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A STUDY OF THE ORCS IN J.R.R.TOLKIEN'S THE LORD OF THE RINGS

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SEBUAH KAJIAN MENGENAI ORCS DALAM
KARYA J.R.R.TOLKIEN
THE LORD OF THE RINGS

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ABSTRACT

The theme of evil has always been irresistible to many of today's twentieth century modern writers. In J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings' (henceforth The LOTR), this is not an exception because one of the central concerns of The LOTR is the theme of good versus evil. While the appeal for The LOTR has long amazed and stumped critics who frown upon the popularity of literary works that fall under the fantasy genre, The LOTR was phenomenal in its success throughout America and England in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, Tolkien's main detractors claimed that The LOTR was too structured, the plot - simplistic, his characters were stereotypical and rigid and the main gist of the novel was merely concerning the battle between good and evil. To denounce Tolkien's epic grandeur with such observations would be indeed unfair. Tolkien's Middle-earth is a unique and wondrous world that is built on an elaborate and internally consistent mythological framework. The world of Middle-earth parallels our own and its multiplicity of themes include the corruption of power, the strength of Fellowship, the perseverance of human spirit, strength, valour, the virtues of forgiveness, love and the complex relationship of good and evil. One aspect that I find noteworthy to explore is Tolkien's portrayal of lowly evil characters in The LOTR. I consider that the appeal of The LOTR also draws its strength from Tolkien's portrayal of the various images of evil that dwells in the realm. In contrast with other one-dimensional and stereotyped portrayals of evil characters in most works of fantasy, the conventional mould of evil characters has been reshaped with the portrayal of lowly and common slaves called the Orcs. Thus, this dissertation is a study of the Orcs and their diverse roles in the vast realm

of Middle-earth. It is also a study of Tolkien's treatment of evil and the position of the Orcs in the centre of all things in The LOTR.

ABSTRAK

Tema kejahatan sememangnya menjadi tema pilihan bagi kebanyakan penulis abad kedua puluh. Dalam karya J.R.R.Tolkien yang bertajuk ‘The Lord of the Rings’ (singkatan The LOTR), tema kejahatan juga menjadi sebahagian daripada tema utamanya. Walaupun kemasyhuran The LOTR telah menakjubkan dan menghairankan ramai pengkritik Tolkien, yang sememangnya tidak menyokong populariti karya-karya kesusasteraan fantasi, karya Tolkien telah mendapat sambutan hangat di Amerika Syarikat dan England pada tahun 1960-an dan 1970-an. Pengkritik-pengkritik Tolkien berpendapat bahawa struktur karya The LOTR adalah terlalu ‘rigid’, jalan ceritanya terlalu mudah, watak-watak ciptaan Tolkien adalah ‘stereotypical’, dan tema keseluruhan The LOTR hanyalah mengenai tema kebaikan-kejahatan. Adalah tidak adil untuk kita mengadili Tolkien dengan pemerhatian-pemerhatian sebegini. Dunia ‘Middle-earth’ Tolkien adalah unik dan menakjubkan. Ia dibina berdasarkan sebuah struktur mitologi yang teguh, dinamik dan konsisten. Dunia Tolkien sememangnya mirip dunia kita dan antara tema-tema The LOTR adalah mengenai pengaruh kuasa, kekuatan hubungan silatulrahim, ketabahan, kekuatan, keberanian, sikap bermaafan, kasih-sayang dan hubungan kompleks kebaikan-kejahatan. Salah satu aspek yang saya dapati penting untuk dikaji adalah cara Tolkien menampilkan watak Orcs yang jahat dan tidak mempunyai peranan yang penting dalam The LOTR. Saya berpendapat bahawa minat terhadap karya Tolkien ini juga mendapat kekuatan daripada cara Tolkien menampilkan watak-watak jahat dalam novelnya. Jika kita membuat perbandingan dengan karya-karya fantasi lain, watak-watak jahatnya kelihatan satu dimensi dan ‘stereotypical’. Di sini kita melihat cara penonjolan watak-

watak jahat telah berubah sama sekali dengan watak Orcs dan kepelbagaian fungsi mereka di dunia Middle-earth. Justeru itu, kajian ini juga adalah satu analisis terhadap cara Tolkien menggunakan tema kejahatan dengan berkesan dan satu analisis kedudukan dan peranan Orcs dalam karya The LOTR.

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