

HUMOR AND HORROR

IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

PROCEEDINGS

**The Third Conference on Language, Linguistics and Literature
(Colalite) 2017**

Java Heritage Hotel Purwokerto, August 19th, 2017



English Department Faculty of Humanities

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman



Publisher
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman
@2017

Proceedings COLALITE 3
HUMOR AND HORROR IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

© 2017 Universitas Jenderal Soedirman

Cetakan Pertama, Agustus 2017
Hak Cipta dilindungi Undang-undang
All Right Reserved

Editors:

Dr. Chusni Hadiati, M.Hum.
Mia Fitria Agustina, M.A.
Aidatul Chusna, M.A.
Dyah Raina Purwaningsih, M.Hum.
(Dosen FIB)

Diterbitkan oleh:

UNIVERSITAS JENDERAL SOEDIRMAN
Jalan Prof. Dr. H.R. Boenyamin 708 Purwokerto
Kode Pos 53122 Kotak Pos 115
Telepon 635292 (Hunting) 638337, 638795
Faksimile 631802
www.unsoed.ac.id

Dicetak oleh:

BPU Percetakan dan Penerbitan
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman
Telepon: (0281) 626070
Email: unsoedpress@yahoo.com

viii + 554 hal., 21 x 29 cm

ISBN : 978-602-1004-63-0

Dilarang mengutip dan memperbanyak tanpa izin tertulis dari penerbit, sebagian atau seluruhnya dalam bentuk apapun, baik cetak, photoprint, microfilm dan sebagainya.

Dancing and Collapsing: The Role of Performance in the Ghost Dance Religion Bayu Kristianto	239
Deconstruction on OVJ (Opera Van Java) to Improve the Humorous Effects in Opera Performance Dian Adiarti	257
Hikmat dalam Humor: Representasi Keluguan dalam Buku Renungan <i>Seri Selamat</i> Dina Novita Tuasuun	262
Ghost Tour Tourist Experience in Bandung Dini Rahmawati, Janianton Damanik, Dyah Mutiarin	277
Combat Exposure as the Cause of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Catharine Anderson's Comanche Moon Eni Nur Aeni	284
Gaya Humoris pada Puisi-Puisi Sapardi Djoko Damono Heri Isnaini, Aquarini Priyatna, Lina Meilinawati Rahayu, Muhammad Adji	292
Suanggi Ilmu Hitam dari Indonesia Timur, Sebuah Studi Folklor Ika Farihah Hentihu	300
The Fantastic of Excalibur in Sir Thomas Malory's <i>Le Morte d'Arthur</i> Imam Hendra Saputra	306
Love, Death and Laughter in the City of Different Angels: S.P. Somtow's Bangkok Gothic Katarzyna Ancuta	313
The Deconstruction of Joker in Movies: From Humor to Horror Lynda Susana Widya Ayu Fatmawaty, Tri Wahyu Setiawan Prasetyoningsih	328
Gagasan Universal pada Humor-humor Cerita Si Kabayan Memem Durachman	333
Parody in Characters of "Saturday Night Live's" Sketches Meria Zakiyah Alfishuma, Nestiani Hutami	344
Finding Horror Elements on Five Stories in <i>Horror in Paradise</i> Mia Fitria Agustina, Lia Agustina Untari	357
The Metamorphic Theory and Its Application to the Future Aesthetic Experience in the Cultural Humor Performance Art Moses Glorino Rumambopandin	367
Okultisme Seni Turonggo Yakso sebagai sebuah Tradisi Dan Mitos Nenin Al Alaz, Suryo Ediyono	377

THE FANTASTIC OF EXCALIBUR IN SIR THOMAS MALORY'S *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR*

Imam Hendra Saputra

English Department

STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin

Banjarmasin, Indonesia

imam.hendra.s@dosen.stkipbjm.ac.id

Abstract

The most prominent mystical power that becomes the signature of the legend is undoubtedly the charismatic weapon of Excalibur. Especially in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the mythology of the sword is perfected into one coherent entity, that the mysterious origin is more comprehensible than the previous. Hence, it is very intriguing to understand how the discourse articulates the fantastic element that built the sword narratively.

