Vladimir Propp's "31 Narratemes" in a Fantasy Fiction

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ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have revealed that the fantasy genre contains elements of other literary genres, such as the adventure novel, the bildungsroman, gothic fiction, and others. In both structure and image system, the fantasy genre is based on myths and fairy tales. These features are also common for "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew" by C. Lewis and "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" by J. Rowling. This article investigates the functions of fairy tales based on the methodology proposed by Russian professor V. Propp in the aforementioned books and provides examples as needed, demonstrating that fantasy is "a long narrative fairy tale". The structural approach proposed by V. Propp for fairy tales is applicable to fantasy fiction as well and can demonstrate its common genesis.

Keywords: Fantasy fiction, fairy tale, function, structure, protagonist, antagonist, secondary world.

INTRODUCTION

Fantasy is one of the younger genres in literature, therefore it is not explored and analyzed carefully enough. Features of fairy tales and myths can be found in children's fantasy literature. The essential characteristic of a fairy tale – which is not based on truth but rather on imagination – is that it is an example of oral folk art with a created with didactic and aesthetic purpose (Свод

этнографических терминов и понятий, 1991, с.114). The spread of fantasy necessitates a thorough, systematic investigation of this phenomenon in social reality. Fantasy appears to be a remake of ancient sagas, medieval ballads, various legends, and fairy tales, and the revival of these author's tales has its reasons in the state of modern society. However, not everything is as simple as it appears; fantasy in modern society has features and characteristics that distinguish it as a distinct socio-cultural phenomenon, rather than simply a literary genre with as-yet undefined characteristics (heroic epic, novel, fairy tale). On the one hand, fantasy is a continuation of tradition; on the other hand, it, like sagas, is a part of the socio-cultural process. Fantasy fiction has been explored from the perspectives of different literary and critical schools, mostly form mythopoetic. However, the structural approach proposed by V. Propp for fairy tales is applicable to fantasy fiction as well and can demonstrate its common genesis.

METHODOLOGY

Using structural and comparative analysis, we will analyze and explain the functions of magical fairy tales suggested by Propp in the works of C. Lewis, "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew," and J. Rowling, "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," and provide examples. Structural analysis in folklore is divided into two distinct types: the type of which Propp's Morphology is the exemplar par excellence, and the other type of structural analysis which seeks to describe the pattern underlie the folkloristic text proposed by Lévi-Strauss (1964: 312). The first type is linear sequential structural analysis, borrowing from syntax in the study of language, while the second type is paradigmatic, taking out the elements from the "given" order and regrouping in one or more analytic schema.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Fantasy, according to Russian literary theorist Perumov N., is a type of fantastic fairy tale in terms of its external features

(Perumov, 2000, p. 320). In his article "Specific Nature of J.R. Tolkin's "Lord of the Ring," Koshelev S. demonstrated that fantasy is the closest genre to a fairy tale by pointing out 25 functions out of the 31 mentioned in Propp's essay "Morphology of a Magical Fairy Tale" (Koshelev, 1981).Following his viewpoint, the use of Propp's theory allows us to assume that fantasy is structurally a "long narrative fairy tale."

In 1928, Vladimir Propp published "Morphology of the Folktale", in which he attempted to identify a so-called "grammar of narrative" in which the structure of a magical fairy tale is empirically analyzed. He was a folklorist researcher who was interested in the interaction of characters and narrative. Propp contended that stories are character driven, and that plots emerge from character decisions and actions, as well as how they function in a story. Vladimir Propp asserted that characters could be defined by their "spheres of action" and the role they played in the story's progression. He identified seven archetypes after meticulously studying 100 fairy tales: the villain, the donor, the helper, the princess, the dispatcher, the hero, and the false hero.

