

| Aleksandra Dmowska

FROM *ETHNOS* TO *MYTHOS*.
THE DYNAMICS OF REALISM
AND THE FANTASTIC
IN TERRY PRATCHETT'S TIFFANY
ACHING PENTALOGY

Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyse how both realist and fantastic elements coexist and interweave in a secondary world fantasy novel, as well as to show potential functions and effects of such coexistence in Terry Pratchett's Tiffany Aching pentalogy. The community of shepherds of the Chalk as well as their daily life are presented in a realist manner, therefore introducing mimetic mode in the novels. The introduction of marvellous elements and the fantastic mode permits to achieve a far deeper complexity of Pratchett's subcreation. Such coexistence of the two modes seems to result in the opening of the Discworld universe to mythical dimensions. The main mythic elements resulting from the dynamics of realism and the fantastic on which this article focuses include the world as language, human being as inseparable part of the world of nature and female initiation.

Key words: fantasy, realism, myth, Terry Pratchett, Tiffany Aching

In her study *Fantasy and Mimesis. Responses to Reality in Western Literature* Kathryn Hume states:

It is truer to literary practice to admit that fantasy is not a separate or indeed separable strain, but rather an impulse as significant as the mimetic impulse, and to recognize

that both are involved in the creation of most literature. By fantasy I mean the deliberate departure from the limits of what is usually accepted as real and normal ... fantasy is an element in nearly all kinds of literature, especially the narrative.¹

In Hume's research fantastic and mimetic modes are presented as inextricably related to each other. In *Strategies of Fantasy*, Brian Attebery expresses a similar view:

... fantasy and mimesis are the fundamental operations of the narrative imagination ... Mimesis without fantasy would be nothing but reporting one's perceptions of actual events. Fantasy without mimesis would be a purely artificial invention, without recognizable objects or actions.²

The aim of this article is to analyse how both mimetic and fantastic elements coexist and interweave in a secondary world fantasy novel, as well as to show potential functions and effects of such coexistence as used by Terry Pratchett in Tiffany Aching pentalogy. Opening of the Pratchettian universe to mythical dimensions seems to present itself as its main result and function, including motives such as myth as a way of thinking and perceiving the world, a human being as an inseparable part of the world of nature and female initiation. The theories of Mircea Eliade, Arnold van Gennep and Eleazar Mielecinski will be used in the analyses of myth and ritual present in the novels. The research of Joseph Campbell, Annis Pratt and Pia Skogemann will allow to interpret Tiffany Aching's story as an example of both male and female hero individuation.

In order to proceed with the above outlined analysis, it is indispensable to clearly define the terms which will be used in the article. Attebery differentiates between fantasy as formula and fantasy as mode. He defines the formula as "a form of popular escapist literature that combines stock characters and devices – wizards, dragons, magic swords, and the like – into a predictable plot ... which tends toward triviality."³ Mode, on the other hand, would be "a way of ... telling stories ... a praise- and prize-worthy means of investigating the way we use fictions to construct reality itself... a vast subject, taking in all literary mani-

¹ K. Hume, *Fantasy and Mimesis. Responses to Reality in Western Literature*, New York: Methuen, 1984, p. xii.

² B. Attebery, *Strategies of Fantasy*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992, p. 3.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

festations of the imagination's ability to soar above the merely possible."⁴ A middle ground between mode and formula is the genre, a category designating stories "more alike than required by the mode and less uniform than dictated by formula."⁵ The genre should be considered a fuzzy set⁶ which is defined "not by boundaries but by a center,"⁷ that is, having a clear centre, but no clear boundaries. Thus, a book on the fringes of a set might be considered as belonging to a genre or not, depending on one's approach. Fantasy as mode in Attebery's approach is precisely what Hume calls fantasy. For the purpose of this article, however, the mode will be referred to as the fantastic, while the name of fantasy will be used to talk about the genre, following Attebery's solution.

