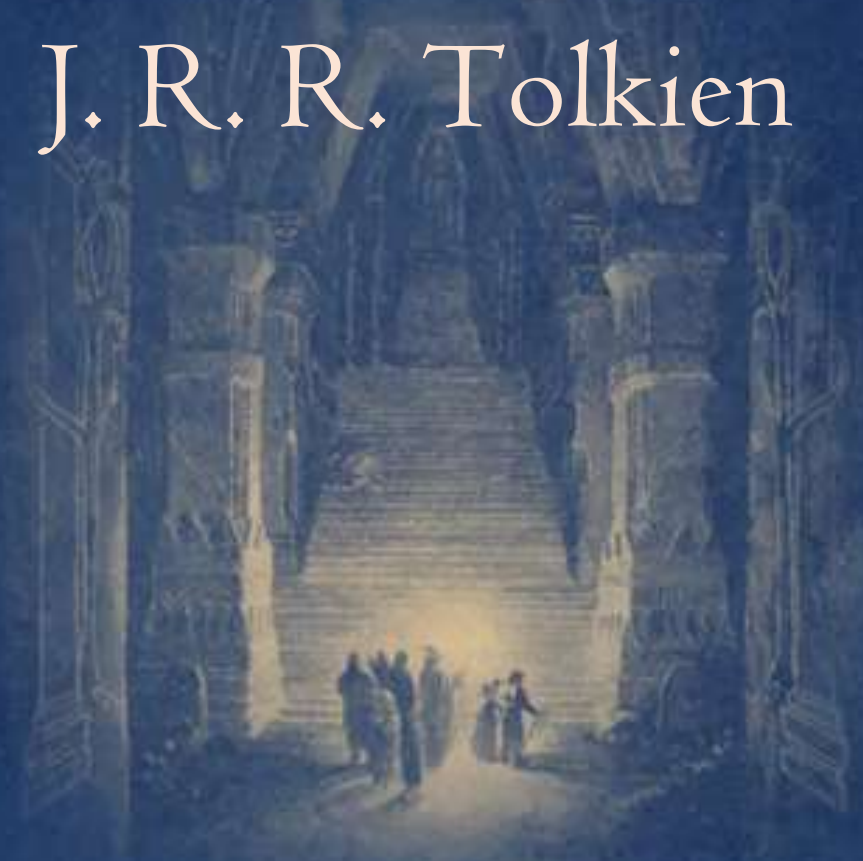# WORLDS MADE OF HEROES

A Tribute to
J. R. R. Tolkien

Editors

Filomena Vasconcelos
Inês Botelho
Maria Luísa Malato

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JUST A FEW WORDS…

> Then darkness took me, and I strayed out of thought and time, and I wandered far on roads that I will not tell. Naked I was sent back – for a brief time, until my task is done.
>
> J.R.R. Tolkien. *The Lord of The Rings. Part II – The Two Towers*

J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has been read and transformed in multiple ways, its narrative meticulously examined, its symbols analysed, its text regarded as configuring different allegories. Indeed, the novels became the best-known and most celebrated epic fantasy trilogy in the 20th century preserving their preponderance throughout more recent times. Whether in literature, cinema or music, countless works have been produced in their shadow, both as mere derivative pieces and as original fictions with an active and distinctive voice. As clearly shown by numerous studies in wide areas of literary theory and criticism as well as in comparative literature, Tolkien's legacy is both literary and cultural, it tackles sensitive national identity issues, and its influence pours out in many postmodern representations of man and nature, thus recreating the old traditional paths of epic fantasy and fantastic literature overall.

Derived as they were from the absorption and transformation of a sizeable body of mythological works in a number of languages, as well as from ancient-classical epic narratives and travel literature, Tolkien's mythopoetic compositions have themselves spawned a wealth of intermedial adaptations, from illustrations and radio plays to films, comic books, heavy metal and folk songs, symphonic compositions, operas, videogames, role playing games (RPG), spoofs...

Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptation of *The Lord of The Rings* (2001-2003) is perhaps the greatest example of all, having contributed so far to further popularize Tolkien's work and to awake a global epic fantasy euphoria.

''The laws of the fantastic are, above all, those of the imagination, and they are, as such, difficult to define' – these are the words of Maria do Rosário Monteiro,

in her study *A Simbólica do Espaço em* O Senhor dos Anéis *de J.R. R. Tolkien* (2010: 15, our translation), to describe Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as a pioneer novel in contemporary fantastic literature. This book also proves it with a polyhedric approach.

In the short anthology of essays that we are now most pleased to launch as a digital publication of the University of Porto, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, literary and cultural questionings will be discussed alongside intermedial dynamics within the context of Tolkien's work and its multiple versions and expansions. Ultimately, at a narratological level, a particular interest will be given to textual analyses around rhetorical/ stylistic features and devices that further reveal important ideological layers.

Essays are ordered alphabetically, based on the authors' first name initial. Starting with "The Importance of Songs in the Making of Heroes and their impact in Different Media", by Ana Loureiro, the paper analyses the construction of heroes in *The Lord of the Rings* and discusses how heroes lead to the making of songs and vice versa: as they are related to the elvish world and actions, songs lead eventually to the making of heroes.

Andrew Roos Bell's paper, "Wounds in the World: The Shared Symbolism of Death-sites in Middle-Earth", examines a correlated aspect of the symbolism of Middle-earth's three most prominent death-sites (the barrow downs, the dead marshes, and the paths of the dead) while suggesting that the unquiet dead owe their state not simply to these locales' status as tombs, but to burial following acts of unresolved violence.

Bernard Scherr presents his "From Epic Poetry to Music. Tolkien's universe as inspiration for *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band*", where he regards Tolkien's epic narrative as the inspirational source behind the author's musical composition: *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band.* Its four movements express in sound certain thematic elements that are woven throughout Tolkien's epic narrative. An analysis of each movement, illustrated throughout with written musical examples, shows how the musical material is connected to specific themes found in Tolkien's narrative.

Bernhard Hirsch's essay, "Character and Perspective: The Multi-Quest in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord Of The Rings*", approaches Tolkien's most celebrated novel from a narratological point of view, studying its complex character system and concluding that the text narrates not just one Ring-quest but many quest plots. The multi-quest narrative, as the author describes it, resists and defies the *actantial* models of formalist and structuralist analyses of single-quest narratives, and emphasises subplots of the text, as it brings forth "marginalised points of view of secondary (anti-)heroes".

Addressing contemporary concerns of national identity in Wales, Carl Phelpstead's essay, "Geoffrey of Monmouth and J. R. R. Tolkien: Myth-Making and National Identity in The Twelfth and Twentieth Centuries", traces back the origins of the stories of King Lear and Cymbeline to the twelfth-century account of the early history of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth (*Historia regum Britanniae)*, which also provided the seminal early account of King Arthur. The essay further explores the striking parallels between Geoffrey's work and that of J. R. R. Tolkien and how they both "'turned to the making of myth in order to address contemporary concerns of national identity."

The Indo-European mythological structure of *The Lord of The Rings* is the theme of Cong Mingh Vu's essay, "Mythology and Cosmology in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of The Rings*". Introducing Dumézil's threefold model of functions – the royal function, the warrior function, the productive function – the author points out the cosmological and metaphysical dimension of Tolkien's work based on the proposition "All is One".

In "Beren and Rhaegar as Two Kinds of Heroes. The Cultural Transmission of the Topic of Love", Eduardo Encabo-Fernández and Isabel Jerez-Martínez reflect on the hero characters of Tolkien's "Beren" and G. R. R. Martins's "Rhaegar" and on what links them, namely, their love stories. Emphasising love conditions and dimensions rather than epic aspects, the authors aim at a comparative study of both characters, different in nature as they are and reflecting their own particular story contexts.

"Of Dead Heroes and Mutable Faces: A Study of *A Song Of Ice And Fire*'s Rhaegar Targaryen", by Hugo Ferraz Gomes, points out the material absence of

Rhaegar Targaryen from the narrative of George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, since, at the outset of the series, the death of the Prince of Dragonstone is already an event of the past. Rhaegar is therefore interpreted as an amalgam of truth and imagination. Ultimately, the paper emphasises that while undergoing a process of reevaluation, rewriting and manipulation, Rhaegar may also be compared to many other heroic characters like Cú Chulainn and Achilles. Since it is 'profuse and impossible to fixate" he "not only fits the archetype of the hero but also subverts it by interpreting its heroic role as an equivocal symbol."

The last essay, by Raul Montero Gilete, "Children and Young Heroes in *The Fellowship of The Ring* and *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe"*, analyses the role of children and young heroes in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* and C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* based on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and his account of the hero on the first adventure stage, the Departure. The paper further focuses on Lewis' heroes of Book 2 of *The Chronicles of Narnia,* the Pevensie siblings — Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy —, as well as on Tolkien's four Hobbits — Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin — of Book 1 of *The Lord of the Rings*, in order to outline a common ground of possible links between the nature of children and heroism.

Perhaps this last essay provides the reason to read all the others, inquiring why Tolkien's work remains so attractive to so many readers around the world: maybe because it is the representation of a radical vitality in the face of obstacles.

Tolkien's success would not certainly result from undertaking "a world around language", from outlining a "creative process" that encompasses even the musical elements of that language, or from "creating a mythology for England" that can be read in its contemporaneity – even if Tolkien and his main biographer, Humphrey Carpenter, have called our attention to the importance of these three elements as the founding forces of his writing. In fact, today, at least, Tolkien's readers don't seem to be particularly captivated by the mythology created for contemporary England. Also, the translation of his novels seems to diminish the poetic impact the latter have in English. And general questions about languages and the creation of archaic, forbidden or invented codes – which have been Tolkien's "secret vice" since his childhood and are certainly seductive to those who despise the war between Lang (Linguistics) and Lit (Literature) – remain for

most readers "exotic" references, and would never justify the great enthusiasm for the adventures of Bilbo, Frodo, Gandolf, Beren, Lúthien or Éowyn…

Translated into more than 40 languages, finding readers in almost all ages, Tolkien's work only seems to require the open-mindedness of that sort of reader we associate with the child, however ageless this open-mindedness may be. Such open-mindedness is perhaps to be found at the very core of "fairy-stories". As Tolkien remarks, one should not mix up children with childlike: "In describing a fairy-story which they think adults might possibly read for their own entertainment, reviewers frequently indulge in such waggeries as: 'this book is for children from the ages of six to sixty'. But I have never yet seen the puff of a new motor-model that began thus: 'this toy will amuse infants from seventeen to seventy'; though that to my mind would be much more appropriate" (Tolkien, 1983: 129-130).

The common association, even nowadays, between Fantasy and Childhood would denounce the dangerous idea of considering Fantasy as an inferior kind of Literature, and children as inferior beings, "almost a different race, rather than normal, if immature, members of a particular family, and the human family at large" (ibid: 130).

Regardless of the time or space in which Tolkien's novels were written, the reason for their success is certainly found in the radical vitality that links both the author's and his readers' motivations: Tolkien's work requires only the curious and wondering reader he himself was. Never does it infantilize the reader, simply because it does not infantilize the child. Tolkien's intent has an utmost precision: the reader must believe what he is being told, even if some "details" of the narrative seem new and strange in the actual world he knows: "If they awakened *desire*, satisfying it while often whetting it unbearably, they succeeded" (*ibid*: 134). Therefore, to understand Tolkien, the capacity for Fantasy must never be confused with the mere capacity for Imagination (i.e., "the mental power of image-making", "the perception of image, the grasp of its implications, and the control", with several differences of degree). What interests Tolkien is a very different world: "the inner consistency of reality", "needing another name: Art, the operative link between Imagination and the final result, Sub-creation". In this sense, Fantasy is "a higher form of Art, indeed the most nearly pure form, and so (when

achieved) the most potent" (*ibid*: 138-139). Under this perspective, Fantasy is the most natural human activity. It does not oppose Reason or Science. It does not cloud our perception of reality. It is not a lie – "On the contrary" (*ibid*: 144). It is a desire for "Truth" and "Reality".

When Tolkien chooses the short epitaph on his wife's tomb and on his own – "Edith Mary Tolkien, Lúthien, 1889-1971// John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, Beren, 1892-1973" –, he denounces the vivid reality of the fable. When W. H. Auden, J. I. M. Stewart and other students recall Tolkien's lectures of Medieval Literature - – which invariably began with an exclamation (*Hwaet!*) followed by a reading of an excerpt from *Beowulf* – they believed they were hearing a bard or the voice of Gandalf. Not because Tolkien was Beren, a bard or Gandalf, but because his readings introduced them to a Secondary World, the transferred reality of their Primary World: this hidden world came into being and there was poetry in the life lived by each of them (Carpenter, 1990: 284, 151): "To make a Secondary World inside which the green sun will be credible, commanding Secondary Belief, will probably require labour and thought, and will certainly demand a special skill, a kind of elvish craft. Few attempt such difficult tasks. But when they are attempted and in any degree accomplished then we have a rare achievement of Art: indeed, narrative art, story-making in its primary and most potent mode" (Tolkien, 1983: 140).

Another reason, still related to its radical vitality, seems to justify the indelible enthusiasm for Tolkien's work: a deep Joy that radiates from his narrative, perfectly compatible with the melancholy that comes from knowing consciously that all Joy is fragile. Joy persist even though heroes die and dragons and rings survive them. During the second world war, on October 6, 1940, he wrote to his son Michael: "I am very sorry indeed, dear boy, that your Varsity career has been cut in two. […] Though in times of peace we get, perhaps (and naturally and for the purpose rightly), too engrossed in thinking of everything as a preparation or training or a making one fit – for what? At any minute it is what we are and are doing, not what plan and do that counts" (Tolkien, 1981: 46).

Tolkien often uses the word "Game" when referring to stories and life: it is a structure constrained by chance and established rules, yet, full of imaginative possibilities. The "story-making in its primary mode" does not disappoint him: on

the contrary, he rejoices in its basic character, as if he were a painter who discovers that he can paint everything with three colour tubes, or an architect who is ecstatic about the simplicity of having only straight and curved lines: "We do not, or need not, despair of drawing because all lines must be either curved or straight, nor of painting because there are only three 'primary' colours" (Tolkien, 1983: 146). In fact, this immanent despair in the face of simplicity or repetition is the clearest evidence of the freedom they hide. Tolkien's imitators did not always understand it this way: the literary escape is not only a form of consolation, but also a force of creation: "[…] the true road of escape from such weariness is not to be found in the wilfully awkward, clumsy, or misshapen, not in making all things dark or unremittingly violent; nor in the mixing of colours on through subtlety to drabness, and the fantastical complication of shapes to the point of silliness and on towards delirium. Before we reach and such states we need recovery. We should look at green again, and be startled anew (but not blinded) by blue and yellow and red. We should meet the centaur and the dragon, and then perhaps suddenly behold, like the ancient shepherds, sheep, and dogs, and horses – and wolves. This recovery fairy-stories help us to make." (*Ibidem*)

It is in search of creative liberation that we go back to basics, reading, re-reading Tolkien. It is still a quest for our salvation and a quest for objectivity: "Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining of a clear view. I do not say 'seeing things as they are' and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to seen them' – as things apart from ourselves" (*ibidem*). So we wish for this book on Tolkien's work.

