

**MOLLY ASTER'S JOURNEY AS A HEROINE IN DAVE BARRY AND
RIDLEY PEARSON'S PETER AND THE STARCATCHERS: AN
ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM**

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas peranan tokoh Molly Aster dalam novel Peter and the Starcatchers yang penulis yakini memiliki karakteristik sebagai seorang pahlawan, sebagaimana tokoh Peter Pan yang selama ini dikenal sebagai pahlawan tunggal dalam novel tersebut. Dengan mengaplikasikan metode kualitatif dan teori Perjalanan Kepahlawanan yang dikembangkan oleh Joseph Campbell dalam bukunya The Hero With the Thousand Faces, penulis menemukan bahwa Molly Aster layak disebut sebagai seorang pahlawan perempuan dalam novel ini karena ia melalui hampir semua tahapan yang dikemukakan Campbell untuk menjadi seorang pahlawan. Hasil ini menjadi sangat penting karena novel ini, yang merupakan fiksi anak, akan mampu mendorong pembaca muda, terutama perempuan untuk memiliki karakteristik kepahlawanan seperti seorang Molly Aster.

Kata kunci: teori arketip, perjalanan pahlawan, pahlawan perempuan

ABSTRACT

This research discusses about the role of Molly Aster as a character in the novel Peter and the Starcatchers which is believed to have the characteristics of a heroine, just like Peter Pan, who has been acknowledged as a single hero in the novel. Applying the theory of Hero's Journey that was developed by Joseph Campbell in his book The

Hero With the Thousand Faces, the writer finds that Molly Aster is worth mentioned as a heroine in the novel because she undergo almost all of the the stages to become a hero as proposed by Campbell. The result of this research is very important because this novel, which is children fiction, will be able to encourage the young readers, especially girls, to have the characteristics of heroism like Molly Aster.

Keyword: *archetypal theory, hero's journey, heroine*

1. Introduction

Peter and the Starcatchers is a novel by Dave Barrie and Ridley Pearson, which tells about a young boy who has a never ending childhood and has the ability to fly. He undergoes a lot of adventures along with his friends, including with a girl named Molly Aster. This novel is inspired by J. M. Barrie's novel Peter and Wendy. The two novels present Peter as the main character and as a heroic character who always helps his friends in facing challenges and obstacles.

Like Peter in Peter and Wendy who is always accompanied by Wendy, Peter in Peter and the Starcatchers also has a friend who always accompanies him, Molly Aster. Molly is a young girl who lives with her parents, Mr. Leonard Aster and Mrs. Louise Aster, in a big house in London. She comes with her father to different boats called Never Land and Wasp in order to deliver a powerful thing from the Queen of England to the King of Rundoon. She meets Peter in Never Land and becomes Peter's companion. She is the key issue of the story because she makes Peter be in the adventures and she introduces Peter to the starstuff which makes Peter curious about that magical thing. However, the writer assumes that Molly in this novel is not only appears as Peter's companion along the adventures, because the writer finds that Molly has her own pattern that may make her becomes another heroic character in this novel. The author seems to encourage girls to become heroines and to have bravery in facing obstacles that may make them strong. The author agrees with the statement which says that girl must not accept the doctrine from the society that

patronized girl as weak being. By analyzing Molly's journey, it can be proven that such doctrine is incorrect.

2. The Background of The Research

The writer believes that Molly Aster is not just an additional character, and instead, she has a very important role in the story. The writer assumes that she has been chosen by Barrie and Pearson to become a heroine of the story. In this research, the writer focuses the analysis on explaining Molly's adventure and classifying it into the three stages of Campbell's Hero Pattern and put her apart from the image of Peter as the hero. The writer conducts library research to collect all data and information that can support this analysis. The primary data is the novel entitled Peter and the Starcatchers written by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, while the secondary data are any supporting information from books and articles which is related to the topic.