As stated above, the interweaving of mimetic and fantastic elements in the novels permits introducing mythic elements to the story. To avoid confusion, while talking about myth, the article will refer to the theories of Mircea Eliade. In *Myth and Reality* he defines myth as a sacred history, describing events which took place in Primordial time, in the time of beginnings. It narrates "how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality – an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution."⁸ It is, therefore, always a story of creation, relating how things came into existence. Supernatural Beings are the protagonists of myths. They are known because of what they did or created in the magical time of beginnings. Myths narrate their creative activities and teach the sacred character of their deeds. The importance of the time of beginnings resides in the fact that it narrates the first manifestation of each object, being or phenomenon. By experiencing it through myth and ritual, humans learn about their origins. The witness of creation, the time of beginnings becomes sacred, magical and transcendent. Apart from the sacred time and Supernatural Beings, the sacred space constitutes an important element of myth. The Sacred enters our world through hierophanies. Each hierophany establishes a "fixed point, a center"⁹ in a homogenous, profane space. As Eliade asserts, nothing can start or happen without a previous act of orientation. But every act of orientation requires the existence of a fixed point. The discovery or creation

⁴ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶ For more information on fuzzy set theory see: G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

⁷ B. Attebery, *Strategies of Fantasy*, p. 12.

⁸ M. Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, trans. Willard R. Trask, New York: Harper & Row, 1963, p. 5.

⁹ M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, trans. Willard R. Trask, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963, p. 21.

of such a fixed point, the sacred centre of the world called *axis mundi*, permits further orientation.¹⁰

Scholars specialising in the analyses of fantasy have launched a debate on the pertinence of interpreting the aforementioned genre with relation to myth. Magdalena Roszczynialska writes:

I think that fantasy meets anthropology not in the aspect of *mythos*, but rather of *ethnos*. Also in the aspect of *ethos*. Not only does fantasy create worlds, but also systems of values. Such an approach presents fantasy as anthropological literature par excellence ... however, while an anthropologist wants to be an interpreter ... a novelist ... an author of fantasy uses the device of parable to present the issues of cultural diversity.¹¹

Nevertheless, a different view will be presented in this article. According to Bronisław Malinowski, myth is “a narrative resurrection of a primeval reality, told in satisfaction of deep religious wants, moral cravings, social submissions, assertions, even practical requirements ... it expresses, enhances and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality.”¹² It is, therefore, impossible to separate *ethnos* and *ethos* from *mythos*, all three being inextricably interrelated. Studying a given community’s culture, daily habits and festivals will sooner or later lead to a study of beliefs, perception of the universe, religion and morality. The following analysis will show how the dynamics of realist and fantastic elements makes the passage from *ethnos* to *mythos* possible in a fantasy novel.

Tiffany Aching pentalogy consists of five novels written by Terry Pratchett and published between 2003 and 2015 (*The Wee Free Men* 2003, *A Hat Full of Sky* 2004, *Wintersmith* 2006, *I Shall Wear Midnight* 2010, *The Shepherd’s Crown* 2015). The events take place in Pratchett’s universe of the Discworld and narrate a story of a young girl, Tiffany Aching, living in a region called the Chalk near the Ramtop mountains, in a community of farmers, shepherds and sheep breeders. She helps her parents on the Home Farm but also trains to be a witch. In the respective novels Tiffany is nine, eleven, thirteen, sixteen and eighteen years old.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 22.

¹¹ M. Roszczynialska, *Etnologiczne konteksty fantazy (Ethnological aspects of fantasy) in: Fantastyczność i Cudowność. Wokół źródeł fantazy (The Fantastic and the Marvelous. The Sources of Fantasy)* eds. T. Ratajczak, B. Trocha, Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, 2009, p. 105. Translation from Polish is mine, only for the purpose of this article.

¹² B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science, Religion*, New York: Doubleday, 1955, pp. 101, 108.