Porto, July 2022

Filomena Vasconcelos
Maria Luísa Malato

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SONGS IN THE MAKING OF HEROES AND THEIR IMPACT ON DIFFERENT MEDIA

Ana Loureiro

Translator

Abstract: This paper analyses the importance of songs in the making of heroes in Middle Earth, focusing both on how heroes lead to the making of songs and on how songs lead to the making of heroes. It shows how poems, meant as songs, apply specific linguistic mechanisms to cause an impact on the way we see those who are described in the songs, especially the elves. Moreover, it analyses how these songs are interpreted and transposed into different media, besides discussing whether they are chosen and adapted in such a way as to facilitate the subtitling task. The paper looks at how songs, related to the elvish world and actions, are valued and relevant in the construction of heroes in *The Lord of Rings.* Likewise, it reflects on how they were analysed, and which elements were given priority to during the translation process.

Keywords: Tolkien – Middle Earth – Song – Intermedial dynamics – Translation.

"[…] if there is no poet to sing them, heroes do vanish. The word and the writing, namely the gatekeepers of the past, offer the ultimate victory over oblivion and death."

(Vincent Ferré, *Tolkien*)[1]

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[1] Portuguese edition: "[…] se não houver um poeta para os cantar, os heróis desaparecem, a palavra e a escrita, guardiãs do passado, oferecem a derradeira vitória sobre o esquecimento e a morte." (FERRÉ 2004: 284).

Do heroes lead to the making of songs or rather, do songs lead to the making of heroes? Is it a brave and fearless character and the hardships of a long quest that determine what is heroic? Or then is it the way in which these deeds are perceived that showcases the heroic fragment? Who or what determines what is heroic or not? Is someone a hero because of what s/he does or is it how what is done is then perceived and remembered by others? These are some of the questions raised and discussed in this paper, even though there is probably no single true and definitive answer to all (or any) of them. These questions will be analysed from an internal and external point of view considering the characters and the readers. Moreover, these issues will be approached from a linguistic, literary, practical and even philosophical point of view. Nonetheless, we aim at no more than presenting a view on the relevance of songs in the making of heroes in Tolkien's work, especially *The Lord of the Rings.*

1. Tolkien's heroes

Heroes have been defined in many ways. Roughly, according to numerous dictionary definitions, a hero can generally be described as a person who is admired for great and brave acts or fine qualities. Nevertheless, we will try to prove that achieving brave acts or having fine qualities is not always enough to become a hero, or even to be perceived as one, since this is not enough to make sure one will be remembered. A hero can also just be a person who is greatly admired. But then again, being admired is no proof of accomplished heroic acts, so this is also not enough to define a hero. Some dictionaries also define a hero as the main male character in a story, play, movie, etc. Again, this definition raises several contradictory issues. Firstly, no leading male character is guaranteed to be heroic, and secondly, why should it be the chief *male* character and not just the main character, be it male or female? In fact, *The Lord of the Rings* portrays quite a few heroic female characters, such as Arwen and Éowin. Hence, one can conclude that there are many views on who (or even what) a hero is. It can

therefore be assumed that whoever is seen as a hero depends greatly on a personal definition and perception. One could even advocate that heroism is merely in the eye of the beholder.

This paper will nonetheless only consider heroes who manage to achieve something extraordinary, especially those who come from a common walk of life and who, through some out-of-the-ordinary chain of events, end up being faced with a quest, a *call to adventure*[2]. In fact, in most of Tolkien's work, one can only be a hero if one takes part in some kind of adventure. Hence, taking part in an adventure implies being *called* out of a common and ordinary life. As far as Tolkien is concerned, there are no tales or songs about ordinary people and ordinary lives, and that is why the first step to becoming a hero, who is worthy of a song, is the stepping out of the ordinary. This idea is clearly voiced by Sam when he sits down to rest with Frodo on their way up the stairs of Cirith Ungol:

"The brave things in the old tales and songs, Mr. Frodo: adventures, as I used to call them. I used to think that they were things the wonderful folk of the stories went out and looked for [...]. But that's not the way of it with the tales that really mattered are the ones that stay in the mind. Folk seem to have been just landed in them [...]. But I expect they had lots of chances, like us, of turning back, only they didn't. And if they had, we shouldn't know, because they'd have been forgotten." (TOLKIEN 1973b: 362)

Furthermore, it is interesting, though not surprising, to note that heroes are created during the journey, and not upon arrival at a specific destination. It is the journey that provides Tolkien's characters with the chance to become heroic. The heroic importance lies within the learning process, the bravery of character and courage shown throughout the journey. Tolkien's characters are not born heroes and they do not acquire this status overnight. They must prove themselves in the course of long, long journeys. In some senses, one might even say that the

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[2] Reference to Joseph Campbell's monomyth (*Hero With a Thousand Faces),* which analyses the patterns and paths of heroes in mythology.

character's journey somehow represents the inner journey of becoming a hero. In Tolkien's work, it seems that *becoming* a hero is rather more relevant than just *being* one.

According to DURIEZ (2003), Tolkien did know that readers expected heroes in stories such as those of Middle Earth. However, heroes from *Beowulf* or *The Odyssey* are rather outdated and lack the appeal of reality. As such, Tolkien's heroes are more of a biblical type than of a superman nature[3]. The most relevant traits of his heroes are humility and imagination, and not strength and power. In fact, Duriez believes that "The World will be saved by humble and common people, and not by the powerful or the wise"[4]. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that a proper hero, according to Tolkien, will come from people who are as common as the hobbits. As such, it is amongst these "common" hobbits that one will find the humblest and legitimate hero, namely Sam. As Duriez states, service, loyalty and sacrifice are heroic qualities in Tolkien's world.[5]

"Sam, the hobbit, is the 'main hero' (as Tolkien calls him) in *The Lord of the Rings*. In a letter to his son Christopher, in 1944, the professor said that most certainly, 'Sam is a flawless character, Bilbo's successor, a true hobbit. Frodo is not as interesting since he has to think in noble terms and, one can say, he has a calling'. However, and despite

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[3] Portuguese edition: "O leitor espera heróis tradicionais como parte do género. Contudo, Tolkien conhecia os seus leitores e sabia que não podia escrever como o autor de *A Odisseia*, *A Morte de Artur* ou *Beowulf*. O público original destas obras acreditava que o mal podia ser vencido com um super-herói. Ora, actualmente, um herói assim seria uma figura de banda desenhada pouco convincente, como Indiana Jones ou James Bond, onde a crença depende da acção. […] Foi capaz […] de criar heróis convincentes mais bíblicos do que super-homens. Na Terra Média de Tolkien, em última instância, os humildes herdarão a Terra." (DURIEZ 2003: 199-200).

[4] Portuguese edition: "O mundo será salvo por gente humilde e comum e não pelos poderosos ou sábios."

[5] Portuguese edition: "A mordomia é uma qualidade heróica valorizada no mundo de Tolkien, e o sacrifício também. […] Ser leal e serviçal também são qualidades heroicas" (DURIEZ 2003: 201).

this, Frodo is a key hero, even more so, due to his determination to fulfil the quest to Mordor."[6]

Nevertheless, one can still find strong and virile heroes in Tolkien's work, "a heroic hero, the sort we feel shy of identifying ourselves with" (Rogers *apud* LOBDELL 2003: 69).

"However, there are also 'heroic' heroes, with traits that can redefine greatness. Aragorn is a character who is able to match great legendary heroes, but he is characterised by gentleness, humility and the gift of healing. Even though he is pre-Christian, he is a hero and a Christic king. The noble quality, which is often attributed to the elves, is softened and humanised in him."[7]

Still, throughout the whole story, this type of *hero* is still more interested in sharing songs than with being part of them, as stated by Vincent Ferré: "Without being certain that men will ever hear about his courage, Aragorn prepares himself for combat with no promise of fame".[8]

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[6] Portuguese edition: "O hobbit Sam é o «herói principal» (como lhe chama Tolkien) de O Senhor dos Anéis. Numa carta ao filho Christopher, em 1944, o professor dizia que, certamente, «Sam é a personagem mais aperfeiçoada, o sucessor de Bilbo do primeiro livro, o hobbit genuíno. Frodo não é tão interessante porque tem de pensar em termos nobres e tem, digamos, uma vocação.». Frodo, contudo, e apesar desta explicação, é um herói central, tanto mais pela sua persistência em cumprir a demanda até Mordor" (DURIEZ 2003: 200).

[7] Portuguese edition: "Todavia, também existem heróis «heróicos» com qualidades que redefinem a grandeza. Aragorn é figura capaz de igualar os grandes heróis lendários, mas caracteriza-se pela docilidade, humildade e pelo dom da cura. Embora o centenário seja pré-cristão, ele é um herói e um rei crístico. As nobres qualidades frequentemente associadas aos elfos são neles suavizadas e humanizadas" (DURIEZ 2003: 201).

[8] Portuguese edition: "Sem certezas de que os homens venham a ouvir falar da sua coragem, Aragorn prepara-se para o combate sem promessa de fama" (FERRÉ 2003: 286).

2. The favouring and flavouring of songs

"Ultimately, in Tolkien's world, music is the organizing principle behind all creation. Tolkien's mystical conception of the World as a manifestation of great musical composition, seems to presuppose a musical cosmos that is an eternally harmonious system created by a Supreme Intelligence. It also presupposes that encoded within the "Great Music" and the "Spheres of the World" is all that was, is, and will be, including the fate of every man and every living thing in creation." (DAY 2003: 20)

Not only in *The Lord of the Rings*, but also in several mythological stories, such as *Beowulf*, are songs a crucial part of the story[9]. It is through songs that we learn about past deeds, history and heroes. It is also through songs that we get to know the heroes, adventures, dangers they underwent and overcame, as well as how what they did changed everything. This is probably why songs, written as poems, were always given a special stand in Tolkien's work. Namely, in *J. R. R. Tolkien reads The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings*, when during the 1950s he recorded some parts of the books and all his main characters were to recite songs (FERRÉ 2004: 285).

There are seven 'speaking races' in Tolkien's world, each of them somehow representing a different feature of humankind. And, if some are well aware of others and they represent no wonder or mystery at all (such as men and elves are aware of mostly everything), there are other races who live rather 'boxed' within their lands and everything that goes beyond borders is somehow mysterious, out of their range of knowledge and understanding; this outside world is 'fantastic' and gives way to the making of songs, which is what happens with hobbits and their views on elves, ents or pretty much anything besides their own kind. In fact, this is quite easy to explain. Just as during the Discoveries people would make up myths of monsters to explain what they could not understand, or

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[9] Portuguese edition: "Ele cantava a glória de Segismundo e dos seus grandes feitos […]", *Beowulf*, org. de J. Queval, op. cit., p. 95 (v. 874 in Swanton's edition, *op. cit.*, 77).

even songs about the heroic deeds of their sailors, so too the people of Middle Earth compose songs to remember and explain extraordinary deeds.

Going through the pages of *The Lord of the Rings*, or any of Tolkien's work set in Middle Earth, one will quickly realise these are filled with songs written in verse. In fact, the very creation of Middle Earth happens with a song. The Ainur, divine creatures of Eä, create the world with *Ainunlindalë*[10], a song that constitutes the first part of *The Silmarillion*. As Duriez puts it, "The power of the song is the magical power behind creation […]", or rather, songs are so powerful as to enable the very creation of Middle Earth[11]. Moreover, Duriez believes that this was C. S. Lewis' inspiration for the creation of Narnia.

3. How heroes lead to the making of songs

Despite usually being overlooked by readers, who tend to jump these verses, songs are crucial to several aspects of the storyline. In fact, it is through these songs that characters, places, deeds and quests are put into context. More often than not, heroic and other relevant characters and places are introduced by others who sing about their endeavours. This is especially evident when the Company is exploring Moria and Sam wonders "Why did they [dwarves] do it all for? They didn't live in these darksome holes surely?" (TOLKIEN 1973a: 354) to which Gimli quickly replies:

"'These are not holes,' said Gimli. 'This is the great realm and city of the Dwarrowdelf. And of old it was not darksome, but full of light and splendour, as is still remembered in our songs.' He rose and standing in the dark he began to chant in a deep voice, while the echoes ran away into the roof." (TOLKIEN 1973a: 354)

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[10] *Ainunlindalë* in Quenya, one the languages of elves, means "Music of the Ainur".

[11] Portuguese edition: "O poder da canção é o poder mágico que subjaz a criação […]" (DURIEZ 2003: 221).

This proves that the song is one (or maybe the only) way of preserving greatness in one's memory. The actual verses that he sings support this idea further by describing how mighty the Durin people were in building something that, no matter what may come, "There shone for ever fair and bright":

"[...] A king he was on carven throne
In many-pillared halls of stone
With golden roof and silver floor,
And runes of power upon the door.
The light of sun and star and moon
In shining lamps of crystal hewn
Undimmed by cloud or shade of night
There shone for ever fair and bright.[...]"
(TOLKIEN 1973a)

And despite all the work these dwarves had, as described in Sam's words – "every one of them busier than badgers for five hundred years to make all this, and most in hard rock too!" (TOLKIEN 1973a: 354), the song then goes on to portray them.

"[...] Unwearied then were Durin's folk;
Beneath the mountains music woke:
The harpers harped, the minstrels sang,
And at the gates the trumpets rang. [...]"
(TOLKIEN 1973a)

Nonetheless, the song does not go as far as not acknowledging that the world had changed:

"[...] The world is grey, the mountains old,
The forge's fire is ashen-cold;"
(TOLKIEN, 1973a)

Still, it is clear that glory and mightiness do not die, not the kind that finds their way into a song. All the people and deeds that find their way into a song tend to be never-dying and somehow everlasting. As such,

"[...] But still the sunken stars appear
In dark and windless Mirrormere;
There lies his crown in water deep,
Till Durin wakes again from sleep."
(TOLKIEN 1973a: 354-356)

By using a distinct rhythm, pace, choice of words and way of portraying people and deeds, these songs, or poems, say it as no piece of prose ever could. Only subtleness and specificities of language and imagery found in poetry say it all. As such, after this almost solemn moment, "Gimli was silent. Having sung his song he would say no more", is almost as if anything one could ever add would just ruin it (TOLKIEN 1973a: 356).

Another example of how relevant songs are to the understanding of history, deeds, people and places worth knowing and remembering is the *Song of Beren and Lúthien,* which is sung, remembered and somehow relived by Aragorn. Again, the solemnity of the moment is clearly conveyed by the silence and softness surrounding this moment.