This research is qualitative. As Bogdan and Biklen state in their book Qualitative Education and Introduction to the Theory and Method, "Qualitative research is descriptive. The data are collected in the form of words and pictures rather than numbers. The results of research contain quotation from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation" (28). Thus the data are collected by applying library research approach and the result of analysis is presented descriptively.

3. The Review of Related Studies

The writer has found some researches about the same novel and those which apply archetypal theory. The first research is by Chici Chairul (2010), a student of Andalas University, Padang. Her thesis, which is entitled "Persona, Anima and Shadow of Archetypes in J.M Barrie's Peter and Wendy", analyzes the three characters in the novel: Peter as the persona, Wendy Moira Angela Darling as the anima and Captain Hook as the Shadow. Based on her analysis, she concludes that

Archetypal criticism by Carl Jung helps the readers to analyze and interpret the meaning of the story to comprehend the story. In addition, the theory of Hero's journey by Joseph Campbell is evidently found in the novel Peter and Wendy by J. M. Barrie.

The next research is published in The New York Times as an article, written by Michael Gorra (2004), a chairman of English Department in Smith College. According to Gorra in his article entitled "Peter and the Starcatchers: Next Stop, Neverland", all the details in Peter and the Starcatchers are so clear. He states that because Peter and the Starcatchers provides detail description, for example in the case of why the magical things happen.

The third a research is a thesis from English Department student of Andalas University named Ryka Hayyu Y. (2008). In her thesis which is entitled as "The Hero's journey in Charles Dickens Oliver Twist", she applies the theory of Hero Pattern proposed by Joseph Campbell and proves that the character Oliver Twist has passed the three steps of hero's pattern, which are: departure, initiation and return.

Compared to those studies mentioned above, this study that the writer conducts is different. Unlike them, this research is an attempt to bring another hero to the long known hero of the novel; to bring Molly to become as important as Peter.

4. Molly Aster's Journey as a Heroine in Barry and Pearson's Peter and the Starcatchers: An Archetypal Criticism

In the following discussion the writer presents Molly Aster's adventures in the novel, which are classified into the three phases of Hero's journey as proposed by Campbell. They are departure, initiation and return. Upon her completion of the three phases, Molly can be regarded as a heroine

a. Departure

Black Stache pursues the ship called Wasp because the information that he gets from his prisoner, a soldier of the Queen of England. According to the Queen's

soldier, Wasp is carrying the most precious treasure that ever brought through the ocean. As the novel depicts, ““The treasure’s on *Wasp*. I promise,” cried the prisoner. “I heard it with me own ears”” (35). After that event, Molly sure does experience **the call of the adventure**. It is when she feels that the starstuff is in danger. She feels like she needs to protect it from Stache who has pirated her father’s ship before. At this point, Molly is called to perform a task that requires her not to fail.

The **supernatural aid (the mentor)** provides the adventurer with help. Ammm, the dolphin, is Molly’s supernatural aid which provides her help with his skill in detecting the presence of the starstuff. As the novel tells, Molly and her friends have no idea about what to do because Molly can only feel the presence of the starstuff without being able to detect the exact position. Later on, Molly meets Ammm which tells her that it saw “light” and “bad man”; and that makes Molly concludes that the pirates has got the starstuff, so that she knows that she has to follow the pirates.

The crossing of the first threshold is the decision Molly takes when she is ready to sail together with her father to Rundoon, but they sail in different ship. She mounts the Never Land with Mrs. Bumbrake, while her father and his troops sail with the Wasp. After listening to Molly’s story, Peter knows all about the starstuff and all the things related to it. From this crossing to the first threshold, Molly begins her real journey whereas she has never thought before that this journey will be her own, not her father’s. Whatever lies in front of her, she will face the journey in order to save the world and her father from the evil power.