Propp asserts that there are 31 (and no more than 31) functions found in the fairy tales he analyzes, though a given tale might not contain all 31 functions. Usually, all fairy tales begin with the provision of some initial situation. For instance, family members are introduced, the main character is introduced, or the setting of the events is described. Following that, the fairy functions are listed in order. (Propp, 1981, pp. 36-65) The functions include the followings: 1) absentation; 2) interdiction; 3) violation; 4) reconnaissance; 5) delivery; 6) trickery; 7) complicity; 8a) villainy; 8b) lack; 9) mediation; 10) counteraction; 11) departure; 12) 1st donor function; 13) hero's reaction; 14) receipt of agent; 15) spatial change; 16) struggle; 17) branding; 18) victory; 19) liquidation; 20) return; 21) pursuit, chase; 22) rescue; 23) unrecognized arrival; 24) unfounded claims; 25) difficult task; 26) solution; 27) recognition; 28) exposure; 29) transfiguration; 30) punishment; 31. Wedding (Berger pp. 19-38)

PRACTICAL VALUE

The practical value of the work lies in the possibility of using the proposed methodology when considering texts of various fantasy fictions; in the possibility of applying the main provisions of the dissertation in the preparation of lecture courses on the theory of literature and genre studies. The results and materials of the study can be used in the preparation of textbooks on the theory and history of literature.

MAIN PART

1. *Absentation: Someone goes missing*
In this case, an adult, usually a parent, departs for somewhere, such as work, another country, or even leaving this world. Young characters can occasionally appear as guests or turn around. Digory Kirk, the main character in the novel "The Magician's Nephew," comes to London to live with his aunt and uncle because his mother is ill. The main character, Harry Potter, loses his parents when he is a baby and is sent to live with his aunt and uncle, his only relatives, in the first book of the "Harry Potter" series. "The rumor is that Lily and James Potter are – are – that they're – dead."... "I've come to bring Harry to his aunt and uncle. They're the only family he has left now."(Rowling, 1997, p.12-13; Есливеритьслухам, тоЛилииДжеймсПоттеры... То они... Они мертвы… Я здесь, чтобы отдать Гарри его тете и дяде. Они – единственные родственники, которые у него остались.) Moving from one location to another serves as the starting point for all of the adventures in both books.

2-3. *Interdiction: Hero is warned; Violation of interdictio*
The protagonist is not allowed to go anywhere, enter anything, or touch anything. The prohibition is sometimes given in the form of a request, and other times it is given in the form of an order. However, in most works, the hero does the forbidden work. Digory is forbidden from entering the room of his insane uncle Andrew in Lewis' novel. And the children appear unknowingly in this inaccessible room via a secret door. In Harry Potter, Uncle

Vernon forbids the magical boy from reading Dumbledore's letter, the headmaster of the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. In fact, the prohibition and its violation have been around since the dawn of mankind, dating back to when the first living creatures of the universe, Adam and Eve, ate the fruit that God had forbidden them to eat. This story is also reflected in the myths and legends of different peoples. Uncle Vernon nails the mailbox, waits for a flood of letters without going to work, and finally, when none of this works, he takes the entire family to remote locations where he believes no one can find them. But Hagrid, the school's gatekeeper, arrives and places the letter in Harry's hand, and the boy finally reads the long-awaited letter.

4-5. *Reconnaissance: Villain seeks something; Delivery: The villain gains information*
The antagonist tries to find the location of the main character or some magical object and somehow gets the information. In "The Chronicles of Narnia", Andrew tricks Polly into giving her a ring to test her reaction. The girl's interest in the rings turned out to be what the mad scientist wanted, because now Uncle Andrew could easily achieve his goal."Do you mean one of those yellow or green ones?" said Polly. "How lovely!"(Lewis, 2010, p.20; Полли очень понравились зелёные и жёлтые колечки.) Quirrell, the school professor Harry meets at the beginning of the book, turns out to be a spy with Voldemort in his body, and his meeting with Harry at the end of the book is not an unplanned event, but one.