For the purpose of the first part of the analysis, it is necessary to forget that Tiffany is training to be a witch, hence forget the magic. The following quotations depict Tiffany's daily life, duties, work and those of her community:

She was the dairymaid, and good at it. She made better butter than her mother did and people commented about how good she was with cheese ... Sometimes, when the wandering teachers came to the village, she went and got a bit of education. But mostly she worked in the dairy.¹³

Tiffany had to do the chores ... That meant feeding the chickens and collecting the eggs ... It meant fetching six buckets of water from the well and filling the log basket by the stove.¹⁴

She kept a diary in the dairy. Cheese needed to be kept track of, and she always wrote down details of the amount of butter she'd made and how much milk she'd been using.¹⁵

Most boys in the village grew up to do the same jobs as their fathers or, at least, some other job somewhere in the village where someone's father would teach them as they went along. The girls were expected to grow up to be somebody's wife.¹⁶

... working with the shepherds by lantern light, dealing with difficult births. She'd work ... with knife and needle and threads and hands and soothing words, she'd saved ewes from the black doorway and helped new lambs into the light. And she'd walked home ... bloody to the elbows.¹⁷

In her home village she works at the farm, makes cheese and butter, tends to animals, cleans the house and helps lambs to be born. Having no time for or possibility of good education, she is destined to become what other girls from the area usually become, that is to say, a wife. When she gets older, she goes into service, which is the second of the strictly limited number of careers for local young women: "It wasn't unusual for girls as young as Tiffany to go 'into service'. It meant working as a maid somewhere. Traditionally, you started by helping an old lady who lived by herself."¹⁸ While in service, she visits local

¹³ T. Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men*, London: Corgi Books, 2004, pp. 16-17.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁷ T. Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky*, London: HarperCollins, 2007, p. 402.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

houses and families, usually to bring the medicine to the ill, but also to wash them, clean their houses, cut their nails, give them some food or clothing. She helps the ill, gives comfort to the lonely, assists expectant mothers or people awaiting death:

... sittin' up all night with some poor old man who's leavin' the world ... comfortin' their terror, seein' 'em safely on their way ... and then cleanin' 'em up, layin' 'em out, making 'em neat for the funeral and helpin' the weeping widow strip the bed and wash the sheets ... and stayin' up the next night to watch over the coffin before the funeral, and then going home and sitting down for five minutes before some shouting angry man comes bangin' on your door 'cos his wife's havin' difficulty givin' birth to their first child.¹⁹

Living in the Chalk and serving in the Ramtops, she has to deal with difficult situations as well as unhappy, stupid or cruel people. She witnesses a lynching on Mrs Snapperly, who was chased from her cottage on the suspicion of abducting the local baron's son who had gone missing in the forest:

after he vanished they went to her cottage and they looked in the oven and they dug up her garden and they threw stones at her old cat until it died and they turned her out of her cottage and piled up all her old books in the middle of the room and set fire to them and burned the place to the ground and everyone said she was an old witch.²⁰

Banished from her home and deprived of food or shelter, the old woman dies in the snow during winter.

Tiffany must also take care of Amber Petty, a thirteen-year-old girl who got pregnant and her father beat her so hard that she miscarried the baby. She also saves Mr Petty from the lynching when the villagers want to hang him for what he did to his daughter.²¹ As she grows older, Tiffany gradually experiences and becomes aware of all the dark secrets and problems of every community: unfaithful wives, violent and drunkard husbands, the fate of illegitimate children, illiteracy, ignorance and intolerance. All those events depicting daily lives and issues of the community of shepherds of the Chalk could be found in a realist novel. All could be easily imagined in a novel by Charles Dickens or Thomas

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 286.

²⁰ T. Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men*, p. 46.

²¹ T. Pratchett, *I Shall Wear Midnight*, London: Doubleday, 2010, pp. 29-34.