"'I will tell you the tale of Tinúviel,' said Strider, 'in brief – for it is a long tale of which the end is not known; and there are none now, except Elrond, that remember it aright as it was told of old. It is a fairy tale, though it is sad, as are all the tales of Middle-earth, and yet it may lift up your hearts.' He was silent for some time, and then he began not to speak, but to chant softly [...]." (TOLKIEN 1973a: 216)

Again, the same softness and solemnity is present when Legolas sings about Nimrodel, "In a soft voice hardly to be heard amid the rustle of the leaves above them he began" (TOLKIEN 1973a: 380).

Relevant arguments come to mind when thinking of the reasons why prose is put aside in favour of songs, whenever the topic is something extraordinary, be it place, heroic deed or character. One could say that songs are easier to learn and remember and that is probably why a lot of common knowledge is passed on from one generation to the other by the use of songs and poems. If there is some heroic deed that should be remembered, people pass it on in such a way as to make it interesting enough to keep it moving from one generation to the other. Songs are used to teach children a myriad of things, as happens in the case of nursery rhymes. This 'teaching method' works because songs and rhymes are different, fun and memorable. Thus, if they help teach children, why not adults too? As David Day mentions, "In most ancient civilizations, the study of music was recognized as the primary means of understanding the universe" (DAY 2003: 20). Furthermore, when writing, songs can be a fun way of telling stories, instead of using *old boring narratives*. This change of rhythm and pace from the prose of the narrative is needed to highlight the extraordinary aspect of some tales, and help the reader learn more about the hero.

On the one hand, this may imply that songs are a good media for remembering and passing on heroic tales. On the other hand, it may also mean these songs or poems are somehow embellished to make things interesting for the listeners. In fact, this makes one wonder whether the heroic nature comes from the deed, the perception of the deed or the song itself. Even if sometimes a heroic action may arise from a stroke of luck, most of the time someone does something which is at least a bit heroic. Nevertheless, *a tale never loses in the telling*, and as time goes by, heroes tend to grow more heroic as their story is further spread and as more people and generations perceive them as heroes. This idea might lead us to the conclusion that, in fact, songs – and all the inherent literary structures that make them poetic and memorable – are crucial to the construction of heroes or, more accurately, the way of perceiving heroes.

4. How songs lead to the making of heroes

Sometimes, the song behind a hero is a force that is more relevant than the hero *per se* and his/her deeds. Sometimes, it is the song that makes readers perceive certain characters as heroes, long before any other literary structure has the chance to do so. At times, the song, or the *possibility* of a future song is what promotes a character into becoming a hero.

In fact, throughout all the hardships and pains of his journey with the Company and especially with Frodo, Sam kept wishing that someday, somehow, it would all be worth it if people would just sing about them, as he states in *The Two Towers*:

"Still, I wonder if we shall ever be put into songs or tales. We're in one, of course; but I mean: put into words, you know, told by the fireside, or read out of a great big book with red and black letters, years and years afterwards. And people will say: 'Let's hear about Frodo and the Ring'!" (TOLKIEN 1973b: 363)

And eventually their deeds are acknowledged, in Gondor, after their quest is properly concluded, "[...] they were surprised to see knights in bright mail and tall guards in silver and black standing there, who greeted them with and bowed before them." As it should be, their extraordinary journey and accomplishments do get them a place in songs:

"And as the Hobbits approached swords were unsheathed, and spears were shaken, and horns and trumpets sang, and men cried with many voices and in many tongues:
      'Long live the Halflings! Praise them with great praise! [...]
      To Sam's final and complete satisfaction and pure joy, a minstrel of Gondor stood forth, and knelt, and begged leave to sing. And behold! he said:
      'Lo! lords and knights and men of valour unashamed, kings and princes, and fair people of Gondor, and Riders of Rohan, and ye sons of Elrond, and Dúnedain of the North, and Elf and Dwarf, and greathearts of the Shire, and all free folk of the West, now

listen to my lay. For I will sing to you of Frodo of the Nine Fingers and the Ring of Doom.'" (TOLKIEN 1973c: 248-249)

Alternatively, songs can also lead to the making of heroes, or then at least play some role in doing so. For Sam, the promise or possibility of being part of a song – of achieving glory and being part of one of those *great tales*, of being kept alive in history for generations to come – is sometimes the source of strength that he needs to carry on. Somehow, it is the possibility of becoming a hero that allows him to carry on and become one. Holding on to the idea that he *could* become one makes him go ahead and does what it takes. Of course, Sam is also greatly pushed by his loyalty and love for Frodo, since he is not capable of abandoning him for any reason whatsoever.

5. Impact on different media

Translating is never an easy or immediate task. As Paul Valéry said, "Fidelity to meaning alone in translation is a kind of betrayal". When one tries to add the translation of poetry and spice it up with different media, then one faces a far greater challenge. Conveying all the meanings, beauty, solemnity and everything that is present in these songs – be it in another language or another media – is close to an impossible mission worthy of looking at.

Given the time and space constraints, this paper will consider rather superficially just a few examples. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the linguistic and poetic mechanisms of songs and their impact on one's perception of the characters in different media.

The first relevant aspect that has an impact on this translation or transposition is how songs are analysed in the process of conveying them into another language or media. Thus, one could ask which elements are given priority to during the translation process? Considering the constraints of translating poetry – the choice

between focusing on metrics, rhyme, rhythm, semantics, or figures of speech, amongst others – one can find different solutions to this challenge, as the goals of each of these features and their order of relevance varies according to the person or the media in question.

When looking at the translation of some of the songs/poems of *The Lord of the Rings*, one would say that, more than pace, rhyme or rhythm, the Portuguese versions privilege the words and the raw meaning of the poems[12]. Here, it should be added that this is just a personal interpretation and opinion with no deep knowledge of the context and conditions under which the translations were carried out.

When looking at the verses Gimli sings in Moria about Durin, the immediate meaning is clearly preserved in the Portuguese translation.
However, reading the verses out loud, one realises the rhythm and melody, which is created by the rhyme present in the word choice and order of the original song, are not present in the translation.

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[12] In relation to the Portuguese versions, this paper will look solely at the Portuguese edition by Edições Europa América (1981).

But still the sunken stars appear In dark and windless Mirrormere; There lies his crown in water deep, Till Durin wakes again from sleep. (TOLKIEN 1973a: 356)	*Mas as estrelas submersas ainda aparecem No negro e parado Lago do Espelho; Lá jaz a sua coroa na água funda, Até Durin despertar de novo.* (TOLKIEN 1981a: 364).

Again, in *The Fellowship of the* Ring, when Aragorn sings the *Song of Beren and Lúthien*, the original version and the translation share a very similar meaning but make use of rather different styles. Nevertheless, in this case, the Portuguese verses show some concern in conveying some of the literary stylistic traits besides the meaning. This is made clear by the anastrophe and the omission of the verb in the second verse ("Altas e graciosas as umbelas da cicuta" rather than "As umbelas da cicuta *eram* altas e graciosas")*.*

The leaves were long, the grass was green, The hemlock-umbels tall and fair, And in the glade a light was seen Of stars in shadow shimmering. (TOLKIEN 1973a: 216).	*As folhas eram compridas, a erva verde, Altas e graciosas as umbelas da cicuta E na clareira via-se um luzeiro De estrelas a brilhar na sombra.* (TOLKIEN 1981a: 228).

In translation, and especially in literary translation, there is often the need to compromise insofar as different languages have different stylistic and semantic mechanisms which, most of the time, are rather unique and do not resemble those of other languages. In this specific case, one could say that meaning and semantics were the priorities of the translator of this Portuguese version of *The Lord of the Rings*.

When considering another media – *The Lord of the Rings* movies – songs are not as present as they are in the books, rather far from so. One could think of many reasons for this, be it the need to create harmonies for written songs and all the challenges that this might bring, the need to find a way to 'pause' the action and create the right mood for a song, as well as the challenges for the actors, amongst many other possible reasons. At this point, this paper will only look at

two examples illustrating two different solutions for this matter: the *Song of Beren and Lúthien* and the moment when Frodo and Sam are presented with their own song about their deeds in Gondor.

In the first case, the extended version of *The Fellowship of the Ring* offers us a small preview of Aragorn singing. One could argue that, despite all the challenges and constraints, the film is able to convey the solemnity of the moment by giving priority to the content of the song, rather than its harmony.

As for the second example, in relation to Frodo and Sam's song, the third movie of the trilogy provides one with a different view. Leaving the song aside, the film tries to convey the same degree of relevance conveyed in the book by having the newly crowned king bow before the four hobbits, as well the whole city of Gondor. In this way, the honour and acknowledgment represented by Frodo and Sam having their own song is transposed to the honour it would be to have a king bow before mere hobbits. This is a rather interesting strategy which proves how relevant the song is, when one looks at what it is replaced by in the movie. One should remember that the song itself is a reference to all the heroic deeds achieved throughout most of their journey.

Conclusion

Should one, for a moment, leave Tolkien's world aside and think of one's own world, it would be possible to realise that today's heroes are the people about whom we also 'sing' about. If one takes 'songs' as metaphors for media coverage, as relevant stances in socialisation, culture and history, then, heroes can only be heroes if people want them to be, no matter what they have achieved. How relevant are metaphoric songs in the making of today's heroes? One could say quite a lot. As Vergil put it in *The Aeneid*, "If aught I sing / have lasting music, no remotest age / shall blot your names from honor's storied scroll" (VERGIL 1910, Book IX, verse 446).

There are really not many other ways of learning about heroes which can provide them with such a solemn character. How relevant are deeds and achievements, in other words, how relevant are heroes to the making of songs? Actually, not so much anymore. In fact, there are many reasons for this, such as the (lack of) relevance of good character traits, or the (lack of) importance of selfless achievements, amongst many other reasons. This corresponds to the way in which we assess people and what we value in heroes nowadays – these, unfortunately (or maybe not), tend to be (in)famous rather than heroic. If in Tolkien's world and work heroes seem to lead to the making of songs more often than the opposite, in today's non-epic real world, one could say that it is less so.

Nevertheless, it seems that Tolkien's heroes do get the privilege of being 'sung' if they are brave enough to step out of their common world, evolve and show their heroic character during the course of the journey. They end up being able to do what is extraordinary in order to preserve the ordinary world, as it were, free from whatever evil they are fighting.

In Tolkien's work, poems and songs provide a magic or extraordinary character, almost like a *spell* that, in Ferré's (2003: 286) words, gives the characters their heroic nature:

"[…] the Rohan's guard's remark towards Strider – 'It seems like you came on the wings of a song, from forgotten times' – could also be addressed to all the characters, appointing them as story heroes. Hence, we are compelled to consider this work as a 'spell', a magic formula, given that this term refers to those who have been quoted and to the quotation itself, 'it simultaneously stands for a story that is told and a power formula over the living.'"[13]

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[13] Portuguese edition: "[...] o reparo do guarda de Rohan a Passo de Gigante – «Parece que vieste nas asas da canção, dos tempos esquecidos» – poderia também aplicar-se também a todas as personagens, designando-as como heróis de relatos. Somos assim impelidos a considerar esta obra como um «spell», uma fórmula mágica, já que este termo designa o enunciado e a enunciação, «significa em simultâneo uma história contada e uma fórmula de poder sobre os vivos" (FERRÉ 2003: 286).

Just as Sam did, one could also wonder: "Don't the great tales never end?" (TOLKIEN 1973b: 363).

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WOUNDS IN THE WORLD: THE SHARED SYMBOLISM OF DEATH-SITES IN MIDDLE-EARTH

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Abstract: This paper examines a correlated aspect of the symbolism of Middle-earth's three most prominent death-sites: the barrow downs, the dead marshes, and the paths of the dead. It suggests that the unquiet dead in these three sites owe their state not simply to these locales' status as tombs, but to burial following acts of unresolved violence. It is this state of unresolved conflict which maintains these discordant links to the past. While some scholarship has focused on these sites individually or as a category of ruins, this paper seeks to bring new attention to them as a different kind of symbolically-related category within Middle-earth. Furthermore, this promises to open new lines of inquiry into Tolkien's symbolic depiction of death, and to flesh out current understandings of the structure of symbolism in Middle-earth.

Key words: Tolkien – symbolism – Middle-earth – death.

In her 2007 paper "The Curious Incident of the Dream at the Barrow," Verlyn Flieger said of Middle-earth that "the past is not just tributary to the present, but also inhabits and immediately affects it" (FLIEGER 2007: 99). This paper will focus on how this present influence of the past is borne out in a very particular setting in J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy of novels, *The Lord of the Rings*: the grave. Nowhere in Middle-earth does the past seem more alive than in these haunts of death, far less resting places than they are battlegrounds or barracks for, as Margaret Sinex writes, "[u]nder mounds, under mountains and..under marsh the unquiet dead await the living" (SINEX 2005: 107). And, as students and fans of Tolkien's work will doubtless be aware, the places most haunted by these restless dead are the Barrow-Downs, the Dead Marshes, and the Paths of the Dead. These "death-sites" have of course been written about and analyzed at length before, but I have not found any comment on a particularly interesting and strong feature shared by all three. Not only do the dead of each remain active, but as this paper will explore, these cases share a common cause: the presence of an ongoing, unresolved conflict. Let me clarify by examining each in turn.

Of all the episodes involving these lingering dead in *The Lord of the Rings,* perhaps the most uncanny is the hobbits' encounter on the Barrow-downs. While crossing a landscape of tumuli containing tombs left over from a deceased kingdom, Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin become lost in the fog, and are subsequently seized and drawn below ground by a barrow-wight. But despite this violence, this remains perhaps the most subtle of the encounters with the dead, for the wight, as noted by Tom Shippey in his *Road to Middle-Earth*, is not the owner of the tomb (SHIPPEY 2003: 110). Instead, the true revenant interred beneath the turf does not make his presence felt until the very end of the encounter, and far from rising from his tomb, he merely speaks through the unlikely vehicle of Merry. But even as the wight's actions form a part of this encounter with the dead, so too does its invasive presence represent an inseparable component of the conflict lurking beyond the grave. Taken as a whole, the encounter reveals the power of unfinished business to perpetuate itself across time, both in the wight's and the dead man's presence.

The conflict at the root of the Barrow incident is in fact the old war between Arnor and Angmar, the long-crumbled kingdoms of the Dúnedain and the Witch-King, respectively, and it is a part of that war which lingers on within the barrow. Though this particular struggle ends with the eviction of the wight, it is itself merely a piece of the greater battle between the forces of darkness and light that overshadows the history of Middle-earth. But to glean the connection between the wight's assault on our halfling heroes and a long-forgotten war, we must begin at the end, when the man buried in the tomb appears in the voice of Merry, waking from an enchanted sleep.

"'What in the name of wonder?...Of course, I remember!,' he said. 'The men of Carn Dûm came on us at night, and we were worsted. Ah! the spear in my heart!' He clutched at his breast. 'No! No!' he said, opening his eyes. 'What am I saying? I have been dreaming'" (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 158).