6-7. *Trickery: Villain attempts to deceive victim; Complicity: Unwitting helping of the enemy*
"And now of course Digory saw the trap in which he was caught..." (Lewis, 2010, p.20) Uncle Andrew informs Digory that the only way to reclaim Polly is to travel to the location where she is currently wearing the yellow ring and return with the help of the green one. Digory, who is willing to go to any length to reunite with his friend, accepts his uncle's offer: "You're too nosy to live, Potter. Scurrying around the school on Halloween like that, for all I knew you'd seen me coming to look at what

was guarding the Stone."(Rowling, 1997, p.289; Ты слишком любопытен, чтобы оставлять тебя в живых, Поттер, – пояснил Квиррелл. – Кто шатался по школе в Хэллоуин? Я чуть не столкнулся с тобой, когда хотел посмотреть, кто охраняет камень.) Professor Quirrell, who has Voldemort in his body, learns that Harry is coming to get the philosopher's stone, so he traps the troll against him. Curious Harry will surely fall into this trap.

8. *Villainy and lack: The need is identified*
Digory demands his friend Polly's return. Wanting to be immortal, the tyrant Voldemort tries to steal the philosopher's stone, and Harry Potter, knowing this, tries to prevent it. In both works, the need for action motivates the main characters to act. One of our characters lacks a magical object, while the other needs a person.

9. *Mediation: Hero discovers the lack*
Andrew tells Digory in "The Magician's Nephew" that he must use the green ring to bring Polly back. And Hagrid, the keeper of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, reveals to a stranger all of the school's and the philosopher's stone's secrets. When Harry overhears this conversation, he becomes aware of the danger that awaits him. Because the person who knew all the secrets was now attempting to obtain the philosopher's stone. It is clear from these passages that while danger is mentioned in one book, deficiency is mentioned in the other. The plot of the work does not always clearly state the existing danger or flaw, but because the books we are analyzing are examples of children's literature, the author is more likely to do so.

10. *Counteraction: Hero chooses positive action*
That is to say, the main hero plays the role of a seeker. Agreeing to do whatever he can in order to save his friend, Digory agrees to wear the ring and disappears from the room, while Harry Potter goes against everyone in search of a magical object."I'm going out of here tonight and I'm going to try and get to the Stone first."(Rowling, 1997, p.154; Сегодня ночью я выйду из

спальни и попытаюсь первым завладеть камнем. — В голосе Гарри была отчаянная решимость.) After hearing about Hagrid's conversation with a stranger, Harry sets out to obtain the Philosopher's Stone before Voldemort.

11. *Departure: Hero leaves on mission*
Digory suddenly sees that the room has disappeared and a pool of water and trees have appeared in front of him. He fell into another world. "Uncle Andrew and his study vanished instantly. Then, for a moment, everythingbecame muddled. The next thing Digory knew was that there was a soft green lightcoming down on him from above, and darkness below."(Lewis, 2010, p.24; Кабинет дяди Эндрюисчезидетипоявилисьвтёмномместе, гдезелёныйсветшёлсверху) Usually, the culmination of the plot is related to this task, and the fight takes place at the destination where the characters go. Harry and his friends leave the freshmen's dormitory and head to the forbidden floor to retrieve the philosopher's stone.

12. *Testing: Hero is challenged to prove heroic qualities*
Digory and Polly find themselves in a world with a red sun and no living souls in "The Magician's Nephew," and they bring disaster upon themselves by ringing a bell with a magic hammer. When the bell rings, the queen, who has been sitting like a statue in the great hall, awakens and follows the children into their world. The plot events in children's fantasy works, like fairy tales, are full of adventure and quests, and it is normal for the hero to face and overcome challenges. And to get to the philosopher's stone, Harry and his friends must overcome a number of challenges, such as walking past a three-headed dog without waking him, falling into a trap of fast-growing plants, getting lostand playing chess with real chessmen.