The last of Molly’s experience in the departure stage is to be trapped in **the belly of the whale**. At one point, Molly jumps off to the sea because she tries to save Peter when she sees Peter is falling down to the sea. Then the wind blows her onto an island where Peter is also swept onto by the waves. Molly accepts this step by starting to explore the island together with Peter, while they are trying to find some water to drink. From this step, Molly starts her first step of her real adventure where

she will encounter more villain and more experiences. She faces the initiation phase where she has to be ready for the real adventures.

b. Initiation

Once she enters the initiation stage, Molly faces the real challenges and obstacles. In **the road of trial** she faces the first trial as in the quotation: “MOLLY AND PETER FOUND IT TOUGH GOING; the lower they descended on the mountain slope, the denser the vegetation, until they almost felt as though they were swimming in it, rather than walking through it” (247). From here, Molly and Peter start to argue that leads them to a complicated situation where they are finally separated. They do what they want to do and take their own way. This is another obstacle of the road of trial that must be faced by Molly.

Molly then comes into the next problem, that is called as **woman as the temptress** in Campbell’s Hero’s journey. Since the writer is analyzing a woman as the heroic character, so that the writer adjusts the title as **man as the temptress**. Molly seems to have a feeling for Peter, but she refuses to admit it and hide her feeling instead. She chooses to refuse because she has to complete her duty, to take care of the trunk. It makes her a true heroine because she is not tempted by the situation above.

Atonement with the father is the next step. In this step, Molly finds her figure of father in her father itself, Mr. Leonard Aster. She becomes very brave when she hears that her father is in a big mission to save the starstuff. Her father makes her strong and brave in facing all obstacles.

The Ultimate Boon of the journey is that when Molly gets the starstuff back and keeps it in the right hand, the Starcatchers. She proves her bravery by passing the adventure and fighting the villain to save the starstuff.

This is the final step of the adventure of a heroine journey. All the steps she passes along the journey make her achieve a new personality in the end. The most important thing is, she can prove that she can pass the steps and the objective can be accomplished.

c. Return

The first step of returning home is **the magic flight**. Molly gains the magic flight directly when finally Peter makes a decision that makes Molly feel so sad. Peter has to stay in the Mollusk Island because he is totally different now. She cannot fight her emotion and then the tears drop from her green eyes and goes to the longboat with her sadness. Finally she must accept that she must separate from her friends. She got the starstuff back, her father is safe, but she cannot be together with her friends.

Molly Aster is in a complicated condition when she gets the starstuff. She does not know what she is going to do with the starstuff because she does not have any experiences as one of the Starcatchers to move the starstuff and how to bring it. She becomes so desperate about it. She cannot imagine that she does this adventure to get and to secure the starstuff but when she gets it she cannot do anything with it. By the coming of her father and the Starcatchers, she feels like getting an enlightenment that makes all her despairs disappear and turns it into happiness. Her father's arrival is her **rescue from without**.

The writer thinks that Molly Aster feels that she cannot accept the reality about Peter who cannot grow up nor going with Molly and the others to England. It makes Molly feel so sad, but she does not melt deeply in that situation and finally learns to accept the fact reluctantly. What makes Molly feel better is because Peter tells her that he will visit Molly to England as fast as possible with his flying ability. His promise makes Molly feel relieved and she finally **crosses the return threshold** to go back to her real world.

After getting back home to her own life, Molly is leaving her adventurous world and is now having a **freedom to live**. In this step, the heroine gets something better in her life. She can prove that without any experience she got from her community, in this case is the Starcatchers, she is also able to make her community proud of her. She can finish all the steps of the journey and gets many experiences which make her as a new person.

5. Conclusion

After analyzing the novel Peter and the Starcatchers by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, the writer can conclude some important points about the journey that Molly Aster has undergone. The writer learns that although she is generally known as the companion of Peter along his journey, she is actually following similar pattern of the common journey of hero: departure, initiation and return.

Molly's journey in the novel has complete stages. She starts from the call to adventure in the departure phase and finish the adventure with the freedom to live in the return phase. Her journey proves that the adventure is actually centers on her and her problem. The fact that she has completed the hero pattern confirms that Molly Aster is not only a companion and secondary to Peter, but the heroine of the story.

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