In carrying the research, the first step is to gather accurate and sufficient data from the text, in which the text is Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. To gain the accurate data, the text is read carefully by using close reading. After that, the text is carefully chosen in accordance to the objective of the research, which is how the discourse articulates the fantastic element that build the image of Excalibur in Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*.

The definition of the Excalibur is brought to the reader by using a poetical and in preserving the mystery manner. Despite Excalibur is basically an inanimate which hardly classified as a character, the sword is depicted to be having the traits that determine the conclusion of the Arthurian saga, hence similar to character, it is having real impact on the progression of the story. The ability is driven by the mysterious power which is depicted through a non-detailed and non-holistic image of the epistemology or ontology along with the fantastical elements.

Keywords – Arthur, Excalibur, Discourse, Sir Thomas Mallory, *Le Morte d'Arthur*, Fantastic

Introduction

One of the powerful element that enforce the Arthurian legend so it can withstand through the ages since Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanae* is fantastic element of the myth and the supernatural that imbued within the story. The most prominent mystical power that become the signature of the legend is undoubtedly the charismatic weapon of Excalibur. With the power of Excalibur, Arthur is able to lead his knight and unite England under the Kingdom of Camelot. Especially in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* which was originally written in 1485 AD, the mythology of the sword is perfected into one coherent entity, that the mysterious origin is more comprehensible than the previous. With the influence of Medieval style, the Malory's Excalibur is depicted in peculiar style that although the origin is somewhat clear, but still keep the lingering shroud of mystery that make the sword to be more interesting.

The sword established its independent legend and manages to even break out of the boundary of the Arthurian Saga. The sword has been used many times in the modern fictions even those which is not originated from English spoken country, such as in Japanese manga of "One Piece" by the name of *Ekusukaribā* (エクスカリバー) according to Japanese spelling. Other reference can be found in American comic as in Marvel's, in which a group of superheroes are assembled, entitled Excalibur. Although the name Excalibur may then be translated loosely to become

something that is not necessarily an authentic sword in form, but the power coruscates out of the sword and becomes the symbol of a powerful force. The recently big budgeted big screen, “King Arthur: Legend of the Sword” movie even directly used the sword as the reference in its title.

The sword powerful force is of course not something that unfamiliar to most people, yet the tapestry that create such narrative, in which the sword even competes if it does not surpass the parent saga of Arthurian. In the discourse level, the tapestry of chosen narrative for the Excalibur is something that may be easily overlooked, especially when one’s focus is on the character of Arthur as the main protagonist of the sword. While it is worth to notice that the very creation of the character of Arthur is firmly related with the Excalibur, especially because Arthur journey until his death is bounded to the sword. Hence, it is very intriguing to understand how the discourse articulates the fantastic element that built the sword narratively.

Methodology

In carrying the research, the first step is to gather accurate and sufficient data from the text, in which the text is Sir Thomas Mallory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*. To gain the accurate data, the text is read carefully by using close reading. After that, the text is carefully chosen in accordance to the objective of the research, which is how the discourse articulates the fantastic element that build the image of Excalibur in Sir Thomas Mallory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*. The indirect textual references to the sword are considered to be the important supplementary data to the primary data while the other source coming from outside the text are considered to be secondary data for the analyzes.

Later, the already collected data are organized systematically and chronologically according to the plot of the saga. The data are then grouped and arranged, given label, so they can be analyzed further on the next phase.

After the data is fully organized, each of the data is later analyzed individually. The analyzes is in the syntactic, semantic and semiotic level. The purpose of the analyzes is to scrutinize each data so it can be understood clearly, either its possible surface meaning, deep meaning and its symbolic meaning.