13. *Reaction: Hero responds to test*
The character can express different reactions, for example, he can oppose a request or order, or, on the contrary, he may agree. In "The Magician's Nephew", Digory and Polly bring the evil witch into another world. The witch, who feels ill in the forest, protests

a lot, but the children comply.Harry agrees to the given order, does what he is asked to do: he looks into the mirror but does not tell what he sees there, deceiving Quirrell."Come here," Quirrell repeated. "Look in the mirror and tell me what you see."Harry walked toward him. I must lie, he thought desperately. I must look and lie about what I see, that's all."(Rowling, 1997,p.292; – Иди сюда, – поторопил Квиррелл. – Загляни в зеркало и скажи мне, что ты видишь. Гарри подошел. «Я должен его обмануть, – приказал он самому себе, чувствуя, что находится на грани отчаяния. – Я должен заглянуть в зеркало и увидеть то, что мне надо, и соврать, только и всего»)

14. *Acquisition: Hero gains magical item*
A magical item can be an object, an animal, an unusual creature, or anything else related to magic. In this case, the main character can obtain magical objects in a variety of ways, including stealing, gifting, and reappearing. The land of Narnia is founded by a lion who came out singing in the land of darkness, where Digory and Polly found themselves after jumping into another pool, according to the Chronicles of Narnia. As the Aslan Lion?? continued to sing, trees and plants, rivers and mountains, and even animals and birds sprouted from the Earth. The philosopher's stone, which has been sought throughout the novel, appears unexpectedly in Harry's pocket. "He saw his reflection, pale and scared-looking at first. It put its hand into its pocket and pulled out a blood-red stone. Harry felt something heavy drop into his real pocket." (Rowling, 1997, p.292; Онувиделсвоеотражение – бледное, испуганноелицо. Оно засунуло руку в свой карман и вытащило оттуда кроваво-красный камень. Гарри ощутил у себя в кармане что-то очень тяжелое.)

15. *Guidance: Hero reaches destination*
Getting to the desired location can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including flying (on a flying horse or carpet, a bird, or a broom), water, land, and so on. The character's arrival at the destination can sometimes be described without revealing how he

got there. Digory and Polly set out on a journey in "The Magician's Nephew" to complete a task assigned by Aslan, which is to pick an apple from a tree growing in an orchard among the mountains. Fledge, the flying horse, transports them on his back to this remote location. When Harry overcomes the challenges and arrives at the philosopher's stone's hidden location, he finds himself in the school's basement, where he encounters a two-faced Quirrell.At this point, the quest that has been pursued throughout the book is almost complete.

16. *Struggle: Hero and villain do battle*
This function is described differently in various fairy tales. Some depict a fight scene, while others depict the hero tricking or deceiving the antagonist. Digory encounters an evil witch he brought from Charn while on a mission, and the witch attempts to trick and trap him. But Digory, determined to keep his promise to Aslan, does not believe the witch's lies and kills her. Voldemort orders Quirrell to kill Harry Potter because he is not yet strong enough to fight. However, Harry is stronger than Voldemort.-"Then kill him, fool, and be done!" screeched Voldemort. Quirrell raised his hand to perform a deadly curse, but Harry, by instinct, reached up and grabbed Quirrell's face – "AAAARGH!" (Rowling, 1997, p. 295; – Тогда убей его, глупец, и покончим с этим! – хрипло выкрикнул Волан-де-Морт. Квиррелл поднял руку, собираясь наложить на Гарри смертельное заклятие, но Гарри инстинктивно рванулся вперед и ударил Квиррелла по лицу, метя в глаза» -А-А-А-А!)

17. *Branding: Hero is branded*
This means that the main character is occasionally wounded in battle, or that a trace of a kiss is left behind; in short, there will be some mark that distinguishes the hero from others. Digory earns Aslan's trust in "The Chronicles of Narnia" by completing the task assigned to him and refusing to believe the witch's deceptions. Standing out among other animals and humans is also a sign. In Harry Potter's first book, Harry is injured during the fight.

18. *Victory: Villain is defeated*
The hero either wins openly or through trickery, depending on the type of combat specified in function 16. In Lewis' work, they prevent the witch from approaching Narnia by planting a magical apple tree. Because the witch who steals and consumes the apple from the tree is cursed by its power. "But while that Tree flourishes she will never come down into Narnia. She dare not come within a hundred miles of the Tree, for its smell, which is joy and life and health to you, is death and horror and despair to her" (Lewis, 2010, p. 20; Покадеревоцветёт, онанесможетприближатьсявНарнию, таккакегозапахужасисмертьдлянеё). And in Harry Potter series, Voldemort, who has taken up residence in Quirrell's body, is defeated, which means Quirrell dies. "He left Quirrell to die; he shows just as little mercy to his followers as his enemies..." (Rowling, 1997, p.298; Он бросил Квиррелла умирать – ведь он безжалостен не только к врагам, но и к союзникам.)

