

Feminism in Le Guin's *The Wife's Story* : A Study

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The story of *The Wife* was released in the short story collection *The Compass Rose* in 1982. Unlike some of Le Guin's fantasy and science fiction stories, it is not related to the creation of the galactic confederate states, neither the Hainish Cycle, nor the Earthsea Young Adult Fantasy. Genre wise, the story may be categorized as fantasy / supernatural, but it undermines the laws of those genres and their readers' expectations.

Using *The Wife's Story* character-bound narrator allows her individuality to be kept confidential until near last part of the story. While there are some extra features reader understands how the primary character presents herself as a gender and also understands her social position as a mom, the portrayal of the character is left very vague deliberately. This enables readers to recognize with the personality more readily and deeply, but also to have certain characteristics assumed by them.

Without a pattern, readers suppose the hero has either its features or some cultural default features based on definite traditions and stereotypes. In the speculative fiction environment, in comparison to an alien or a mythological being, human acts as a race default. Therefore, the reader views the primary character in *The Wife's Story* as a person under the impact of such an assumption, and her husband is the other waswolf.

The overwhelming amount of fictional characters, as has already been stated, is male. This proportion is even greater when, for instance, seventy one percent of all films are concerned with the work's protagonist. In other minority groups, distinguished by ethnicity, sexuality, sex identity, disability or social status, the scenario is comparable. Simply put, anything that is not middle-class, white, homosexual, cisgender. The reckoning behind this is an assumption that the set of characteristics mentioned above is somehow unbiased or intact. Each feature in which the central character varies from an average makes identifying with this protagonist proportionally more difficult for the reader / viewer.

The so called minority protagonist's worse marketability is portrayed as a result of the audience's failure to identify with the hero. However, the target group's fossilized concept seems to have a much greater impact on the scenario. This can be demonstrated in the gaming industry instance, which is described as a male-dominated room as well. While it is true that female-lead games or games with optional female hero seem to sell worse than male-centered titles, it was also discovered that less than forty percent of the marketing budget was also obtained by these games. The greatest issue is that such protagonists are presented.

If their features vary from the above-mentioned neutral, based on this distinction there is a tendency to label this job. It is either viewed as being targeted at a unique audience, e.g. female protagonist in female literature, or as a unique problem job. In the second case, instead of just a personality characteristic, the distinction from what is perceived as a norm becomes the entire plot. This additional disaffects the reader / viewer from the story and the central character, and the reduced interest in this alienation's job is seen as corroboration of the initial hypothesis. This argumentation is related to the notion of tentative fiction as a masculine genre in the genre of speculative fiction.

There are basically two choices for female cultural respondents. First is identifying with the hero of the male. This strategy is more prevalent as masculine features and roles are generally considered more desirable. While it is true that female-lead games or games with optional female hero seem to sell worse than male-centered titles, it was also discovered that less than forty percent of the marketing budget was also obtained by these games. This self-referential reason is then used to maintain fictitious characters' sex composition skewed towards the male majority. Similar argument is used when taking into account at any group that is different from the traditional protagonist's pseudo-neutral idea. While it is true that female-lead games or games with optional female hero seem to sell worse than male-centered titles, it was also discovered that less than forty percent of the marketing budget was also obtained by these games. This self-referential logic is then used to maintain fictitious characters' sex composition skewed towards the male

majority. Similar argument is used when taking into account at any group that differs from the traditional protagonist's pseudo-neutral idea.

There are many protagonists in Ursula Le Guin's works that defy this concept of the neutral hero in both sex and ethnicity. However, Le Guin uses the constraints and specifics of the written narrative to hide these facts until the story's further stage. As she states in her interview with Victor Reinking and David Willingham (published in discussion with Ursula Le Guin in 2008): And so I put in a brown skin the children who are going to read, although at the time fantasy was read almost exclusively by white children. They discover out after becoming accustomed to being Ged that their skin is brown ... (149). However, the first vagueness of the central character look was one of the reasons why the primary character was constantly portrayed as pale European skinned. This can also be triggered by the premise of publishers / producers that a non-white character on the cover or making this characters a protagonist of a film would repel prospective audience.

Le Guin utilizes comparable literary techniques in *The Wife's Story* to hide her protagonist's real identity. There is no proof that the protagonist (or any other personality) could be anything other than human until about two thirds of the story. The language used is strictly centered on people. He had no match at all... (WS, p. 327). The use of the word game for hunted animals is comparatively late (around the 13th century), and its etymology suggests that the animals are hunted for sport (along with game). This does not match the concept of an animal hunting for food alone, while reinforcing the picture of the hunter of human sports. Lodge Meeting nights, they got him to lead the singing more and more frequently. (WS,p. 328). There are references to operations linked to rudimentary civilization at least. In this sense, the word lodge can be interpreted as a term for a social or religious community that is further endorsed by the singing reference.

The protagonist's human identity is strengthened by placing her husband in the other the waswolf's place. It's been the moon, they're saying that. (WS, p.328). The moon's impact on the husband of the protagonist and the reference to the curse in the blood of[the husbands] (WS,p . 328) connect the story with the lore of the waswolf. However, other facts are drastically different from the tradition. It always occurs in the moon's darkness. (WS, p. 328). This is an adjustment to the standard. Traditionally, a full moon triggers the conversion of the waswolf. The dark moon is here the stage when the moon is invisible against the sun's background.