This seeming dream is the last memory of the tomb's long-dead inhabitant, irrupting through Merry into the waking world centuries after his death. Flieger expertly teases out the history of this memory's author at length, which I will summarize briefly. The dead man is identifiable as a prince of the Dúnedain, the men of the West, who perished fighting the forces of Angmar. Furthermore, Flieger explains that:

The Appendices also tell us that the barrows, many of which were built in the First Age as grave mounds for the Dúnedain (cf. Tom Bombadil above), came to be haunted by "evil spirits out of Angmar" who "entered into the deserted mounds and dwelt there." (RK, Appendix A, I, iii, 321) (FLIEGER 2007: 10).

This means that Merry is not simply recounting just any last memory, but that both the man possessing him and the wight are products of the same war, each a partisan for vanished sides. Because everything of Angmar and Arnor but broken stones and dull gold has rotted away centuries before, this may seem like mere historical curiosity, but since this was all just a part of the war between the men of the west and Sauron, which at the time of the hobbits' encounter was escalating to its final conclusion, the conflict remains fundamentally unfinished.

Unfinished conflicts, however, have ongoing consequences, so it comes as no surprise that

the wight's invasion of the Dúnedain's tomb is a continuation, or even an escalation (surely the defilement of graves in a culture that prioritizes elaborate burials counts as such) of the war between the barrow-raisers and Angmar, the wight's origin. The wight has perverted the tomb of its enemy and transformed it into a trap for the hobbits, who are after all on the side of the man buried there. So not only does the war outside continue, between Ring-bearer and Ring-lord, but Angmar, in the "person" of the wight, has continued the struggle with the Dúnedain prince within the barrow. And thus it is this unresolved conflict that spills over into the present through the activity of both dead and the undead – in the wight's assault, and in the Dúnedain's subsequent awakening.

Since at first blush it might seem that these two events are unconnected, we must recall that the wight's abduction of the hobbits, which brought them into the tomb, directly precipitates Merry's encounter with the dead. And this attack was itself not random malice, unconnected to the age-old war against the West; what Frodo witnesses in the tomb makes it clear that the wight is bent on continuing, even ritually reenacting the war of old. Tolkien writes:

"He turned, and there in the cold glow he saw lying beside him Sam, Pippin, and Merry. They were on their backs, and their faces looked deathly pale; and they were clad in white. About them lay many treasures, of gold maybe, though in that light they looked cold and unlovely. On their heads were circlets, gold chains were about their waists, and on their fingers were many rings. Swords lay by their sides, and shields were at their feet. But across their three necks lay one long naked sword" (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 155).

In the wight's ritual the hobbits are arrayed like the dead – they even look "deathly pale," and their placement with swords, treasures, and new garments serves to cast them in the character of those for whom the barrows were first raised. The wight has not just waylaid the hobbits, but has chosen to dress them up as its ancient enemies. And then it begins to reach for the sword. Here is a microcosm of the conflict between Angmar and Arnor being played out once more: the barrow wight, emissary of Angmar, is putting on a ghastly play of the prince of Arnor's death, executing him again in the effigy of the hobbits. And this is no mere

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battle reenactment: it is a blow in the ongoing war, for the hobbits are themselves agents in the fight against Sauron – though it is unclear if the wight knows this (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 206, 327, 235).[1] But this is not simply the reliving of a death, but of a battle, and the wight's attack is met by Frodo, who takes up what seems to be one of the swords of Westernesse, and with it hews off the wight's hand (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 157).[2] Thus Frodo answers the ancient spawn of Angmar in kind, with an old weapon of the west, and both begins the defeat of the wight and with it the resolution of the conflict within the barrow, while continuing the struggle against Sauron outside it. As an aside, it is fitting that the blades the hobbits take from the barrow go on to do great service in that war. It is with one of these blades that Merry, who had, however briefly, assumed the identity of the Dúnedain (FLIEGER 2007: 107), himself reenacts as a proxy the ancient war in the north and inverts the wight's death-play by striking the penultimate blow against the king of Angmar himself. It is in this context of relived and ongoing conflict that the dead man's memories of past war come welling up through Meriadoc.

Finally, the conflict at the barrow is linked not just to the past, but to the future, through the songs of both the wight and Tom Bombadil, which look toward the ultimate end of the struggle. For its part, the wight does not just reenact the old war; it anticipates, and – for as Frodo realizes, the song is an incantation – participates in what it sees as the final victory of darkness. The wight chants:

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[1] It is worth noting that the wight may, consciously or otherwise, be targeting the company in part not simply as an arbitrary ambush of travelers, but due to the pull of the Ring or the influence of the Dark Lord's power in searching for it. Beyond the Ringwraiths being drawn to it, Gandalf himself observes that the watcher in the water seizes upon Frodo first of the company at the gate of Moria. Instances such as these suggest the possibility that the wight is likewise moved somehow to play a role in the conflict; one that might have proven decisive, given how Gandalf described the encounter in the barrow as "perhaps the most dangerous moment of all" in the hobbits journey to Rivendell. Cf. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings,* 206, 327, 235.

[2] Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings,* 157. While the identity and origin of the sword used by Frodo is not explicitly stated, it is probable that it shares its origin with the daggers drawn from the same tomb, which are identified as being the work of "Men of Westernesse." Cf. p. 161.

"Cold be hand and heart and bone,

and cold be sleep under stone:

never more to wake on stony bed,

never, till the Sun fails and the Moon is dead.

In the black wind the stars shall die,

and still on gold here let them lie,

till the dark lord lifts his hand

over dead sea and withered land" (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 156).

These words, spoken as the wight prepares to kill the hobbits, position its action in the context of the ongoing war as a whole, motivated by that unresolved conflict. Here the wight looks for resolution in the permanent victory of Sauron. But the song is answered by Tom Bombadil, who like the wight has a strong relationship and association with a particular landscape (SHIPPEY 2003: 108). Tom also frames his actions as a part of an ongoing war; breaking the tomb open, he drives out the wight with his own incantation:

"Get out, you old Wight! Vanish in the sunlight!

Shrivel like the cold mist, like the winds go wailing,

Out into the barren lands far beyond the mountains!

Come never here again! Leave your barrow empty!

Lost and forgotten be, darker than the darkness,

Where gates stand for ever shut, till the world is mended" (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 158).

Tom's song concludes the conflict in the barrow, expelling the wight, but like the wight's attempt to kill the hobbits, it is part of a grander play. Tom's reference to the mending of the world does not speak so much to Sauron's end, but, mirroring the wight's song, to the end of the struggle between light and darkness, with the outcome reversed. Each song places the episode within the cosmic conflict of which the War of the Ring is a part. The conflict within this chapter is a miniature of the grand, ongoing battle between death and life – between the

wight, as Sinex puts it, transforming the hobbits into corpses, and Tom breaking in with air and sunlight, disinterring them (SINEX 2005: 106). Here, at the moment of Merry's figurative resurrection as he is brought out of the tomb, the dead prince prince wakens for a moment in him. Perhaps it is only a lingering dream, or perhaps Merry's waking, if momentary, identification with the prince is a response to the resolution of the conflict with the wight, as its hold on the tomb and its inmate breaks (FLIEGER 2007: 109). Regardless, it can be no coincidence that the dead prince speaks now, at the end of his part in the age-old conflict, to recall its beginning. It is the conflict that allows him now to speak, through Merry's enchantment at the wight's hands, though only at its end does he do so.

Unlike the barrow, where the dead prince visits only the mind of Merry, the eponymous deceased of the Dead Marshes actually appear to Frodo, Sam, and Smeagol in visible form. Though they bear the visage of the corpses they were, this still places them in a state of unnatural unrest, since their bodies should have decayed an age ago. However, the activity of the dead beyond this is limited to lighting candles, Smeagol's "tricksy lights," and luring the travelers down toward them. Like the other death-sites, the marshes are a grave. Here it is the manner of grave and place that the marshes are which forms the link to their past conflict. They were once a part of the battle plain at the gate of Mordor, site of the clash which led to Sauron's first defeat. The dead buried there are soldiers of both sides, fallen in battle, and interred in war-graves. Besides having their origin in conflict, this struggle remains unresolved, since the battle failed to end the threat of Sauron and achieved only a deferment of the war until his return.

Indeed, when Frodo arrives the conflict has been renewed, not only in the war being fought in Rohan and Gondor, but in the marshes themselves. Smeagol pictures the marshes as swallowing up the graves, framing them as an aggressor against the soldiers' repose. Sam also suggests that the influence of Sauron is at work in the illusory revival of the corpses, asking if it is "some devilry hatched in the Dark Land?" (TOLKIEN 1954: 653; SHIPPEY 2003: 143-4) It seems that, like the barrow-wight, Sauron has invaded and perverted the graves of his enemies, turning them into an obstacle, if an unplanned one, for the ring-bearer

(SHIPPEY 2003: 117; SINEX 2005: 97). And the revived dead are not inert shades of an old battle, but current participants in the conflict, tempting unwary trespassers to a watery end as march-wardens of Mordor. Sinex and Shippey note that the marshes present a temptation toward despair and even suicide for the Ringbearer, and so the dead actively threaten the quest (SINEX 2005: 93; SHIPPEY 2000: 216). But the marshes' role is not one-sided, for it is the Ring-bearers who make the best use of them in sneaking towards Mordor. It suits well that this ambivalent, conflicted path be found by Smeagol, himself wracked by an unresolved, internal struggle as he leads the hobbits through the marshes. Here we again have a grave which the dead haunt, thanks to an unresolved conflict with three aspects – Sauron's continued existence, the war, which caused them to die, and still remaining undead where they lie.

It is also at the end of the marshes that Frodo, like Merry at the barrow, has a dreamlike vision of a past battle. "He looked up at the smoke-streaked sky and saw strange phantoms, dark riding shapes, and faces out of the past. He lost count of time, hovering between sleep and waking, until forgetfulness came over him" (TOLKIEN 1954: 658). In this context, it seems probable that this vision is of the battle that spawned the marsh-dead. This would explain both the riders and the faces, given the battle and the emphasis earlier placed on the faces of the dead. In both hobbits' visions, by mere or on moor, the memory of the unfinished conflict bursts into the present across time. While the barrow served as an ongoing battle-ground, the Dead Marshes are more a set tableau of a conflict, preserved in a continuously hanging, unburied state.

The last and most clear-cut case of unresolved conflict keeping the dead active is of course the Paths of the Dead. Here, the unresolved nature of the conflict stems not from an inconclusive battle, but the absence of one. Thousands of years before the events of *The Lord of the Rings,* the mountain men had sworn to allegiance to Isildur, only to refuse to join him in the first war against Sauron. In response, Isildur cursed them to remain as restless spirits until their part in the ongoing war was resolved:

Then Isildur said to their king: "Thou shalt be the last king. And if the West prove mightier than

thy Black Master, this curse I lay upon thee and thy folk: to rest never until your oath is fulfilled. For this war will last through years uncounted, and you shall be summoned once again ere the end." (TOLKIEN 1954 1955 1991: 813).

In this case, the connection between the mountain-folk's unfulfilled oath, resulting in an unfought war, and their unrest is a simple, direct causal one. Their post-mortem activity, referenced by their moniker the "Sleepless Dead," is sustained solely by the fact that the war persists without conclusion, and without a chance for them to fulfill their oath and take part in it. Like the dead in the mere of faces, this host is a pawn of both sides: refusing to help Isildur because they had worshipped Sauron (TOLKIEN 1955: 813), they ultimately become a crucial weapon against the Dark Lord in the hands of Aragorn. It seems the graves of the sleepless dead are haunts of ambiguity, no-man's lands caught between both sides in an undying war. Of course, it is not the conclusion of the war, strictly speaking, that frees these dead and allows them rest, for their final battle predates the overthrow of Sauron. But it also precipitates the Dark Lord's fall, and thus links them to his end. Moreover, they are intertwined with the fate of the war as a whole, since by abstaining from the first downfall of Sauron, they were made to wait until they could partake in the second. The relevant conflicts here, however, are not simply the war but those of the dead with Isildur's line, begun by their betrayal, their conflict with their own oath, and their unjoined battle with Sauron – not to see his defeat, but simply to fulfill their oath by fighting for Isildur's heir against him. As long as they did not fight, these conflicts remained open wounds, separating the dead from their natural rest. For the army of the dead, simply accepting their place in the great conflict is enough to resolve those that bound them to the present long after their time has passed.

Before concluding this tour of tombs, it is necessary to address a possible alternative explanation for the supernatural phenomena haunting Middle-earth's graves: the idea that they may be the result of a sort of curse, the moral impression left on the landscape by death or the dead. It is clear that in Tolkien's world death can have a lasting effect on its locale. This can be clearly seen from the twin burial sites of two great mounts whose riders clashed upon the Pelennor fields. Théoden's steed, Snowmane, and the Witch-king's winged mount both

fell in the battle and remained on the field afterwards, and both had a pronounced impact on that environment: "green and long grew the grass on Snowmane's howe, but ever black and bare was the ground where the beast was burned" (TOLKIEN 1955: 878). This establishes the possibility for death to permanently alter the landscape through implicitly supernatural means, and in a manner that reflects the differing moral characters of the dead. But while this device of moral corruption or blessing should not be dismissed outright as a relevant factor in making the death-sites of Middle-earth what they are, it cannot account for the three examples of true haunting given above. In cases where the dead themselves remain active, we are no longer dealing with simple after-impressions left as an imprint on the landscape. These could perhaps be seen as natural consequences in a world of moralized nature, like stains on the landscape, but the lingering dead stand out as explicitly supernatural (BRISBOIS 2005: 201, 206).[3] What is more, the corruption present with them does not fall along anything resembling the clear moral line between Snowmane and the fell beast. Instead, the barrows feature the tomb of a Man of the West, on the same side as the hobbits, whose grave has still been made into a haunt of evil. Likewise the marshes, where good and bad, friend and foe, are all jumbled up together, are twisted into a trap for any who wander there. The only instance where the location seems to fit its ghosts is the Paths of the Dead, which seems an appropriately bleak place for the restless spirits of oathbreakers. So while the character of the dead clearly can have an effect on the death-site, something more is required to explain why the dead, good and bad, linger on. And here we must note that both Snowmane and the fell beast had fought their last fight, and shortly thereafter their war ended; while our three ghostly graves all share the common explanation of an unconcluded history not nearly as brief or as neat.

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[3] Michael J. Brisbois, "Tolkien's Imaginary Nature: An Analysis of the Structure of Middle-earth," *Tolkien Studies* 2.1 (2005): 201, 206. It is worth noting that Brisbois' description of nature in Middle-earth as containing moral symbols perfectly describes the neat contrast between Snowmane's howe and the scorched grave of the fell beast. Cf. Randel Helms, *Tolkien's World,* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company 1974), 79-81, on the principle that moral laws govern Middle-earth.