Hardy. As Attebery states: fantasy is a genre “that makes use of both the fantastic mode, to produce the impossibilities, and the mimetic, to reproduce the familiar.”²²

It is important to notice two elements in this realist aspect of the novels. First, that the aforementioned duties and the heroine’s mentors’ insistence on their importance help Tiffany build her identity. As she comes from the family of shepherds, the people of the Chalk gradually become her sheep, or rather she gradually becomes their shepherd. So, her work and chores gain an existential dimension and become an almost philosophical category. They make her who she is and her own identity is constructed around those duties. The second crucial element is that the life of this community is built following the rhythms of nature and the rhythm of festivals, which introduce cyclical and repetitive time in the novels. The lambing festival called Sheepbellies in late February, when the lambs are born, marks, for example, the beginning of shepherds’ year. Morris dance in spring announces the end of winter and the coming of summer, whereas the scouring, a three-day fertility festival, signifies the end of summer. Additionally, Tiffany’s day-to-day life and duties – tending to animals, healing, helping others, midwifery, preparing girls for their marriage, attending the dying and the dead – do not only follow the natural year or the year of festivals, but they are also linked to the rhythm of nature on a larger, existential scale. They are linked to the processes of the natural cycles of life, giving birth, maturing and dying, growing and decaying. In performing those duties, Tiffany often turns to the memories of her grandmother Sarah Aching.

Granny Aching was the best shepherd of the Chalk, its wisest woman, guardian of laws and the community’s memory. She taught Tiffany about sheep, people and people’s duties: “We are as gods to the beasts o’ the field, my jiggit. We order the time o’ their birth and the time o’ their death. Between times, we ha’ a duty ... Them as can do, has to do for them as can’t. And someone has to speak up for them as has no voices.”²³ Sarah Aching is one of the most important members of the community as well as Tiffany’s family. Not only is she the girl’s grandmother and teacher, but also, one might argue, her point of orientation: “Granny Aching smelled of sheep, turpentine and Jolly Sailor tobacco. The three smells mixed together and became one smell which was, to Tiffany, the smell of the Chalk ... it meant warmth, and silence, and a space around

²² B. Attebery, *Strategies of Fantasy*, pp. 16-17.

²³ T. Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men*, pp. 69, 196.

which the whole world revolved.”²⁴ This is the reason why, when Granny Aching dies and Tiffany finds her, the girl’s world seems to end: “And Tiffany had sat by the narrow bed and thought about Granny Aching ... and about the world losing its centre ... Then she’d gone home and told everyone that Granny was dead. She was seven, and the world had ended.”²⁵

Explicitly referred to as the world’s centre, or the space around which the universe revolves, the most important person of Tiffany’s childhood, Granny Aching could be therefore considered a Supernatural Being, whose deeds constitute a part of a sacred story of the time of beginnings – in this case, Tiffany’s childhood. Effectively, it is Sarah Aching who explains to Tiffany how the world works, namely, the laws governing this world as well as people’s place in it. She also symbolises the sacred space, the *axis mundi*, the centre of the cosmos and the “fixed point”, of which Eliade talks in his studies, for both the community of shepherds and her granddaughter Tiffany. Finally, she reveals herself to be the embodiment of the Chalk itself. Both the sacred, cyclical and repetitive time and Granny Aching, who functions as a supernatural being of the time of creation, the centre of the world and the embodiment of the land, become channels through which the sacred enters the profane world. They introduce mythical aspects to the novel, or rather open the secondary world to mythical dimensions. The hitherto presented analysis of mimetic or realist elements of the novels has revealed mythical aspects or the morphology of myth in the discussed stories. The following part of the article will demonstrate how fantastic elements widen the mythical context and deepen the mythical dimension of the story. All the duties performed by Tiffany in her human community of shepherds described in previous paragraphs are mirrored during her apprenticeship to become a witch. The fantastic elements reflect the realist elements and become a kind of extension of reality.