The scene where the real identity of the husband is revealed is a mirror image from the horror stories of the traditional waswolf transformation. It is also the first time when the protagonist's no human identity is suggested. This is performed by describing her husband ah human for the first time, although in a mildly alienated way each foot got longer, stretching out... the hair started to flee all over his body. Then he was white all over, like the skin of a worm. (WS, p . 331) then explicitly identified him as the other My dear love, transformed into the hateful one. (WS, p . 331).

By this late disclosure of the identity of the protagonist, Le Guin succeeded in tricking the reader into recognizing with the character that is so dissimilar from the apparent norm that it could be considered unrelated. However, this undermines the above argument that the audience cannot identify with a minority protagonist, which decreases the product's marketability. It can be asserted that after learning this protagonist's identity, the reader tends to lose interest, but this does not explain the popularity of such works as *Earthsea's Wizard*. The issue is how this discrepancy can be explained. When the link is made before the protagonist's difference is disclosed, the reader can identify with such a protagonist. However, the second explanation is that this incapacity is learned and promoted as a manner to preserve the cultural status quo.

The story of the wife can be split into three sections which mirror the storytelling aspects of Labov. Each of these sections is characteristic of the protagonist's atmosphere and attitude. They also heavily mirror a mother's psychological state in terms of the reality that a family member abuses her kid. The first portion of the story returns to the first meeting between the protagonist and her future husband and the start of their marriage. This part's overall mood is a combination of nostalgia and sorrow resulting from the comparison between the idealized past and the present. In retrospect, the protagonist tries to find any signs

that something is wrong with her husband and if there is a way to prevent the current situation. He's been a good husband, a good dad. I don't know it. I don't trust it. I don't think it occurred. I've seen this occur, but it's not true. It's not possible. (WS, p . 327). A quotation from the case file of national violence / child abuse could be the very start of the story. The abuser is often defined as a good individual by the strangers or an untouched family member who may never be able to perform such acts. Even the victims often describe their abuser similarly, emphasizing the abrupt shift in the character of the abusers.

The complicated action starts when her husband's strange behavior is first noticed by the protagonist. He would have come home late and worn out, and for one so sweet-tempered, fairly close to cross. (WS, p. 329). These sudden mood and personality shifts are often quoted as one of the warning signs of an abusive connection. I said, "What's the smell of you?" All over you! And he said, I don't know, it's really short, and it made him sleep. But when he thought he didn't notice, he went down and washed and washed himself. (WS, p . 330). His conduct can be clarified in the start by having an affair hence the unwillingness to speak and also the repeated washing, which can be interpreted as a manner of getting rid of the proof. Protagonist's remarks about the strange smell of her husband are that the wife's trope that finds out her husband is unfaithful to her because she can smell a strange perfume from him. When the conduct of the daughter of the protagonist starts to alter, the scenario escalates.

She switched from her dad to our eldest, the little one, my child. Simply overnight. (WS, p . 330). She's portrayed her father's afraid. It's likely triggered in the story by her witnessing the conversion of her father. It could be described as a response to being abused by her dad without the supernatural motivation. In is further backed by the failure of the daughters to speak correctly-she has not yet spoken plainly (WS, p . 330), which leaves very vague the reason for her fear.

Just waking up dreaming, she guessed, and passed it that way. Or attempted to do that. And I did that. And when she kept acting crazy afraid of her own father, I became really angry with my child. (WS, p . 330). The protagonist's and her husband's reactions are also comparable to those instances of real-life violence. The abuser's husband claims his daughter is unable to differentiate between dream and reality in an attempt to seem innocent. The protagonist suspects something is wrong, but she won't acknowledge it. For her, it would imply that she failed to choose a appropriate partner as well as to protect her kid. Also, since the setting of the story is defined as a close-knit society, she may be scared that others will ostracize her. Therefore, it is simpler to deny any issue and blame the kid for acting crazy (WS, p. 330). This denial characterizes the whole second part's atmosphere and also prohibits any action being taken by the protagonist.

This denial comes to an abrupt end when the narrator witnesses the conversion of her husband. In the third portion of the story, which begins with this event, the protagonist's conduct changes dramatically. Then the wrath of the mom comes into me, and I snarled and crept forward (WS, p . 332). Finally, she can take action. The stimulus for this action was almost stereotypically the instinct of a feminine mother to protect her offspring-and her action is hindered by her husband's love (I was last, because love still binds in me the anger and fear (WS, p . 332). Nevertheless, both the protagonist and her sister are empowered by the end. I saw her running down at the guy with low head and heavy mane and yellow eyes like winter sun. (WS, p . 332). It is also essential that the protagonist's identity is revealed when she lastly acknowledges what is going on. This provides her the authority to tackle this issue, transforming her symbolically into a stronger wolf creature.

The research observe the changes in Le Guin's feminism strategy. While *Wife's Story* can skew the perceived changes, there is an obvious change toward more intersectional, similar to the modifications in the entire motion. The distinctions between second and third wave readings of feminism were less different than expected, as it was argued that the problem that appeared in Le Guin's *The Wife's Story* was more universal. Nevertheless, the objective of this article can be asserted more confidently to demonstrate that Ursula Le Guin has been accomplished as a feminist author who is still essential today.

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