These "clusters of unquiet dead" form a strangely consistent anomaly amidst what is on the whole the more-or-less realistic landscape of Middle-earth (BRISBOIS 2005: 198-9). What helps to explain these hauntings as more than random deviations from this is their shared reason for rising: the call of unfinished conflict.

While my goals in examining this aspect have been humble, I hope that this connection will lead to further exploration of the nature of death in Tolkien's works. I believe that applying this reading to a more general study on the symbolism of death in Middle-earth could be a fruitful line of research. In the meantime, I hope that the argument advanced here leads to a more complete, coherent, and explicit understanding of both how these death-sites operate as a category, and of Tolkien's Middle-earth as a whole.

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FROM EPIC NARRATIVE TO MUSIC

Tolkien's universe as inspiration for *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band*

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Abstract: This paper traces the inspiration behind my composition *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band*. The four movements of this work express in sound certain thematic elements that are woven throughout Tolkien's epic narrative. An analysis of each movement shows how the musical material is connected to specific themes found in his narrative. The analysis of this symphony shows the musical representation is fluid because it exists on a spectrum from literal to abstract representation in the context of the idioms of tonal and non-tonal Western art music.

Keywords: Tolkien – Music – Music and Literature – Epic narrative – Structure – Western Music

Music is the generative device used by Ilúvatar and the Valar to create the universe of Tolkien's legendarium in *The Silmarillion* (cf. TOLKIEN 1977: 15-22). Harmony, consonance, dissonance, and thematic development in intricate counterpoint are the elements of this divine music. As a composer this idea is profoundly moving and

inspiring. For Tolkien, divine inspiration, thought, and music are a single act of Ilúvatar's will. This act produces real things that have existence and form. Musical creativity for me is similar to this in that it is a combination of three strands of activity: imagination, improvisation, and inspiration–the mystical element. This activity produces real music that exists in time and has form. Over the course of my career art and literature have inspired dozens of compositions. This paper traces the inspiration behind my composition *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band*. The four movements of this work express in sound certain thematic elements that are woven throughout Tolkien's epic narrative. An analysis of each movement demonstrates how the musical material and its presentation in form are connected to specific themes found in his narrative. This analysis is accompanied by recorded and written musical examples.[1] The analysis and discussion of this work shows that the musical representation of Tolkien's epic narrative is fluid because it exists on a spectrum from literal representation to intellectual abstraction in the context of the idioms of tonal and non-tonal Western art music.

The four movements of the symphony are titled "The Shadow Lengthens," "The Fall of Nargothrond," "Upon Hearing the Nightingale," and "The Morningtide of Númenor." Throughout Tolkien's universe the evil wrought by Morgoth and Sauron casts a dark, ever lengthening shadow over the hearts and minds of Men. In battling this evil, Elves, Dwarves, and Men suffered tremendously in loss of life, lands, and possessions. Tolkien's legendarium, though replete with epic wars between good and evil, also contains stories of hope, love, and faithfulness. The story of Beren and

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[1] This paper includes the written musical examples. Recordings of the four movements can be heard at: http://berniescherrcomposer.com/recordings/. Accessed May 23, 2015. The presentation at the "Worlds Made of Heroes" conference included original artwork by Erin Izbrand. The artwork was shown during the playing of the musical examples. The complete presentation can be viewed at the same website as the recordings. This paper is an expansion of the presentation, which was shorter because of the time limitations of the conference sessions. Even the abbreviated presentation, however, required a longer session, which the conference organizers graciously accommodated.

Lúthien is the greatest of all these stories, and it is mirrored in the tale of Aragorn and Arwen. I believe hope and faithfulness are also central to the foundation of Númenor and the restoration of the Reunited Kingdom. The faithfulness of the Edain toward the Valar and the Elves was rewarded in the gift of Númenor. The Faithful of Númenor established the Realms in Exile and these lands are restored in the Reunited Kingdom under King Elessar and Lady Undómiel. It is in his kingdom that the wisdom of the Elves and the spirit of the Maiar continue to bless Middle-earth long after they have returned to the Undying Lands. Table 1 pairs the movements of the symphony with the corresponding sections and/or themes from *The Silmarillion*.

Table 1: The movements of *The First Age of Middle-earth: a Symphony for Concert Band* with the corresponding sections and/or themes from *The Silmarillion*.

Movement title	*The Silmarillion* section or theme
"The Shadow Lengthens"	Morgoth's increasing influence over Middle-earth throughout the First Age
"The Fall of Nargothrond"	"Of Túrin Turambar" (198-226)
"Upon Hearing the Nightingale"	"Of Beren and Lúthien" (162-87)
"The Morningtide of Númenor"	"Of Tuor and the Fall of Gondolin" (238-45), "Of the Voyage of Eärendil and the War of Wrath" (246-55), and the opening of the "Akallabêth" (259-61)*

Source: J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1977

*These stories form the background of Elros, the first king of Númenor. Even though the history of the Númenoreans defines the Second Age of Middle-earth, this movement draws upon its pre-history and foundations to represent what I perceive as the ideal Númenor that became the honored memory of Westernesse mentioned

in *The Lord of the Rings*. For more detailed information on Tuor and Túrin, see Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-Earth*, 19-60, and 61-170.

The musical material of the four movements is inspired by the themes described above. "The Shadow Lengthens" conveys a sense of anxiousness, darkness, and fear. "The Fall of Nargothrond" expresses the sadness of bitter memories of violence and death. In "Upon Hearing the Nightingale," music of suffering is dispelled by the sound of beauty and love. Finally, in "The Morningtide of Númenor", one hears music of creation and the nobility of King Elros and the first Númenoreans. The following analysis traces the musical elements used to express these ideas. In this symphony, like all of my music, compositional technique mingles with inspiration and there is no clearly delineated boundary between the two. In my opinion, discerning the difference is not important: the resultant work in its entirety was envisioned from the beginning even if certain details needed refinement and editing. The pitch material is derived from the equal tempered, chromatic pitch collection and the harmonic vocabulary is drawn from tonal and non-tonal idioms. The rhythmic material is non-aleatoric and lies within symmetrical and asymmetrical meters. The symphony is scored for piccolo, two flutes, oboe, bassoon, three B-flat clarinets, B-flat bass clarinet, two alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, three B-flat trumpets, two F horns, three trombones, euphonium, tuba, timpani, percussion, and mallets.[2]

There are five themes in "The Shadow Lengthens" and they are organized in a modified arch form: A (repeated)–B–C–D–E–D'–B'–A'. Themes A, D, and E are in B-flat minor, Theme B is non-tonal and B' is in B-flat major. Theme C is a mixture of

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[2] In this paper I also assume the reader has a basic understanding of musical notation and certain musical concepts, such as key, harmony, melody, rhythm, and meter. If a reader does not have this familiarity, however, I believe he or she will still be able to understand the connection between the music and Tolkien's text.

C minor and non-tonal elements. The major and minor key areas are not used in a tonally functional manner. There is no tonic/dominant polarity and contrapuntal textures obscure triadic sonorities. In addition, Themes D and E are harmonized with minor triads that lie outside the key of B-flat minor, and as with Theme C, they contain instances of polychordal harmony. The metrical and thematic organization are closely related: Theme A is in 5/4 (divided 3+2), Theme B is in 7/4 (divided 4+3), Theme C is in 7/4 (divided 3+4), and Themes D and E are in 5/8 (divided 3+2). The tempo markings of the piece lie between 80 and 96 beats per minute, with the quarter note or dotted quarter note having the pulse.[3] I use the asymmetrical construction of the meters to suggest the imbalance in nature that the evil of Morgoth wrecks upon Middle-earth.[4]

Example 1 shows that Theme A is a composite of four voices.[5] The soprano voice is made of a single motive that is repeated at different pitch levels. The descending, stepwise motion has a sighing quality which is built into the motive of the alto voice. The tenor and alto voices are developed through pitch inversion and rhythmic augmentation. The upper voices avoid the root of the B-flat minor triad because it is,

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[3] To summarize, tonal music, or music of the common practice era–the music of J. S. Bach, W. A. Mozart, and L. van Beethoven, for example – has certain harmonic relationships that define keys. This movement (and the entire symphony), though using elements of tonal music, does not have the harmonic relationships of the common practice era. The same can be said about the use of meters. In most instances, tonal music uses the same meter for an entire movement. These meters are often 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 or their compound counterparts of 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. The reader can see that the meters in this movement lie outside common practice metrical organization.

[4] This asymmetry is seen in the uneven groupings of 2 and 3 beats in the meters.

[5] The musical examples are piano reductions of the complete band score. The complete band scores are currently (May 29, 2015) unpublished and are in possession of the composer, Bernard Scherr. He can be contacted at Hardin-Simmons University, Box 16230, Abilene, Texas, 79698, or bscherr@hsutx.edu.

with the fifth of the triad, a pedal tone in the bass voice.[6] It is my intention that the minor harmony and the sighing quality of the melody express the sense of fear Morgoth exerted over the hearts and minds of Elves and Men.

Example 1: Theme A of "The Shadow Lengthens"

Theme B consists of a soprano voice harmonized in parallel motion above a pedal tone in the bass voice. In Example 2 the reader can see that the melody is related to Theme A because it is also built on stepwise motion. In addition, observe that the harmony of the soprano voice is foreign to the key of B-flat minor and the triad roots at the ends of the phrase segments are at variance with the pedal tone in the bass voice. These chromatic harmonies and intervals show an increase in the use of dissonance from Theme A to Theme B. The sense of anxiousness is now

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[6] The voice parts of a choir–soprano, alto, tenor, and bass–are commonly used to describe instrumental parts that occupy similar ranges as their vocal counterparts. They are also used to describe the positions of parts within like families of instruments or in chamber ensembles.

significantly increased from Theme A to Theme B through the use of dissonance, rhythmic diminution, and intervallic development.[7]

Example 2: Theme B of "The Shadow Lengthens"

Example 3 shows that Theme C is complex because it is a composite of three voices built on the first six tones of the soprano voice and motives of Theme A. Theme C also contains pedal tones, in this case a dyad taken from the first two tones of the theme. Chromatic elements from Theme B are used as well, which are seen in the E/E-flat, G-flat/G, and A/A-flat cross relations in bars 2, 3, and 9 of the example. These cross relations extend the sense of anxiety from Theme B. The first statement of this theme is lightly scored for B-flat clarinet 1 and B-flat bass clarinet. Example 3 shows how the melody passes from one instrument to the other. This process is meant to demonstrate the insidious influence of Morgoth, first upon the Elves and then on Men.

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[7] Rhythmic diminution is the concept of reducing the time between related rhythmic events. Intervallic development refers to modifying the distances between the tones of melodic fragments in following iterations of said fragments.

Example 3: Theme C of "The Shadow Lengthens"

Heard in context, Theme D (shown in Example 4) has the aural effect of a bridge theme. This is because it is brief and juxtaposed with a portion of Theme B. In addition, its opening two bars are developed in the continuing passage through a steadily rising line in pitch level, scoring, and dynamic markings. Theme D thus builds in tension and segues to the arrival of Theme E.

Example 4: Theme D of "The Shadow Lengthens"

Example 5: Theme E of "The Shadow Lengthens"

Theme E, given in Example 5, is the climax of the movement. It is the longest passage with *tutti* scoring and *fortissimo* dynamic markings. It also brings together elements of the previous four themes. The soprano melody contains the perfect 5th (abbreviated P5) of the pedal interval of Theme A, the parallel harmonization of Theme B, fragments of Theme C as an inner voice, and the rising and falling stepwise motion of Theme D. The *tutti* scoring, *fortissimo* dynamics, and the synthesis of the thematic material bring the sense of anxiousness, darkness, and fear to its zenith in this passage. The music for Theme D' remains intense and does not subside until the end of Theme B'. The movement closes with a quiet, lightly scored statement of Theme A'.[8]

The form of "The Fall of Nargothrond" is a theme, 15 variations, and a coda drawn from the theme. A number of the variations are not traditional in the sense that they do not maintain the formal structure of the theme. Instead, these variations focus on a specific aspect of the theme before moving onto the next variation. In this movement, the technique of altering the length and character of the variations is used to reflect the ephemeral nature of memory. The overall outline approximates a slow–fast–slow arrangement: the Theme and Variations 1 and 2 are slow, Variations 3 through 11 are fast, and Variations 12 through 15 and the Coda are slow. Example 6 shows that the Theme is non-tonal and its motives are built on intervals no larger than a P4.[9] The accompaniment uses these intervals and their inversions in subtle imitation of the Theme.[10] The music's rhythmic ebb and flow, its gradual rise and fall,

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[8] I chose not to include a complete return of Theme C at this point in the movement because the intense momentum of Themes E, D', and B' propelled the music through the questioning and worried character of Theme C. That said, I included fragments of Theme C (the descending scale segment) in the statement of Theme B', which aided in easing tension as the music transitioned toward Theme A'.

[9] The melody of the theme is the top voice of the upper staff.

[10] For instance, the descending C-sharp/G-sharp in measure 1 is a P4, and it is answered in the accompaniment by a P5 (the inversion of a P4) with a descending E-flat/A-flat).

and the dissonance in the accompaniment collectively express the wistful recollections of the remnant of the Noldor in Middle-earth, such as Lady Galadriel, sister of Finrod Felagund, King and founder of Nargothrond.[11]

Example 6: The Theme of "The Fall of Nargothrond"

Following the cadence at the end of the theme, tension gradually intensifies from Variations 1 through 4 by means of an increase in volume, tempo, and rhythmic activity. These variations develop various elements of the theme and its accompaniment motives. Example 7 shows that Variation 3 is a study of the inversion of intervals and melodic contour. For instance, the intervals of the first six

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[11] It should be noted that the uneven length of the variations are an extension of the uneven phrase lengths of the Theme. As with many themes in "The Shadow Lengthens", the Theme in "The Fall of Nargothrond" also has a pedal tone in the bass voice which is at variance with the tones in the soprano voice.

tones of the upper voice are in reverse order of the first six tones of the theme, with a change in contour of the last three tones. In addition, the intervals of the accompaniment are also derived from the theme. Variation 4 is stated at *forte* in the trumpets and is accompanied by bursts of short, accented, and rhythmic phrase segments in the low brass that drive the music forward toward Variation 5.

The first recollection of fighting, Variation 5, is shown in Example 8. The shape of the line is derived from the opening accompaniment motive, but the rhythm, dynamic marking, and articulation literally represent the sweeping and thrusting motions of soldiers in close-quarter combat. For instance, one can easily visualize how the descending octave leap from G-sharp5 to G-sharp4, in sixteenth notes, to an accented, half step rebound traces violent sword strokes.[12] Sword thrusts can be imagined in the sequential motives that follow the rebound figures. These gestures are forcefully strengthened at *fortissimo* in the percussion section.

