other. These animals can communicate with the other creatures in Narnia including human.

“The Horse had lifted its head. Shasta stroked its smooth-as-satin nose and said, “I wish you could talk, old fellow” And then for a second he thought he was dreaming, for quite distinctly, though in a low voice, the Horse said, “But I can.”

Shasta stared into its great eyes and his own grew almost as big, with astonishment.

“How ever did you learn to talk?” he asked.

“Hush! Not so loud,” replied the Horse.

“Where I come from, nearly all the animals talk.”

“Wherever is that?” asked Shasta.

“Narnia,” answered the Horse (Lewis, 1956:396)”

Shasta knows that the horse can talk because the animals in his hometown can not talk. However, the horse in Narnia is very different from the horse in Shasta's place; the horse in Narnia can talk. The horses feels free in Narnia. There was no possession to the animals or even the animals where not pets as Lewis told when the horses communicate to human:

“We're free Narnians, Hwin and I, and I suppose, if you're running away to Narnia you want to be one too. In that case Hwin isn't your horse any longer. One might just as well say you're her human (Lewis, 407).”

However, not all animals in Narnia can talk. The animals are separated in two classes: the animals that can talk and those that can not talk. The animals that can talk have the higher level because they can think and used their logic as human being.

"Creatures, I give you yourselves," said the strong, happy voice of Aslan. "I give to you forever this land of Narnia. I give you the woods, the fruits, the rivers. I give you the stars and I give you myself. The Dumb Beasts whom I have not chosen are yours also. Treat them gently and cherish them but do not go back to their ways lest you cease to be Talking Beasts. For out of them you were taken and into them you can return. Do not so (Lewis : 53)

The animals that can talk have moral responsibility to the animals that can not. The higher-leveled animals might not hurt others and they have to live together peacefully and treat each other well. Aslan, also prohibits them to act like foolish animals because they have been given thoughts that can make them think which is true and not. If they act like the animals which are unable to talk, they will lose their ability and their status as the higher-leveled animals. This description emphasizes a higher responsibility of the smart animals. It is a mechanism created by Aslan to maintain natural balance as ideal construction in Narnian world.

There is a big lion named Aslan besides the animals that have been mentioned. Aslan also known as the Great Lion, is the true king and the creator of the world of Narnia. Aslan is a magnificent, large, talking lion, who is frightening but still has an authoritative bearing. He will appear in different sizes and it depends to the belief of the people to the existence of Aslan. Different people will see different sizes of Aslan although he never changes. Aslan very wise and powerful for goodness, but the Narnians often said that he was dangerous. Aslan is the true king of Narnia. All of its inhabitants have faith in him and obey him absolutely.

When we talk about nature, we also talk about culture because both of them; nature and culture have interactive processes. It is similar with what Garrard (2004:76) says, "Nature and culture are interactive processes: human culture is affected by the landscape as well as effecting change on it". It means that if a society use culture to treats the nature wisely, the nature will protect them.

One of the example of culture is worshipping. Worshipping is always connected with the belief. In the novel, the Narnians show how they worshiped the nature wisely. They keep the story about the myth in Narnia from generation to generation. It is also called with local wisdom. One of the believes of the Narnians is their belief to the existence of Aslan. The Narnian believed that Aslan is the creator of Narnia. They worshiped and considered Aslan as their God. "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters (Lewis, 543)

Aslan with his song awakened a world known as Narnia. Grass and trees suddenly appear from the ground. So do the animals. The animals appear magically then Aslan orders them to be lovingly creatures, able to use the logical

thoughts, and able to talk. They believed that Aslan has an incredible power and can do anything he wants.

The Narnians believed a myth that the forest where there was the Tree of Protection was the home of the evil spirits. This belief was believed for years it made the people who went near the forest feel scared. They was scared to be lost in the forest, eaten by the evil spirit, and the other fears. The Narnians called that forest 'Black Woods'. Black Woods is not just a forest it had a mythical history and enchantment it. It also provided the protection for Narnia and the Narnians. The forest is also sacred. It is a forest hallowed by Aslan himself for the purpose of protecting Narnia. "Ugh!" said Caspian with a shudder. "Do you mean in the Black Woods? Where all the - the - you know, the ghosts live? (Lewis, 1956:104)."

The deforestation represents the human authority to the nature. In this context, nature becomes the victims of the authority it is one of the examples of exploitation like what Collin (2004) says "the unfair use of something or treatment of someone for personal benefit."