At some point Tiffany is possessed and later chased by a hiver – “a type of demon ... they are not alive but they have, as it were, the shape of life. They have no body, brain or thoughts of their own ... Yet a hiver does have the ability to fear and to crave.”²⁶ A hiver is a being that possesses humans and stays in their minds and bodies until the minds of the hosts disappear completely. He is a mix of his host’s memories. Eventually, Tiffany understands that the hiver is frightened of his endless experience, being able to see everything, aware of eve-

²⁴ Ibid., p. 112.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 150-151.

²⁶ T. Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky*, pp. 100-101.

ry single thing that exists, and incapable of forgetting. It seems that all he wants is shelter and silence. Finally, the hiver asks Tiffany: “Teach us the way to die.”²⁷ Just as she did many times before, tending to dying people, Tiffany resolves to teach the hiver to die:

Death is right behind us, she thought. Life ends, and there’s death, waiting. So ... it must be close. ... It would be ... a door ? Yes. An old door, old wood. ... She turned. Behind her, there was a black door in the air ... The hinges would creak, she thought. When she pushed it open, they did. So-oo ... she thought, it isn’t exactly real. I’m telling myself a story I can understand, about doors.²⁸

Then she helps the hiver get through the door, thinking: “So ... this is what we do. We live on the edges. We help those who can’t find the way.”²⁹ But when the hiver still does not know what to do: “But there is no ‘me’ to die, said the voices of the hiver. There is only us,”³⁰ Tiffany gives him a name:

‘Do you want a name? That helps.’

Yes. A name...

‘I’ve always liked Arthur, as a name.’

Arthur, said the hiver. I like Arthur, too. And if I am, I can stop.³¹

So, by naming him, Tiffany symbolically helps Arthur to become, to be born, just as she did literally with the lambs or children, and aids him to get to the other side, thus teaching him how to die.

A few years later, she is courted by the wintersmith, a god-like being, an incarnation of winter, who fell in love with her and wants her to become his queen, his lady Summer. Winter comes to the Chalk and does not go away, snow is everywhere, plants, animals and people start dying because Tiffany has taken the place of lady Summer. The everlasting cycle of the seasons has been broken. So Tiffany must overpower and chase the wintersmith away:

She pulled the wintersmith towards her, and saw the look of astonishment on his face. ... There was nothing to see but the wintersmith’s cold face, nothing to hear but her

²⁷ Ibid., p. 348.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 349.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 350.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 351.

³¹ Ibid., p. 352.

own breathing, nothing to feel but the warmth of the sun on her hair. ... Where this takes me, there I choose to go, she told herself, letting the warmth pour into her. ... This I choose to do ... Thunder on my right hand. Lightning in my left hand. Fire above me... 'Please', she said, 'take the winter away. Go back to your mountains. Please.' Frost in front of me. ... Balance ... and it came quickly, out of nowhere, lifting her up inside ... Balance ... and his lips were like blue ice ... She shut her eyes and kissed the wintersmith ... and drew down the sun. Frost to fire.³²

For a moment becoming the wintersmith's queen, Tiffany kisses him and pouring the heat of the sun through herself into him, she destroys his physical body and chases the spirit away. While in service she used to prepare girls before their marriage, this time she symbolically performs a marriage ritual herself, being a priestess and a bride in one.

When she officially becomes the witch of the Chalk, her mentor witch and the first among equals Granny Weatherwax dies, leaving to Tiffany her hut in Lancre and designating her as her successor. When elves invade Discworld, both in the Chalk and in Lancre, Tiffany must protect her lands against them. She tries to secure the help of the King of elves, who has abandoned his kingdom, but he refuses. So she must stand alone against the glamorous magic of cruel elves. That is when she gets the help of the land itself:

... the Chalk was her world. She walked on it every day. She could feel its ancient life under her feet. The land was in her bones ... it was in her name, too; in the old language ... her name sounded like 'land Under Waves', and in the eye of her mind she'd walked in those deep prehistoric seas when the Chalk had been formed, in a million-year rain made of shells of tiny creatures. She trod a land made of life, and breathed it in, and listened to it and thought its thoughts for it.³³