The next step is mapping each data into a coherence understandable unity. Subsequently, the relation of the data is analyzed further by giving semiotics interpretation whether for each relation and for the total relation related to the Excalibur. he purpose is see the holistic relation of the data and the total building of the narrative.

The final stage is drawing conclusion from the already analyzed data. The already completed raw analyzes is analyzes further to get to the final conclusion which is in accordance to the question of the research, which is how the discourse articulates the fantastic element that build the image of Excalibur in Sir Thomas Mallory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*.

Finding and Discussion

Pentecostal Oath

The Pentecostal Oath is an important fulcrum point for the creation of the journey of Arthurian saga beside the appearance of Merlin, Lady of the Lake, Sword in the Stone, and of course

Excalibur. With this oath, the Arthurian saga become significantly more complete, by setting the basis for the chivalrous value of the roundtable knights. In relation to the current discussion, the oath set the moral value with which is become the purpose of the sword to be held high and keep it protected.

The setting of moral value can be seen in explicitly in the oath:

“The king stablished all his knights, and gave them that were of lands not rich, he gave them lands, and charged them never to do outrageousness nor murder, and always to flee treason; also, by no mean to be cruel, but to give mercy unto him that asketh mercy, upon pain of forfeiture of their worship and lordship of King Arthur for evermore; and always to do ladies, damosels, and gentlewomen succor upon pain of death. Also, that no man take no battles in a wrongful quarrel for no law, ne for no world’s goods. Unto this were all the knights sworn of the Table Round, both old and young. And every year were they sworn at the high feast of Pentecost.”

(Sir Thomas Malory, 2009)

As we can see above, the Pentecostal Oath establishes the backbone structure for the value of Chivalry, as I said in my previous journal “Sir Thomas Mallory put his ideas of chivalry by combining three elements into the oath: (1) the moral posture of the knight, (2) the compassion value, (3) the bravery that marked the military attribute of the knight.” (Saputra & Makhtuna, 2017). These values are something that enforced by the presence of Excalibur, to be protected and preserved. To preserve the values within the oath, Excalibur is needed to be more than merely ordinary weapon – moreover it is the weapon of a great king – by being imbued by super power such as slaying an army with powerful beam.

While the Pentecostal Oath is the ideology that act as the mental scaffolding for the Arthurian saga, Excalibur is the physical embodiment of the idea. Acting as a scaffolding, the oath is also a political cohesive for the structure of the Arthurian political party of roundtable by providing the unitary vision, thus the alliance is possible to be forged. The oath, as it is agreed and upheld by a league of strong knight, gives the moral ground for the Arthurian knights to act on the deed of enforcing the chivalrous values with such guarantee that the act will not be acted alone, instead is supported by other knights in the alliance. Meanwhile, Excalibur is the actual weapon that give crucial and practical support in Arthurian campaign and furthermore, it transcends into a powerful symbol of guarantee similar to the oath, that the campaign is supported by powerful and loyal force. Together they become a complete ideological force, politically and militarily, morally and physically, which ensure the preservation of the Arthurian ideology.

Metaphysically speaking, in relation to mystical value of the two entities, the Pentecostal Oath can be perceived as a sacred oath within a sacrament with which creates a magical contract between the Roundtable Knights and the Arthurian spirit. This kind of contract is somewhat, in slightly different manner similar to the encryption on the stone where the Sword in the Stone is – magically – embedded. Of course, the Oath has no obvious magical immediate effect in the realm, but when the purpose of the Oath is to be juxtaposed with Excalibur, the two may be something that enhance each other. Hence, the Oath is software that function as scaffolding that form the realm in which the Excalibur is possible to exist.