Example 7: Variation 3 of "The Fall of Nargothrond"

This fierce moment is relatively short-lived because Variation 6 is a transition that rapidly eases the tension of Variation 5; but in Variations 7 through 10, the music intensifies toward Variation 11, the second fighting episode. This episode contains extensive motivic development of the melody of Variation 5. The rapid interchange

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[12] The numbers after the notes represent octave placement: middle C on the grand staff is C4, and the octave above that is C5; thus, the pitches between these notes are the "fourth" (4) octave.

of melodic fragments and interjections of harshly accented percussion bursts vividly express the chaotic nature of hand-to-hand combat. The greater length of Variation 11 represents the full weight of the bitter memories of the horrible destruction wrought by the dragon, Glaurung, his spell upon Túrin Turambar, and the capture and later death of Finduilas, niece of Finrod Felagund and Lady Galadriel.[13]

Example 8: Variation 5 of "The Fall of Nargothrond"

Variations 12 through 14 gradually move away from the agonizing emotion of Variation 11. The elongation of this emotional descent reflects a necessary period of recovery following such a painful memory. The Coda closes the movement with fragments of the Theme's opening. Scored from upper woodwinds to muted trumpets to low brass, the Coda evokes a sense of melancholy in which traces of sadness linger across the ages.

The form of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale" follows the narrative of the first interactions of Beren and Lúthien. Beren, long-suffering in the woods of Neldoreth, sees a young woman, beautiful beyond imagination, dancing. He instantly falls in love but is caught in a trance. She disappears from his sight and he returns to wandering and suffering alone in the forest. Sometime later, he hears music and espies her once more. This time he touches her arm and his trance is lifted. Lúthien falls in love with Beren and they begin their remarkable lives together. Reflecting

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[13] Variation 11 can be heard from 3:26-3:56 on the recording of "The Fall of Nargothrond" at http://berniescherrcomposer.com/recordings/. Accessed May 23, 2015.

this outline, the music is organized in a repeated binary structure: A–B–A–B. The A Sections have the "Suffering" Theme. The first B Section has the "Dancing" Theme. The second B Section has the "Dancing" Theme, but also the "Embracing" and "Love" Themes.

Example 9: The "Suffering" Theme of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale"

The "Suffering" Theme, shown in Example 9, is a composite theme in that it contains a primary and secondary component. The primary component is lyrical, but somewhat plodding. The line contains mostly stepwise motion and its pitches are almost entirely drawn from the underlying harmony. The secondary component has two elements, an arpeggiated upper voice, and lower voices that are homophonic and chordal. The harmony moves from an A half diminished seventh chord to an F-sharp minor seventh chord. The rhythm stresses the down beats, which is further emphasized with tenuto markings. The combined effect of these two components

evokes images of a lonely person, suffering, with stooped and tired shoulders, dragging heavy feet along an uncertain path.

Beren is transformed the moment he first sees Lúthien. Her music, the "Dancing" Theme (given in Example 10), is gentle, quiet, and graceful. In B-flat major and scored lightly in the woodwinds, the melody dances upward through a series of P4 skips. The major triads that harmonize this melody reflect both his renewed spirit and her pure heart. Unfortunately, he is also cast into a trance and can only call out to her in his mind. All too soon she vanishes from his sight and he returns to his harsh and lonely path. This sad turn of events is expressed in the return of the "Suffering" Theme.

Example 10: The "Dancing Theme of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale"

On a day unexpected, Beren is surprised by the sound of music, which he follows to its source. There he sees Lúthien but is now able to touch her which allows him to speak to her for the first time. In two-part counterpoint, the "Embracing" Theme is surrounded by a single, shimmering, and gentle P5. This theme, shown in Example 11, is scored for solo oboe, representing Lúthien, and solo B-flat clarinet,

representing Beren. Each part trades motivic elements and a shared contour. These elements express how their joy and happiness are now intertwined.

The "Embracing" Theme is soon followed by a restatement of the "Dancing" Theme, which is extended, and builds to the "Love" Theme, shown in Example 12. Slow, strong, steady, and certain in its purpose, this brief theme is a summation of their undying love. The downbeats are stressed with firmness, the major triads and major-major seventh chords are bright and sonorous, and the melody soars freely above the chorale-like texture. Following this moment the music subsides and transitions to the Coda. The Coda recalls the primary and secondary components of the "Suffering" Theme, but now they have been transformed through lighter scoring and major harmonies. Delicate fragments of the "Dancing" Theme are heard as the movement concludes. These thematic transformations represent the transformative love that Beren and Lúthien now share.

Example 11: The "Embracing" Theme of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale"

Example 12: The "Love" Theme of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale"

Númenor was the Valar's gift to the Edain for their valor in the War of Wrath. Arising from the depths of the Great Sea it was blessed with bounteous flora and fauna. Its first King, Elros, had the blood of elven princes and lordly men, and its people became learned seafarers and created a rich and beautiful culture. The form of "The Morningtide of Númenor" traces the foundation of this wondrous land. Theme A expresses the rising of the land from the Great Sea and is developed to represent the creation and growth of plant life. Theme B and its development represent the Valar populating the land with diverse animal life. Theme C is the noble theme of King Elros and the first Númenoreans.

Theme A, given in Example 13, is built on an A-flat major pentatonic scale. Its rhythmic energy comes from two sixteenth notes on upbeats that rush to a longer note on the beat. The theme traverses an octave, but its structural tones, E-flat3–A-flat3–B-flat3–E-flat4, form a symmetrical unit: P4–major 2nd (abbreviated M2)–P4. The background is based on a tetrachord, B-flat5–C6–D6–E-flat6. This closely spaced scale segment shimmers with light because of the fingered tremolos in the woodwinds and the medium-high tessitura. The upward motives of Theme A express the work of the Valar in raising an island from the depths of the Great Sea. Images of depth are also heard in its scoring for low brass and woodwinds. In addition, the symmetrical construction of the theme represents the good work of the Valar and is

contrasted with the asymmetrical elements used earlier in the symphony which represented the evil wrought by Morgoth.

Example 13: Theme A of "The Morningtide of Númenor"

Following a brief development, Theme A is transformed through rhythmic augmentation, scoring, and background support. This transformation represents the plant life as it springs forth from the newly formed earth. In subsequent statements new lines are woven around it in a contrapuntal texture, evoking images of growth and diversity. Example 14 shows the final statement of Theme A and its accompaniment of two other interconnected lines. This statement now uses all the tones of the A-flat major scale.

Following this passage, Theme A returns for a short time in a form similar to its initial presentation; but in this instance, it is modified through changes in pitch, rhythm, and interval content. Theme B follows the modified return of Theme A. Like Theme A, it also undergoes contrapuntal development in subsequent statements through the addition of new lines. Theme B oscillates between E-flat major and E-flat Mixolydian. The D5 and D-flat5 exchanges also reflect the difference between A-flat major and E-flat major, which are the primary key areas of the first half of the movement. Example 15 shows the final statement of Theme B and its accompaniment of three other interconnected lines. Following this passage, Theme A returns again, but is

now significantly developed. This development represents the completion of Númenor in its preparation for settlement.

Example 14: The final statement of Theme A of "The Morningtide of Númenor"[14]

Example 15: The final statement of Theme B of "The Morningtide of Númenor"[15]

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[14] The final statement of Theme A is in the soprano voice.

[15] The final statement of Theme B is in the tenor voice.

Example 16: The final statement of Theme C of "The Morningtide of Númenor"[16]

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[16] The final statement of Theme C is in the tenor voice.

Following the Star of Eärendil, Elros led his people to Númenor. In him flows the blood of the three Houses of the Edain, the Three Kindreds, and Melian the Maiar. He embodies the noblest characteristics of the Children of Ilúvatar: faithfulness, bravery, and wisdom. He also embodies all that was good in the people of Númenor, all that was envisioned for them to be by Ilúvatar and the Valar. His theme, thus, is also the theme of the Númenoreans. Labelled Theme C, it is introduced with solo B-flat trumpet accompanied by a chorale in the brass. Certainly the soloist represents Elros, the trumpet represents his nobility, and the chorale expresses his sense of sacred duty to lead his people in taking possession of the Valar's miraculous gift. Following its introduction, Theme C is stated in the woodwinds and then is developed along lines similar to the development of Themes A and B.

Example 16 shows the final statement of Theme C. It is heard in the F horns, trombones, and euphonium. His theme is now joined by the hearty voices of the Númenoreans. In the mode of F Mixolydian, the stately melody rises confidently toward the end of the phrase. It is accompanied by a steadily rising bass line and two different contrapuntal lines in the upper woodwinds. This moment represents the ideal Númenor, the ideal that burned in the hearts of her people across the ages, through exile, wars, and finally in the restoration of the Reunited Kingdom. This statement is followed by several passages that see the return of portions of Themes A and B. Cast in a new light, the light of Númenor in its Morningtide, the statements sound confident and have a sense of emerging maturity.

The passages that follow Theme C lead to the closing theme, which is given in Example 17. This theme is composed of motives from Theme A, its accompaniment, and Theme C. Marked forte or *fortissimo*, sharply articulated, and excitedly rhythmic, it brings the movement and symphony to a rousing conclusion. By combining elements of Themes A and C, I intended to connect Númenor to her people. Even though Númenor was eventually destroyed by the Valar, the memory of the glory and beauty of Westernesse still lingered long into the Third Age. In fact, Tolkien

writes in the *Return of the King* that Minas Tirith is the "last memory of Westernesse" in Middle-earth.[17] I view the Reunited Kingdom of King Elessar and Lady Undómiel as the renewal of Númenor, but transferred to Middle-earth and ushering in the Fourth Age.

Example 17: the closing theme of "The Morningtide of Númenor"

This analysis has demonstrated that the stories of the First Age of Middle-earth are the animating force of this symphony. They have inspired themes, determined form, and even informed scoring choices. Table 2 and Table 3 are given below in order to clarify how specific elements from this symphony are connected to the three categories that form the spectrum from literal to abstract representation. Table 2 shows, in general, how the spectrum is represented in the music. Table 3 shows how the spectrum is related to three literary categories and how these categories are manifested in the music.[18] Literal musical representation is connected to imagery because literary imagery arises from the author's depiction of physical objects,

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[17] J. R. R. TOLKIEN, *The Return of the King* (1984: 290). For extensive conversations between Frodo, Sam and Faramir about Westernesse, see TOLKIEN, *The Two Towers* (1984: 355-69).

[18] For a concise definition of the terms "imagery", "mood" and "symbol" as used in literature, see C. Hugh HOLMAN (1980: 224, 277, and 436).

places, persons, and actions. Of course, word painting in music has a long association with textual imagery in vocal literature, and instruments have played a *co-expressive* role in vocal word painting. Middle-ground musical representation is connected to symbols because literary symbols retain their physical properties as they suggest another, more abstract meaning. Abstract musical representation is connected to mood because mood is the emotional attitude of the author, and in my case, composer, toward the subject matter. Musical expression of mood and emotion is subjective, and, of the three topics used in this paper, is the most abstract because it exists beyond word painting and the use of symbols: it encompasses the expressive sense of the music as a whole. Discerning the specific expressive meaning of a given musical passage is a *learned intuitive-ness* that enculturated listeners of Western art music develop. Even so, this sense is oriented in the individual–author, composer, and listener–who will perhaps discern the general sense of a musical passage, but who will retain a unique emotional response.

Discussion concerning the musical expression of emotion has a long tradition within Western writings about music and is it not my intention to cite the numerous writers that have discussed the various aspects of musical aesthetics germane to this paper.[19] The reader must understand that efforts to create definitive quantifications of the effect of music on human emotion will prove to be illusive, and because of its subjective nature will remain impossible to construct. Therefore, the spectrum developed for this analysis is not intended to be an empirical measure of musical representation; instead, it is a comprehensive categorization of my perceptions of the degree to which Tolkien's narrative inspired specific musical gestures. The use of literary topics in this process strengthens the connection between the literary and musical imagery.

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[19] For examples of writing about the representation of emotion in music, see Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, translated by Ernest C. Harriss (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981), 104-11. See also Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, edited by Leo Treitler (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 698-703, 954-65, 967-69, and 971-80.

Table 2: General representation of the spectrum from literal to abstract representation.

Literal	The battle strokes of hand-to-hand combat of Elves and Orcs in "The Fall of Nargothrond" are mapped directly onto the shape of the angular, accented, and rhythmically punctuated phrases of Variations 5 and 11.
Literal	The thematic organization of "Upon Hearing the Nightingale" is identical to the progression of events from the time Beren enters the woods of Neldoreth to the love embrace of he and Lúthien.
Middleground	The use of intricate tonal counterpoint to represent diversity and growth ("The Morningtide of Númenor").
Middleground	The technique of modifying the theme used for the creation of the island of Númenor for use as the theme for the creation of its plant life ("The Morningtide of Númenor").
Abstract	Melancholy expressed through non-tonal pitch material and a languid melody ("The Fall of Nargothrond").
Abstract	Spreading evil expressed through rhythmic diminution and minor chords that have been progressively obscured with an increasing use of chromatic counterpoint ("The Shadow Lengthens").

Table 3. The spectrum in relation to three literary categories.

Literal representation –to draw– Imagery	*Middleground* representation –to represent– Symbols	*Abstract* representation –to express– Mood
• Descending, stepwise motion to trace sighing • Descending octave leap to an accented, half step rebound to trace violent sword strokes • Sequential motives that follow the rebound figures to trace sword thrusts • Rapid interchange of melodic fragments and interjections of harshly accented percussion bursts to show the chaotic nature of hand-to-hand combat • Musical form parallels narrative events • Ascending interval skips to draw dance movements • Ascending, symmetrical, and rhythmic theme to show the creation of an island • Low instruments to show depth and low voices	• Increased dissonance, rhythmic diminution, and intervallic development to represent increased anxiousness • Asymmetrical meters to represent the imbalance of Morgoth's evil influence • Musical gestures to represent bodily disposition • Major chords to represent a renewed spirit and pure heart • Two parts sharing motivic elements and contour to represent intertwined joy and happiness • Theme for creation of land modified for creation of plants • Thematic transformations to represent transformative love • Symmetry to represent the goodness of the Valar • Contrapuntal development to represent growth	• Minor chords, rhythmic diminution, and increasingly chromatic counterpoint to express a spreading evil • Climax in scoring, dynamics, and thematic synthesis to express an emotional climax • Languid musical contour, rhythm, and dissonance to express melancholy • Altering length and character of variations to express the ephemeral nature of memory • Elongating a musical descent to express a period of emotional recovery • Character of melody and accompanying harmony to express undying love • Character of melody, scoring, and use of a chorale to express nobility and a sense of the sacred

The "Music of the Ainur" must still resonate from the realm of fantasy to our world today.[20] Certainly, the analysis and discussion within this paper demonstrate that this symphony owes its existence to their imaginary music. In Tolkien's legendarium music brought forth Eä and is heard across the ages of Arda. As a musician reading *The Silmarillion*, I often sense an operatic quality in Tolkien's epic narrative. Opera is musical drama in which fantasy and reality occupy the same time and space. Opera's artistic power arises from the interactive dynamic of imagery, symbolism, and emotion (mood) as expressed in music, art, and drama. This paper traces in detail how the fantastical universe of Tolkien's legendarium inspired purely instrumental music. I believe that instrumental music lives in both fantasy and reality because real sounds exist in time, but they transcend time and space by moving the heart and stirring the imagination without the added dimension of sung text. I am convinced that as long as there are composers who read and are inspired by Tolkien's deeply profound and captivating epic legends, the "Music of the Ainur" will be heard.