The deforestation discussed also happened in the story of the novel:

"Woe, woe, woe!" called the voice.

"Woe for my brothers and sisters!

Woe for the holy trees! The woods are laid waste. The axe is loosed against us. We are being felled. Great trees are falling, falling, falling (Lewis, 1956: 16)."

"With the last "falling" the speaker came in sight. She was like a woman but so tall that her head was on a level with the Centaur's yet she was like a tree too. It is hard to explain if you have never seen a Dryad but quite unmistakable once you have—something different in the color, the voice, and the hair. King Tirian and the two Beasts knew at once that she was the nymph of a beech tree (Lewis, 1956:16)

The two quotations above show that holy trees in the deep forest were felled. The other big trees also became the victim of human's greed. Through Dryad, the Nymph of a beech tree, Lewis shows the emotion of the voiceless elements of creation that are suffered due to human's domination.

Dryad tried to express how the suffering of the trees were. "Justice, Lord King!" she cried. "Come to our aid. Protect your people. They are felling us in Lantern Waste. Forty great trunks of my brothers and sisters are already on the ground (Lewis, 1956: 17)." Dryad tries to ask justice to the king, this call for justice shows that there is something wrong involve in the cutting of these trees. It is not just an inconvenience, or unpleasant consequence. And the humans who do these things are morally guilty for their act.

Forty big trees were cut and it adds in amount of the forest damage. The king is angry because of hearing the news saying that there were people who were brave to kill

the Talking Trees. It makes the king trying to find out the reason and the doers. "What, Lady! Felling Lantern Waste? Murdering the talking trees?" cried the King, leaping to his feet and drawing his sword. "How dare they? And who dares it?—(Lewis, 1956: 17)."

In the middle of the journey king saw something in the river.

"It. is a raft," said King Tirian. And so it was. Half a dozen splendid tree-trunks, all newly cut and newly lopped of their branches, had been lashed together to make a raft, and were gliding swiftly down the river. On the front of the raft there was a water rat with a pole to steer it (Lewis, 1956:19)."

The quotation above shows that the amount of the cut trees increase so it can be used for making raft ridden by a water rat. It would bring the wooden raft to Calormen and sell it there.

Environmental problem appearing in Narnia not only happened to the nature, but it also happened to the animals. Animals has a role to make the nature balance. All creatures had connection and relation each other. So do the humans and the animals. In contrast, a lot of animals got a rude treatment from human being.

This novel also shows how the bad treatment to the animals happened many times, Garrard (2004:136) says "...that cruelty to animals was analogous to slavery". This condition also can be seen in the following moment:

"There was a great crowd of people at work, and a cracking of whips, and horses tugging and straining as they dragged at the logs. The first thing that struck the King and the Unicorn was that about half the people in the crowd were not Talking Beasts but Men. (C. S. Lewis 1956: 20)

The quotation above explains that the cracking of whips and the forced horses are the clear image of slavery based on the definition of the cruelty to animals. The horses were forced to pull the big cut woods with torture using whips. It is really in contrast with the concept of animals right which opposes the bad treatment to animals.

Ecocriticism focuses on the problems of animal rights because animals also have rights to get better things and condition. One of the most important animal rights is the prosperity of animals. The animals prosperity consists of everything related to the physical and mental condition of animals.

Nature has a very big power and nothing will be able to defeat it. In this chapter the power of nature which can destroy a world named Narnia is shown. The destruction in this research is called apocalypse "Apocalyptic literature takes the form of a revelation of the end of history (Thompson in Garrard, 2004:86)."

Apocalypse talk about the coming of the end of the day; the day the world will be destroyed. Since long time ago peoples had have been believing the end of the day

(apocalypse) as what Garrard (2004: 85) says in his book *Ecocriticism*: "For at least 3,000 years, a fluctuating proportion of the world's population has believed that the end of the world is imminent."

In ecological point of view, Apocalypse points to damage that occurred when environmental harmony is disturbed. This bad condition makes the environment imbalance and culminates to environmental destruction. The destructed environment can be depicted as the end of the world.

After the huge exploitation which was done by Shift and the Calormenes Narnia was a chaos and a war happened between Shift, Calormenes army, and the Narnians. Not long after that the real Aslan appeared. In the night of Aslan's appearance, he awakened Father Time. According to the fairy tale in Narnia, Father Time would wake up in the day the world End. "He went to the Door and they all followed him. He raised his head and roared, "Now it is time!" then louder, "Time!"; then so loud that it could have shaken the stars, "TIME." (Lewis, 1956: 130)."