19. *Resolution: Initial misfortune or lack is resolved*
The object sought is found, the bewitched are released from the spell, the dead are resurrected, or captives are set free during this function. In "The Magician's Nephew," the children, who have returned home from Narnia on Aslan's orders, destroy all of the yellow and green magic rings that Uncle Andrew has left in his room. They are buried in the ground by Digory and Polly. In "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," the central quest, the philosopher's stone, which is the catalyst for all of the adventures, is finally destroyed."...As for the Stone, it has been destroyed."(Rowling, 1997, p.297; Ачтокасаетсякамня, тоонбылуничтожен.)

20. *Return: Hero sets out for home*
The book's main character returns to his home or original destination. Digory and Polly, who traveled to the lands of Charn, Narnia, and the forest between the worlds by wearing magical rings, return home at the end of the book after all of their adventures. And Harry is injured and taken to the school hospital after leaving his bedroom to fight the enemy. He will then return

to his quiet and peaceful life. "Harry swallowed and looked around him. He realized he must be in the hospital wing."(Rowling, 1997, p.296; Гарри тяжело вздохнул и огляделся. Он только сейчас понял, что, судя по всему, находится в больничном крыле.)

21. *Pursuit: Hero is chased*
That is, despite winning, the hero is being pursued by someone else. Unlike Harry Potter, the characters in "The Chronicles of Narnia" are all different children; this function refers to the main antagonist, or enemy, rather than the main character. The Narnians, who defend Narnia from the evil witch by planting an apple tree, are always under the witch's watchful eye, waiting for an opportunity to return to the country. Although the enemy in Quirrell's body is defeated in the Harry Potter series, the evil is not completely destroyed, as Voldemort now seeks other ways to get closer to Harry Potter, gathers strength in the shelter, and watches over Harry. -" Voldemort's going to try other ways of coming back, isn't he? I mean, he hasn't gone, has he?" -"No, Harry, he has not. He is still out there somewhere, perhaps looking for another body to share..." (Rowling, 1997,p.298; —Я хотел спросить: ведь теперь Волан-де-Морт будет искать другой способ вернуть себе силы, правда? Я имею в виду, ведь он не исчез навсегда? — Нет, Гарри, — согласился Дамблдор. — Он все еще где-то здесь, возможно, ищет новое тело, в которое мог бы вселиться...)

"The Chronicles of Narnia" and the Harry Potter series are fantasy novels consisting of seven books, with events occurring in consequence, and the quest changing within the parts as the characters grow older. The books "The Magician's Nephew" and "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" reflect 21 of the 31 tasks listed in Propp's essay. The remaining ten missions will be covered in subsequent installments of the series. For example, the 30th function, which is "Punishment: Villain is punished", and the 31st function, which is "Wedding: Hero marries and ascends the throne", are reflected in the last part of the Harry Potter epic "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows". And we can see the following functions described by Propp in later books of the

Narnia series. For example, the 23rd function, "Arrival: Hero arrives unrecognized" can be found in the book "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader," where the children waiting for the train at the station unexpectedly appear in Narnia. Alternatively, the "false hero" from the 24th function appears in "The Last Battle" as a donkey wearing lion skin.

CONCLUSION

Fantasy fiction has been studied from various literary and critical schools, most notably mythopoetic. However, V. Propp's structural approach to fairy tales is applicable to fantasy fiction as well and can demonstrate its common genesis. We discovered similarities while analyzing "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew" by C. Lewis and "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" by J. Rowling through the prism of 31 narrative functions of fairy tales.

Perspectives for further research may include further detailed analysis of structural elements in fantasy works as genre narrative elements.

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