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[20] See note 1.

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CHARACTER AND PERSPECTIVE:
THE MULTI-QUEST IN J. R. R. TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

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Abstract: This paper outlines an innovative approach to studying the complex character system of *The Lord of the Rings*. From a narratological point of view, the text narrates not just one Ring-quest but many quest plots. In contrast to a clear association of characters with actantial roles in the wake of formalist and structuralist analyses of (mono-)quest narratives, a multi-quest narrative with many questing agents whose goals overlap only partially – some of which are even opposed to one another – defies such clear-cut categorisations. This paper brings to the fore the characters' different perspectives on the interpretation and evaluation of the subplots of the text. It contrasts the overall presentation of the Ring-quest with marginalised points of view of secondary (anti-)heroes such as Sam, Éowyn, Galadriel, or Gollum.

Keywords: Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, Quest narratives, Actancial roles, Characters

A great multitude of people populate J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. The success of Middle-earth as a convincing secondary world is partly based on the staggering variety, diversity, and complexity of its inhabitants: they serve as an essential component of the distinctive and immediately recognisable setting to Tolkien's quest-romance. Yet while it is inevitable that not all of them may become *characters* in that they are allowed to develop any individualised personality traits, an extraordinary number of them do, which raises several important questions.

The central tension is succinctly distilled into the binary formula *The one* [protagonist] *vs. the many* [other characters], which is the title of Alex Woloch's eminent monograph on secondary characters in the realistic novel (2003). There is a natural discrepancy between the detailed depiction of main figures of the text and the representation of marginal people at the very periphery of the reader's attention. Each character claims their own character space, "that particular and charged encounter between an individual human personality and a determined space and position within the narrative as a whole" (Woloch, 2003: 14). As a consequence, a large number of characters in a single narrative have the potential to destabilise the unity, coherence, and overall structure of the text. In this regard, Woloch asks the significant questions: "How can many people be contained within a single narrative?" (*Ibid*: 1), and "[h]ow does the text organize a large number of different characters within a unified symbolic and structural system?" (*Ibid*: 14).

Of course there already exists abundant literature on character in *The Lord of the Rings*. One could broadly classify these critical texts into studies which (i) focus on individual characters in the form of character studies[1]; (ii) establish comparisons between two or more characters[2]; or (iii) discuss a class of characters such as

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[1] For example, cf. Devin Brown (2006), "From Isolation to Community: Frodo's Incomplete Personal Quest in *The Lord of the Rings*", *Mythlore* 25.1-2: 163-173; Judy Ford and Robin Reid (2009), "Councils and Kings: Aragorn's Journey towards Kingship in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*", *Tolkien Studies* 6: 71-90; Michael Treschow (2006), "Bombadil's Role in *The Lord of the Rings*", *Mythlore* 25.1-2: 175-196.

[2] For example, cf. Maria Raffaella Benvenuto (2006), "Against Stereotype: Éowyn and Lúthien as 20th Century Women", in *Tolkien and Modernity Vol. 1*, ed. Frank Weinreich and Thomas Honegger (Zollikhofen: Walking Tree, 31-54; Janet Croft (2011), "Túrin and Aragorn: Evading and Embracing

hobbits, female characters, wizards, half-elves, dwarves, etc.[3]. The items (i) and (iii) may be combined so that a single character is analysed in terms of a whole class as a pars-pro-toto. This, however, could lead to a reductionist picture. For example, Lynette Porter laments that Éowyn often has to bear the burden of being the (sole) vehicle for feminist claims on the text:

Representing all womanhood seems to be Éowyn's fate [...] She is often either held as a positive role model to represent the strong, assertive woman in a male-dominated world, or denounced because in the book she dresses as a man, Dernhelm, to be able to go to war, thus being perceived as having to renounce her femininity in order to be successful. Éowyn is further penalized by some readers who believe she 'sold out' by marrying Faramir and turning into a wife and, presumably, mother. (Porter, 2005: 91)

None of the approaches mentioned addresses the whole character system of *The Lord of the Rings* as "the arrangement of multiple and differentiated character-spaces – differentiated configurations and manipulations of the human figure – into a unified narrative structure" (Woloch, 2003: 14). The questions formulated above cannot be answered with regard to any single character or any thematically linked class of characters: they call for a structural analysis of the interrelation and interaction of the characters as essential parts of the quest plot.

Furthermore, the need for a new attempt at a systematic study of Tolkien's characters is also underscored by the fact that some of the fundamental points of criticisms brought forward by early reviews and studies on characterisation in *The Lord of the Rings* can be adequately addressed only by considering the character system as a whole. Especially early critics and reviewers – even those who were quite sympathetic to the text, like Burton Raffel or W. H. Auden – were not particularly convinced that characterisation, the subtle portrayal of people, was at all an important

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Fate", *Mythlore* 29.3-4: 155-170; Charles Nelson (2002), "From Gollum to Gandalf: The Guide Figures in J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*", *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 13.1: 47-61.

[3] For example, cf. Leslie Donovan (2003), "The Valkyrie Reflex in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*", in *Tolkien the Medievalist*, ed. Jane Chance, London: Routledge, 106-132; Michael Stanton (2001), *Hobbits, Elves, and Wizards: Exploring the Wonders and Worlds of J. R. R. Tolkien's* The Lord of the Rings, New York: Palgrave; Renée Vink (2013), "'Jewish' Dwarves: Tolkien and Anti-Semitic Stereotyping", *Tolkien Studies* 10: 123-145.

issue in Tolkien's work (cf. Muir, 1955; Spacks, 1969: 81-99). For example, Burton Raffel affirms that while Gandalf "is a force more than he is a personage [...], [i]t is in Frodo, and in Frodo only, that I think Tolkien achieves something of what one can call the characterization of literature" (Raffel, 1969: 238). This quotation indicates a tendency in Tolkien criticism: that the only significant "real" development occurs in Frodo, the main protagonist. Even W. H. Auden stated that "the Quest tale is ill adapted to subtle portrayals of character; its personages are almost bound to be archetypes rather than idiosyncratic individuals" (Auden, 1969: 49). But what concept of "character" is implied when critics lament the absence of detailed investigations into the psyche of the people of the tale? Is there any hope for Sam, Gandalf, Aragorn, Éowyn, Gollum, and all the others to be anything but archetypal – or even "cardboard" (Bloom, 2008: vii) – agents performing their task in the set-up of the quest plot? Do they lend themselves not just for comparative studies[4], source studies[5], and thematically oriented studies [6] but also as objects of readings on literary characterisation? In other words, we are looking for people in *The Lord of the Rings* who are

[…] in a way more complex though not necessarily more vivid than other characters. They are the vehicles by which all the most interesting questions are raised; [...] [i]n a sense they are end-products; they are what the novel exists for; it exists to reveal them. Because of this it is unwise to generalize about them; each exists as an individual case and demands special consideration. (Harvey, 1965: 56)

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[4] For example, cf. Carter, Downey, Hopkins. Carter, Susan (2007) "Galadriel and Morgan Le Fey: Tolkien's Redemption of the Lady of the Lacuna", *Mythlore* 25.3-4: 71-89; Downey, Sarah (2011) "Cordial Dislike: Reinventing the Celestial Ladies of Pearl and Purgatorio in Tolkien's Galadriel", *Mythlore* 29.3-4: 101-117; Hopkins, Lisa (2007), "Gollum and Caliban: Evolution and Design", *Tolkien and Shakespeare: Essays on Shared Themes and Language*. Edited by Janet Croft. Jefferson: McFarland, 281-293.

[5] For example, cf. Marjorie Burns (2007), "Tracking the Elusive Hobbit (In Its Pre-Shire Den)", *Tolkien Studies* 4 (2007): 200-211; Frank Riga (2008), "Gandalf and Merlin: J. R. R. Tolkien's Adoption and Transformation of a Literary Tradition", *Mythlore* 27.1-2: 21-44; Taryne Taylor (2008), "Investigating the Role and Origin of Goldberry in Tolkien's Mythology", *Mythlore* 27.1-2: 147-156.

[6] For example, cf. Nancy Enright (2007), "Tolkien's Females and the Defining of Power", *Renascence* 59.2: 93-108; Michael Livingston (2006), "The Shell-Shocked Hobbit: The First World War and Tolkien's Trauma of the Ring", *Mythlore* 25.1-2: 77-92; Karen Nikakis (2007), "Sacral Kingship: Aragorn as the Rightful and Sacrificial King in *The Lord of the Rings*", *Mythlore* 26.1-2: 83-90.

Quite in contrast to such a quasi-mimetic approach, which treats characters as more or less successful imitations of complex "real" people, one also has to bear in mind the opposite tradition, begun in antiquity with Aristotle and resurging prominently in structuralism, which sees characters as agents performing certain functions that cause and react to the plot of the narrative. Abstract story models are a powerful tool, and it makes perfect sense that *The Lord of the Rings*, which is a standard example of a quest narrative, should be a text to which the cognitive schema of the quest masterplot is applied. There are many models in this direction: one thinks of the early Russian formalist *Morphology of the folktale* by Vladimir Propp from the 1920s, of Joseph Campbell's *monomyth*, of Frye's *mythos* of Romance, of Greimas' actant model; or of W. H. Auden, who wrote his famous article on the "Quest Hero" particularly with *The Lord of the Rings* in mind[7]. As a consequence, it becomes quite easy to assign characters to functions, to establish a clear-cut linear relation between characters and the actions they perform. Established terms for such functions (or rather "agents") would be quester (or protagonist), helper, donor, villain – or more generally, opponent –, quest object, etc. The main caveat is that this association of characters with actants easily leads to reductionism and fosters readings of the text which altogether dismiss the characterisation, the personality-building of the characters. However, a functional model that assigns characters to actantial roles is not per se reductionist as long as its limitations are accounted for. The foremost limitation is that each actantial model is restricted to the character system of *one storyline*. Hence the first step to overcome this simplification is not just to reject the powerful actantial model for the character system in a prototypical quest narrative but to reflect whether there is only *one* character system to be described – the one centring on the Ring-quest – or whether there are actually *many* of them.

Another hypothesis, which is very much linked with this one, is that the overall narrative structure of *The Lord of the Rings* is determined by the Ring-quest: it

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[7] Cf. Vladimir Propp (1996), *Morphology of the Folktale*, ed. Louis A. Wagner, trans. Laurence Scott, 2nd ed., Austin: University of Texas Press; Joseph Campbell (1968), *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton: Princeton UP; Northrop Frye (1966), *Anatomy of criticism*, Princeton: Princeton UP; Algirdas Greimas (1971), *Strukturale Semantik: Methodologische Untersuchungen*, trans. Jens Ihwe, Braunschweig: Vieweg; Auden, W. H. (1969). "The Quest Hero", *Tolkien and the Critics,* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

provides the essential story, or rather story-thread, of the text. However, it is not the only thread in this narrative web, although it is the dominant one. There are other storylines, and they are also best understood in terms of quest narratives. Importantly, these narrative threads are sometimes foregrounded in the text – not least because there is no truly omniscient narrative situation (if that is at all possible). In fact, there is mostly what is called ambient focalisation: the perspective and experiential quality alternate between different individual participants in the text, especially the hobbits.

This is where the second major component of the present paper comes in. A study on literary character inevitably touches on the issue of perspective because it is through the characters that different perspectives on the narrated story-world are provided. Conversely, the necessarily subjective, individualized perspective from which a story is looked at and put to words by the narrator is the crucial factor that transforms functional agents into characters and endows them with "experientiality"[8]. A story is "always presented from within a certain 'vision'" (Bal, 1997: 142), but apart from the overall perspective that governs the narrated text (and which the narratee is invited to adopt) each of the characters perceives the narrated events from his and her necessarily subjective vantage point. This is not primarily a question of the limited perspective on the whole event structure resulting from personalized focalisers but rather an effect of the individualized *interpretation* and *evaluation* of the events by different characters. Hence while it is clear that the overall presentation of the story of *The Lord of the Rings* centres on the Ring-quest and consequently assigns characters like Aragorn, Éowyn, or Gollum into adjunct positions relative to the (primary) quester, their own perspective on their position in the story is bound to be different. Each of them brings a radically new point of view to the story, and each of them foregrounds a different character as the protagonist. How would *they* "read" (interpret) their stories – and even more importantly, how would they write them? How do they perceive[9] their own position in the tale – and how does this affect the

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[8]   The significance of experientiality as the "quasi-mimetic evocation of 'real-life experience'" in narrative fiction is extensively discussed by Monika Fludernik (1996), in *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (London: Routledge).

[9] It is important to emphasize the aspect of perception (including interpretation and evaluation) rather than narration.

overall presentation and evaluation of these characters? How would the incipit, the complication, the development, the climax, the resolution, the dénouement, and the closure look like from their point of view? And how does the evaluation of a seemingly marginal character change once s/he is interpreted as the protagonist of his or her own storyline with the potential to develop into a fully round character?

If the central claim of this paper – that there are many quest plots in *The Lord of the Rings* – is true, then there are equally many character systems, each of them revolving around a different central quester and his or her synergistic and antagonistic secondary figures, and characterisation is established precisely in the interplay of these multiple character systems. Inevitably, each of these individual narratives other than the Ring-quest is subordinated and hence only fragmentarily developed in the text. Nevertheless, they are there, and to ignore them would mean to ignore an essential aspect of the secondary characters; precisely that aspect which makes them complex and interesting. Given that there are multiple questers, *The Lord of the Rings* may be called not just a quest narrative but a multi-quest narrative. In different narrative threads – that is: in different quests – people perform different functions; they may be helpers in one quest and yet play a quite different role in another storyline, most notably in their own, where they are protagonists and hence most likely to be developed to their full complexity. It is then the aim to uncover, and in turn to adopt, those alternative perspectives – alternative to the superordinated one of the Ring-quest – in order to complement the picture of the story and especially of the characters. Ultimately, any final interpretation and evaluation of a character needs to take into account the multiple perspectives from which this character can be looked at.