Sword in the Stone

One may interpret the Sword in the Stone as a weapon that is actually similar with Excalibur, yet the fact within the text dictates that after the sword is broken (Dougherty, 2017). Arthur will soon get a replacement sword named Excalibur from the Lady of the Lake. The role of the sword is also different as I said in my previous study. While the Sword in the Stone is merely for the purpose of establishing the prophecy of Arthur becoming the king of England as the encryption on the anvil “Whoso pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvil is rightwise king born of all England” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009), Excalibur hold far more important role, since the sword also eventually accompanies Arthur in his death. Still, the Sword of the Stone is pivotal in defining the early fate of Arthur. The inscription gives solid promise without hesitation that the future King is someone who can pull the sword from the stone, and of course Arthur is the one as it is promised. The other thing that is worthy to be noted is the manner of which the stone appears, as it “there was seen in the churchyard against the high altar a great stone four square” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009), while the epistemology of the appearance is kept in the dark as the stone just somehow marvelously appears in the churchyard, “the people marveled”. Upon presenting the magical appearance of the Sword in the Stone, the narrator interpret the event as something that is strange but actual.

Further discussion upon the existence of the Sword in the Stone will not be carried since the focus of analysis is the articulation of the narrative on Excalibur. The mentioning of the Sword in the Stone however, is a must, since the sword has a close relation to the following appearance of Excalibur. In comparison to Excalibur, the Sword in the Stone appears in similar mystical atmosphere as Excalibur. The Sword of the Stone appearing in the realm is heavily related to the predestined fate of Arthur Pendragons as “the one true king”.

Related Characters

Arthur is of course the main protagonist character of the story, who is the legitimate bearer of Excalibur. Thus, it makes Arthur – if we consider that most of the actions in the saga are involving Arthur as the bearer of the sword – as an inseparable individual when talking about Excalibur. Nevertheless, the tapestry that define the very existence of the sword is actually forged by so many character outside Arthur. Arthur – despite the fact that he is the one that destined as the one to be the sword until the end – alone is not the source of the creation of the sword, instead he is merely the bearer of the sword. Of course, as the bearer, “merely” is probably a form of euphemism on the character, but the sword as a magical item started before the appearance of Arthur.

The original creation of the sword was shrouded in mystery as much as the bestowal of the sword to Arthur. The sword was created by Avalon elf and in which later is held by the Lady of the Lake. The elf as mythical being character as the forger of the sword brings the magical attribute to the sword. The choice of elf ensures that the sword has initial magical prowess within. The elf himself is not having much involvement during the saga, except that he is in Avalon and involve in the creation of the sword.

Before Arthur received Excalibur from the mysterious hand coming out of the lake, the young Arthur was the one that managed to pull the Sword in the Stone. The intertwine between the sword and Arthur would not be happening without the medium of the sorcerer Merlin, who heavily involves in the fate of the saga. The revelation of the omen of “Whoso pulleth out this

sword of this stone and anvil is rightwise king born of all England.” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009) is a predestination perceived by Merlin, which is one of the pivotal moment within the saga. The second important plot that involve Merlin and the bestowal of magical sword to Arthur is when Merlin guide Arthur to get the Excalibur after the Sword in the Stone is broken in the fight with Pellinor. The intimate relation between the bestowal of the magical swords to Arthur and the powerful sorcerer Merlin suggests that either the magic always be the integral part of the revelation of the sword, and that as a magical object; the magical predicate of the sword is inevitable, the sword as form of weapon is also the host that soon to be exploding magic that will conjure the magical kingdom of Camelot.

Other character that heavily mystically bound with the Excalibur is Lady of the Lake. The identity of Lady of the Lake herself is somewhat confusing since there are two character that may fit into the Lady of the Lake slot; one is known as Nimue other is Nynveve. Despite the ambiguity of the identity, the Lady of the Lakes do have the magical attribute which radiate into the sword by mystically bring the mysterious sword in the mysterious manner to Arthur.