The chalk is made of limestone, which is composed of millions of once living creatures. It is soft and easily worn down, but in the heart of the limestone there is flint, cutting sharper than any knife. The living land chooses Tiffany to be its shepherd. An echinoid – a sea urchin – called the shepherd's crown by the inhabitants of the Chalk, seeks a true shepherd. As it turns out, it chooses Tiffany for its guide: "And to the moon she said, 'What is the shepherd's crown? Whom does the shepherd's crown serve?' And the answer dropped into her head. 'Tiffany Aching, Land under Wave.' ... Tiffany Aching is the first among

³² T. Pratchett, *Wintersmith*, London: Doubleday, 2006, pp. 381-382.

³³ T. Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky*, pp. 66-67.

shepherds, for she puts others before herself.”³⁴ When the battle is almost lost and the magic of elves overpowers the defenders of the Chalk, the land answers through Tiffany:

She was not alone. She never would be. Not while her land was beneath her boots. Her land ... She was Tiffany Aching. Not Granny Weatherwax, but a witch in her own right ... who knew exactly who she was and how she wanted to do things. Her way ... The land was speaking to her now, filling her up, throwing the glamour of the elf lord aside ... And she was standing firm, her feet on the turf, the murmur of the ancient oceans below swelling through her soles. Earth. Water. She raised her arms. ‘Thunder and Lightning, I command you’ ... The shepherd’s crown glowed golden on her breast – at the heart of it all, the soul and centre of her being – the golden light rising from the apex to surround her, protect her, add its energy to her own. And the sky broke in half ... ‘I am Tiffany Aching and my bones are in the Chalk. Let the Chalk be cleansed!’ And the world has changed.³⁵

Becoming the embodiment, the incarnation of the land, Tiffany overpowers the elves. Yet, at the same time, she manages to define herself for she finally realizes who and what she is and decides who she wants to be. She gains her identity and fully becomes Tiffany Aching.

As can be seen, the fantastic elements of the stories mirror their mimetic elements (birth of lambs and children / birth of the hiver, tending to the dying / helping the hiver to die, preparing for marriage / performing the marriage with the wintersmith, protecting the sheep / protecting the land and community). What is more, the fantastic elements continue the development of mythical aspects of the novels, which have already been introduced by the mimetic mode.

Teaching the hiver to die is not simply a literal, therefore a fantastic, version of helping somebody to get to the other side. This part of the story effectively constitutes a part of the rite of passage that Tiffany is undergoing, namely the initiation. The term “rites of passage” is a translation of French name *rites de passage* created by Arnold van Gennep, an ethnographer of Dutch-German-French descent³⁶. Their main function is to introduce the initiated into a community and the world of culture. The rites of passage usually consist of a symbolic separation from the community, different types of trials and challenges, and contact with demonic forces outside the community. Those stages are fol-

³⁴ T. Pratchett, *The Shepherd’s Crown*, London: Corgi Books, 2016, pp. 293, 311.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 310-312.

³⁶ A. van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage. Étude systématique des rites*. Paris: Picard, 1981.

lowed by a ritual cleansing and return to the community of the person undergoing the rite. Upon their reintegration with the community, such a person acquires a new status.³⁷ One of the most important rites of passage is initiation. It contains tests of physical endurance and an introduction to the basics of knowledge. During the rite, the initiate experiences a symbolic death and enters in contact with spirits that lead to the revival, or to be more precise, to the initiate's rebirth. So is the case of Tiffany, who is separated from the community, enters the underworld to take Arthur with her, meets Death and gains new, mystical, secret knowledge, respectively. Her return from the otherworld, alive and victorious after the meeting of the hiver, changes her status and Tiffany finishes her first part of witch training.