The power of Aslan was shown again in the day the Narnian world will end. With his roar, he called Father Time that had taken a rest. Father Time was like a giant with a horn. The first jobs after he woke up was to blow the horn. After the horn sounded, suddenly the stars in the sky begin falling one by one.

"Immediately the sky became full of shooting stars. Even one shooting star is a fine thing to see; but these were dozens, and then scores, and then hundreds, till it was like silver rain: and it went on and on (Lewis 1956: 132)."

The quotation above shows that a terrible situation started haunting. Meteors and the falling of the stars can be a big disaster because they could destroy the earth with the power. The stars described in Narnia were not the burnt gas balls like in the real world they were like human with a long shining hair and bringing spear it appeared that the stars did not fall. They were called to come back to the creator, Aslan. Garrard says, "...just as natural disasters as a sign of the coming End." (2004: 88). Apocalypse can be seen with the coming of natural disaster. It can be flood, dryness, tsunami, earth quake, and volcanic explosion.

In the novel *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis tries to show an idea about the coming of industrialization to the Narnia world. The appearing of this industrialization is depicted with the existence of huge roads, big cities, schools and offices. These things were the beginning of the destruction in the Narnian forest.

"We'll be able, with the money you earn, to make Narnia a country worth living in. There'll be oranges and bananas pouring in—and roads and big cities and schools and offices and whips and muzzles and saddles and cages and

kennels and prisons—Oh, everything (Lewis, 1956:28).”

In the novel Lewis tells how the perception about the changes of live value begins from the attempt to exploit the environment. Lewis describes this change of live value through the moment when an ape named Shift tried to do its idea to get benefits by cutting trees and felling them. The felled of the trees one of the value changes that happened to the Narnians.

Narnia is a representation of a harmonious live where animals, humans, and plants live together peacefully. The live of Narnia is the ideal world in Lewis imagination. It also shows that Lewis is the one who cares to environmental issues.

Abreu argues that: “Lewis was one of the only people during this period to really address the topic of animal suffering....“Lewis is very rarely considered an animal welfare activist.”

Ideology of the author can influence his literary works. This can be seen through Lewis ideology about Christianity, conservatism, and his loving to environment which influence his literary works. In conclusion, the position of his ideology in his literary work is the foundation of his creative process.

CONCLUSION

The novel *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* tells about the destruction of Narnia world. It does not happen without any reason. Absolutely, there are some causes of the destruction. Most of the causes are the natural damage caused by the creatures living in Narnia.

This research focuses on environmental issues since most part of the story in the novel are about the broken environment. One of the environmental issues in this research is deforestation that makes the forest broken. The other is the bad treatment to the animals. Most environmental issues that is analyzed in this research is about exploitation.

This research shows that the representation of the creatures in the imaginative world like Narnia is not far different from the creatures in the real world. It can be seen through the explanation in the chapter discussion about the representation of the nature and the animals.

This research proves that the representation of the power of the nature in the fictitious story is similar with the power of the nature in the real world although the story in the novel is more dramatic and imaginative. By showing the dramatic effect of the power of the nature, it is hoped that it can be an alert for the readers that damaging natural environment can cause a very big effect of the life of the livings.

The last point that this research reveals that what C. S. Lewis has in mind really influences his literary works and the purpose of his literary works, especially the one entitled *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*, is to criticize the nowadays destructive environment and to show the message of the holy Bible. It has been answered in the chapter discussion, saying that the story in his novel really reflects

his ideology about the Christianity, conservatism, and his care to the nature. The critiques which he shows about the destruction of the nature can be seen through his story about the process of the end of the day in Narnia.

Lewis shows that damaging nature can give great destructing effects to the nature even the life. This moment is also the representation of the message of the holy Bible because the process of ending life in Narnia, called apocalypse in this research, is similar with what the holy Bible tells. It really shows that Lewis spreads the message of the Holy Bible through his literary work.

In conclusion, this research shows that environmental issues can not be ignored. The damages which are happened to the nature can cause big problems to the life as warns through showing the story of the novel about the destruction of the nature. The message to protect the nature and the creatures is showed by analyzing the story and the ideology of C. S. Lewis. Hopefully, this research is useful to remind everyone who reads this thesis to love and take care the nature and the creatures.

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