These characters, mostly articulated directly among the characters themselves. When Merlin is showing Arthur the way to find his new sword, his prophecy “hereby is a sword that shall be yours” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009) is strong and firm, with the “hereby” he confirms that he knows for sure that Arthur will find the replacement sword at the place he promised. The same manner also occurs when the Lady of the Lake appears upon the lake, the overt narrator explains that “With that they saw a damsel going upon the lake” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009), this sentence may not be special, but when it is crosschecked with the magical apparition of the sword held in hand in the middle of the lake, with the help of the device of presupposition (Chatman, 1978), the reader can presuppose that the narrator overtly articulate that the Lady of the Lake has certain relation – magically – to the whimsical state of the sword.

Excalibur and Battles

After the battle with Pellinor which break the Sword in the Stone in two, the subsequent Arthur involvement in battle is always with Excalibur by his side. Excalibur becomes not only the weapon, but also the protector for not only Arthur himself but the Arthurian ideals. With its magical prowess, the sword provide the superhero attribute to the bearer who in this case is the already exceptional fighter King Arthur.

During the battle with Accolon, the oblivios Arthur does not know that he brings the fake sword, while Accolon fight him with the genuine one. As the result, the fake “Arthur’s sword brast at the cross, and fell in the grass among the blood” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009). Here, the role of the sword is significant, hence the fate of a great warrior is going south without it. If it is not because of the intervention of the Lady of the Lake, the condition may go further awry. The intervention itself is magical by nature, since “...that by the damsel’s enchantment the sword Excalibur fell out of Accolon’s hand to the earth” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009). The power

The Lake

The lake has always been the special place for Excalibur, disregarding the Sword in the Stone as the possible equal interpretation of Excalibur. Within the saga, the lake becomes the sacred place for the connection between Excalibur and King Arthur. The lake, with the guidance of Merlin is the place of the bestowal of the Excalibur to the King, where it in magical manner

protruded in the mid of the lake in “an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in that hand” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009).

When King Arthur is dying after he was fatally wounded by Mordred in the Battle of Camlann, the lake is once again become the realm where Excalibur gone. The manner in which the sword disappear is similar to the first when the sword is bestowed to King Arthur. Disregarding the fact that it needs three attempt to throw Excalibur since the hesitance of Sir Bedivere to cast it away, which later “there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water” (Sir Thomas Malory, 2009).

Conclusions

The definition of the Excalibur is brought to the reader by using a poetical and in preserving the mystery manner. Despite Excalibur is basically an inanimate which hardly classified as a character, the sword is depicted to be having the traits that determine the conclusion of the Arthurian saga, hence similar to character, it is having real impact on the progression of the story. The characters behind the appearance of Excalibur and also other magical existences, to be specifically Excalibur are depicted as magical being with magical power, whether in form of prophecy or a supernatural act such as telekinetically throw down a weapon from somebody's hand. The ability is driven by presupposition of the mysterious power which is depicted overtly through non-detailed and non-holistic epistemology and/or ontology of the existences along with the fantastical elements.

Bibliography

- Chatman, Seymour (1978). *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Dougherty, Martin J. (2017). *Raja Arthur dan Kesatria Meja Bundar: Kisah-kisah tentang Camelot dan Misi Pencarian Cawan Suci (Trans: Yulius Ervan)*. Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo.
- Malory, Thomas, Sir. "Le Morte Darthur Sir Thomas Malory's Book of King Arthur and His Noble Knights of the Round Table." Thomas Malory. Ed. Edward Strachey. Project Gutenberg, 14 Sept. 2014. Web. 18 June 2017.
- Saputra, Imam Hendra, and Wulida Makhtuna. "Medieval Chivalry Ideals Manifested in Excalibur of Arthurian Mythology in Sir Thomas Malory's "Le Morte D'Arthur"." Ed. Ninuk Krismanti. *Integrating Local Wisdom in English Language Teaching: A View from Applied Linguistics (2017): 113-24*. Integrating Local Wisdom in English Language Teaching: A View from Applied Linguistics. Eng Dept STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin, 26 June 2017. Web. 26 June 2017. <<http://english.stkipbjm.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Imam-Hendra-Saputra-Wulida-Makhtuna.pdf>>.