Van Gennep's model constitutes the basis of Joseph Campbell's monomyth pattern.³⁸ Tiffany is in fact one of rare examples of female heroes who actually perform the journey of the archetypal male hero analysed by Campbell. The journey follows the pattern of departure, separation, initiation and return and consists of the following stages: a call to adventure, a road of trials, severe challenge, achieving of the gift, return to ordinary world and, finally, application of the boon. Separated from her homeland and family, Tiffany undergoes many trials and challenges, of which the encounters with the hiver, the wintersmith and elves are but few examples. She becomes a fully trained witch and finally comes back home, with her newly gained knowledge, to live there, serve and care for her community. Defeating the wintersmith by kissing him is not just a ruse. It becomes *hieros gamos*, a ritual playing out a marriage between a god and a goddess, in which the wintersmith is an incarnation of winter and Tiffany symbolizes summer. The aim of the ritual is to restore fertility of land and nature and to increase the wellbeing and fortune of a community.

Finally, Tiffany becoming the Chalk, understanding the real meaning of her name Land Under Wave, and defeating the elves, introduces two ideas omnipresent in myths. The first is the idea of a human being who constitutes an inextricable part of the world of nature. When Tiffany's community finds itself in danger, the young witch unites with her land, literally becomes the land and commands it. At the same time, the land takes the shape of Tiffany and acts through her. The second is the idea of the world of nature as a language, talking to humans and teaching them, revealing to them the truths about itself and

³⁷ E. Mielecinski, *The Poetics of Myth*, trans. Guy Lanoue, Alexandre Sadetsky, London, New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 204.

³⁸ J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

themselves. This is how Tiffany learns who she is and what her responsibilities are.

The act of uniting with her land is also the last step on her journey of individuation. In fact, not only does Tiffany undergo the initiation more typical for male heroes, but she also completes individuation typical for female protagonists, as presented by Pia Skogemann³⁹ and Annis Pratt⁴⁰. Such female individuation consists of seven phases: splitting off from the world of ego, the green-world guide or token, the green-world lover, confrontation with parental figures, the plunge into the unconscious, experiencing death and return to the known world. It is important to notice, that according to this theory, the meeting with god does not end in marriage and girl's passivity, but results in gaining new experience and a choice to reject life with god-like male figure, and going back to the real life. In this respect, the wintersmith could be considered a green-world lover. Also, the encounter with the hiver and teaching him to die symbolise both a plunge into the unconscious and the death experience. Finishing her journey of individuation and reintegration, Tiffany becomes the witch, the shepherd, but also the protector of the land, the guardian of the laws, the land's and the community's memory: "She tells the land what it is, and it tells her who she is."⁴¹

The interweaving of the mimetic and the fantastic introduces myth as a dominant mode of narration in the Tiffany Aching novels. Through the use of morphological elements of myth such as sacred time, the time of beginnings, Supernatural Beings, as well as the sacred space and *axis mundi*, Pratchett deepens the complexity of the Discworld and allows the sacred to enter his subcreation. The motives of initiation, the archetypal hero's journey, *hieros gamos* and female individuation widen the context of Tiffany's story and multiply its different layers of meaning. They permit to create a multidimensional universe, where a human being becomes an inextricable element of the world of nature, linked to its rhythms, while nature itself transforms into a language and a teacher. Finally, they become crucial in forming or discovering one's identity by discussing the questions concerning human duties, responsibilities as well as sense of belonging to a community, loyalty or even philosophical aspects of ordinary daily life. All those contexts and layers of meaning would not be possible without the dynamics of mimetic and fantastic elements. It is the interplay of re-

³⁹ P. Skogemann, *Kobiecość w rozwoju. Psychologia współczesnej kobiety (Kvindelighed i vækst)*, trans. Piotr Billig, Warszawa: Eneteia, 2003.

⁴⁰ A. Pratt, *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.

⁴¹ T. Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky*, p. 268.

alism and the fantastic which turns out to be reality's extension that allows the movement from ethnos to mythos. The two modes constitute the basis of myth which, at some point, dominates the narration of Tiffany Aching story.

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