The second part of the paper pursues the goal of highlighting several characters to whom the theory of the multi-quest could be fruitfully applied and sketching the basic lines of thought of such an approach. The first example of a secondary quester to be considered in this way is Samwise Gamgee. Sam is the foremost helper in the text; in fact, he is the co-quester to Frodo: always subservient, always in secondary position. At least this is what early reviewers claimed, calling him Frodo's "dog-like servant" (Wilson, 1965: 329) and a "pure stock character – lovable [and] useful [...], but as a characterization virtually meaningless" (Raffel, 1969: 237). In fact, he is much more

than that. While he shares the same storyline with Frodo, he and his master have different goals. Only when he considers taking up Frodo's quest of destroying the Ring himself after Shelob's attack, Sam voices this thought explicitly: "I can't help it. My place is by Mr. Frodo. They must understand that – Elrond and the Council, and the great Lords and Ladies with all their wisdom. Their plans have gone wrong. I can't be their Ring-bearer. Not without Mr. Frodo" (Tolkien, 1987a: 345). Sam's goal is to take care of and save his master, not to destroy the Ring. He elevates the task of the helper to the status of a quest, and it is one which eventually becomes a more "active" subplot than the Ring-quest; in his (successful) attempt to save Frodo from the tower of Cirith Ungol, his quest arguably becomes far more heroic than Frodo's[10], who retreats into the background, and also more ambitious in terms of character development. What is more, Sam explicitly becomes the central character at the end whose story is literally the one that takes over Frodo's in the "Red Book": "'I have quite finished [the Red Book], Sam', said Frodo. 'The last pages are for you'" (Tolkien, 1987c: 307). In the course of *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam manages to develop out of the secondary role of the helper towards a protagonist who transforms his subservient task into a heroic quest. This perspective could be a promising starting point for an in-depth character study of Samwise Gamgee.

The next example is Gollum. His perspective deviates much more radically from the dominant one of the Ring-quest because it is diametrically opposed to it. While much of Gollum's story, especially as regards the pivotal moments in his development, is covered by Frodo's in books IV and VI, his quest in fact reaches much further back in time. It has the single goal of recovering the Ring and was hence initiated when Bilbo found his "precious". In the primary narrative, only the end of this long quest is directly narrated, while the main part is only fragmentarily developed in the text. What is more, we are informed about Gollum's wanderings only indirectly via several sub-narrators, namely Bilbo, Gandalf, Aragorn, and Legolas, none of whom are sympathetic to him. This adverse introduction predetermines the reader's expectations of this character. Yet it is significant that these negative portrayals are mediated indirectly via other characters and are not given by the narrator. One may contrast their stories with his own account in which he, for example, talks about the

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[10] See Tolkien's statement (1981: 161) that Sam becomes the "chief hero" of the book in *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin).

maltreatment he received through the elves. This evaluation is seconded by Frodo himself, who often scolds Sam for mistreating Gollum and eventually reconsiders his own verdict against Gollum in his early discussion with Gandalf[11]. It is Frodo who thus advises us to put ourselves in Gollum's position, and from this position the roles of the main characters are reversed: Sam becomes an opponent, the Ring is the desired quest object, and Frodo its guardian. This character triangle and their passage to Mordor are all the more complex when one considers their contradictory goals without necessarily privileging the Ring-quest.

Gollum's story also has a different climax. The climactic point for Gollum is arguably not the catastrophe on Mount Doom because by this time Gollum is already irrevocably lost, if not to the fire but to the Ring. The pivotal scene in his development comes earlier, directly before he leads the hobbits into Shelob's lair. In this most "tragic moment" (Tolkien, 1981: 330) of the whole text, he is exposed to us as an individual who may decide for himself in his interior debate: whether to forsake the Ring or to betray the sleeping hobbits: "For a fleeting moment, could one of the sleepers have seen him, they would have thought that they beheld an old weary hobbit, shrunken by the years that had carried him far beyond his time, beyond friends and kin, and the fields and streams of youth, an old starved pitiable thing." (Tolkien, 1987a: 324). The tragic quest of Gollum's life is here foregrounded, and although there is no happy end possible, it is the fatal decision of Gollum in this situation that determines his downfall.

The third of the multiple questers who brings in a wholly new perspective is Éowyn. The relation of her story to the Ring-quest is quite different than Sam's or Gollum's; in fact, they are almost unrelated. The war of the Ring merely provides the inciting moment for her quest for subjectivity. This quest in itself is directed precisely against an established, dominant perspective, namely that of the patriarchal society of Rohan. In other words, the thematic essence of Éowyn consists in the struggle for overturning a superordinate perspective that relegates her into a subservient position:

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[11] "What a pity that Bilbo did not stab that vile creature, when he had a chance!" in J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1987: 68); this may be contrasted with Frodo's claim that "I will not touch the creature. For now that I see him, I do pity him." in Tolkien, *The Two Towers* (1987a: 222).

"Shall I always be left behind when the Riders depart, to mind the house while they win renown, and find food and beds when they return? […] All your words are but to say: you are a woman, and your part is in the house. But when the men have died in battle and honour, you have leave to be burned in the house, for the men will need it no more." (Tolkien, 1987c: 57-58)

Of course, this is not a straightforward struggle. The main obstacle to her claim for an autonomous, self-chosen path in life is underscored by the fact that the narrative of her glorious deeds in battle partly hides her achievement behind her male *alter ego* Dernhelm. In the same vein, it is significant that her story is interpreted by various male onlookers, who stand by her sick-bed in the houses of healing (*Ibid:* 142-145). Several feminist readings interpret this as a relapse[12], but actually it is merely the juxtaposition of different perspectives of several characters. The ending of Éowyn's quest in the houses of healing, however, provides a more radical twist than her attempt to overcome the role assigned to her, because while her participation in the battle was indeed very successful, it still accepted and adhered to the mechanics and patriarchal rhetoric of war. It is only after Éowyn, the shield-maiden and Faramir, Gondor's captain leave behind their military ambitions that they are able to overcome that value-system which ultimately determined both their identities heteronomously. In the context of such a pacifistic worldview as that which is primarily exemplified in the hobbits, this ultimate turn towards love and healing can only be a personal triumph.

The final example of a secondary character who may be interpreted as a quester is Galadriel. She is chosen for analysis in particular because she is a very unlikely quester: in *The Lord of the Rings*, she mostly appears as a static donor, but in fact her own perspective is bound to be radically different. Galadriel's story is transtextual: it is developed in different parts of the *legendarium*[13]. *The Lord of the Rings* only hints at her quest, which began far back in the Elder Days with her joining the rebellion of the High-Elves against the Valar and their exodus towards Middle-earth in

[12] For example, cf. Candice Fredrick and Same McBride (2001), *Women Among the Inklings: Gender, C.S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press).

[13] Most notably, cf. "The History of Galadriel and Celeborn and of Amroth King of Lórien", in J. R. R. Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-Earth* (1998: 294-348).

order to found realms of their own. Galadriel also succumbed to this desire for independent sovereignty over dependent subjects, although it was veiled behind nobler motives for enlightening and enriching the forgotten Middle-earth; nevertheless, the ban of the Valar not to return to Valinor established a permanent constraint. In *The Silmarillion*, some stages of Galadriel's exile are narrated (Tolkien, 1999: 61 *et passim*), resulting in her position as we find her in *The Lord of the Rings*: a local ruler of a beautiful, but very narrowly limited and secluded domain that has little impact on the politics of Middle-earth.

In this position the Ring-quest joins her own, and while Galadriel is seen from Frodo's perspective as a donor, or a helper, Frodo almost becomes a donor to her when he proposes to give her the Ring and thereby places the greatest temptation before her:

"'I do not deny that my heart has greatly desired to ask what you offer. For many long years I had pondered what I might do, should the Great Ring come into my hands, and behold! it was brought within my grasp. […] You will give me the Ring freely! In place of the Dark Lord you will set up a Queen.'" (Tolkien, 1987b: 381)

Up to this point, it was not so clear what an eminent turning point, a moment of utter conflict Frodo's coming to Lothlórien means for Galadriel. The resolution of this scene confirms that we witness a real test of character (and not just a hypothetical temptation): "Then she let her hand fall, and the light faded, and suddenly she laughed again, and lo! she was shrunken: a slender elf-woman, clad in simple white, whose gentle voice was soft and sad. 'I pass the test,' she said. 'I will diminish, and go into the West, and remain Galadriel.'" (*Ibidem*). The sorrowful poems that she subsequently recites when the company leaves Lothlórien reflect upon her failed ambitions and her renouncement of power as well as the barred passage into the West (*Ibid:* 388-389). The character development from the ambitious Elven-queen towards this example of humility and wisdom is here extremely compressed, but it draws on a slow progression over thousands of years in which all the questions involved in this temptation have been pondered. Yet her final choice, which is key to the pardon she eventually receives by being allowed to return to Valinor, is not limited to herself but affects other characters as well. In particular, it is Gimli who receives

the decisive momentum is his development from his encounter with Galadriel (*Ibid:* 394-395).

These examples are merely starting points for extensive character studies, which may similarly be undertaken for other characters, such as Pippin and Merry, Aragorn, Gandalf, Boromir, etc. Any such reading will build on the fact that the function performed by secondary characters in the Ring-quest is complemented by their own quest experience. As one may expect, the protagonists are typically the most carefully characterised personalities. Consequently, secondary figures become much more interesting objects of studies on literary character when they are considered as protagonists of their own quests. What is more, taking a fresh look at substantial parts of the narrative from a marginalized perspective also enriches the appreciation of the development of the main protagonist because Frodo's role is seen from different vantage points. Finally, the multi-quest interpretation also allows for a more nuanced evaluation of the main storyline of the Ring-quest as it is confronted with other narratives. It may be related to them via (partial) convergence, passing overlap, (mutual) indifference, estranging deviation, or even open antagonism. These different perspectives and evaluative stances contribute to the overall interpretation not just of the characters but also of the plot of *The Lord of the Rings*.

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GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH AND J. R. R. TOLKIEN:
Myth-making and National Identity in the Twelfth and Twentieth Centuries

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Abstract: Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain), a twelfth-century account of the early history of Britain, introduced the stories of King Lear and Cymbeline to the world and provided the seminal early account of King Arthur. Geoffrey's work has striking parallels with the writings of J. R. R. Tolkien. This essay explores the ways in which both Geoffrey and Tolkien turned to the making of myth in order to address contemporary concerns about national identity. It concludes that although national identity was a fundamental driving force behind both writers' creativity, Geoffrey's work embodied a vision of the island of Britain as a single, united polity whereas Tolkien rejected the modern idea of Britishness, identified himself as English (not British), and celebrated more local identities.
Keywords: Tolkien – Geoffrey of Monmouth – National identity – Myth – History

In a chapter on Arthurian literature in my book *Tolkien and Wales: Language, Literature and Identity* I wrote that

"There was once a writer living in Oxford, though he had been born outside England. His most famous work was an enormously popular piece of fantasy fiction that presented itself as a true history, claiming to be based on an ancient manuscript source. The book dealt with kings, heroes and a wizard. It became a bestseller not only in England, but internationally; it was translated into many languages, was widely illustrated and was adapted in other media. That writer was, of course, Geoffrey of Monmouth and his work the *Historia regum Britanniae*, but the parallels with J. R. R. Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings* are strikingly exact." (PHELPSTEAD 2011: 69)

The twelfth-century account of the early history of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth, his *Historia regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain), introduced the stories of King Lear and Cymbeline to the world and provided the seminal early account of King Arthur. The parallels between Geoffrey's work and that of J. R. R. Tolkien seem to me now to be even more striking than when I wrote that paragraph in *Tolkien and Wales*. This essay explores in greater depth and more detail than was possible in my book the ways in which Geoffrey and Tolkien turned to the making of myth in order to address contemporary concerns

around the issue of national identity.[1] This focus on myth-making and nationality reveals that alongside the remarkable similarities between the two writers they crucially differ in their view of the relationships between the different peoples on the island of Britain.[2]

1. Tolkien, Myth-making, and National Identity

J. R. R. Tolkien's strong sense of English (rather than British) identity and his desire to give expression to it through the medium of fantasy or myth, has long been recognised as a major impetus (though not the only one) behind his creative writing. In recent years the UK has witnessed a very public debate about the relationship of English, Welsh, and (especially) Scottish national identities to the idea of Britishness. More than half a century ago Tolkien was dismissive of the idea that Britishness is anything other than a political fiction; in a letter to his son Christopher written in December 1943 Tolkien writes: "I love England (not Great Britain and certainly not the British Commonwealth (grrr!))" (TOLKIEN 1981: 65). Christina Scull and Wayne Hammond reveal that when staying at Stonyhurst in 1946 Tolkien gave his nationality as "English" in the guest book, thus "breaking a line of dittos under the topmost entry, 'British'" (SCULL and HAMMOND 2006: 244). Tolkien generally used "British" to mean "Brittonic": that is, pertaining to the Celtic language from which Welsh, Cornish, and Breton derive or to the speakers of that language. He saw the appropriation of "British" by the modern state (Great Britain) as an abuse, writing in his 1955 O'Donnell lecture on "English and Welsh" that

"The misuse of British begins after the union of the crowns of England and Scotland, when in a quite unnecessary desire for a common name the English were deprived of their Englishry and the Welsh of their claim to be the chief inheritors of the title British." (TOLKIEN 1983: 182)

There were times, in fact, when other identities proved more congenial to Tolkien than "English". As I argued in the final chapter of my book on *Tolkien and Wales,* Tolkien – who was of course a professional medievalist – looked back beyond the early modern period of so-called "British" state formation to seek more congenial identities in the early Middle Ages. After coming from South Africa to England at the age of three, Tolkien spent his childhood in the West Midlands and he sometimes preferred to identify with the region in which he grew up rather than with the English nation as a whole. When doing so he referred to the English Midlands by the name of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, which had covered the area in the period before the Viking invasions of the ninth century and the subsequent creation of a single English kingdom by the successors of King Alfred the Great. Near the beginning of his O'Donnell lecture on "English and Welsh",

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[1] The present essay draws on material from Chapters 4 and 6 of my book *Tolkien and Wales*, but combines this with a fuller account of Geoffrey of Monmouth's myth-making and a more sustained comparison of the two writers than is provided in my book.

[2] I presented this material as a plenary lecture at the "Worlds Made of Heroes" conference in Oporto, November 2014, and as the Annual Public Lecture of the Centre for the Study of the Middle Ages, University of Birmingham, October 2014. I am very grateful to the organisers of both events for their kind invitations.

WORLDS MADE OF HEROES

Tolkien declared himself to be "one of the English of Mercia" (TOLKIEN 1983: 162). The name Mercia is a Latin adaptation of (West Saxon) Old English *Mierce*, the equivalent of *Marc* in the dialect of Mercia itself; it means "border or boundary people" (and survives today in the phrase "Welsh Marches"). The Mercian form of the kingdom's name (Marc) is also, of course, the name of the realm of the Rohirrim in *The Lord of the Rings* (The Mark) and, as has long been recognised, the names, place-names, horse-names and weapon-names of the Rohirrim are in the Mercian dialect of Old English.[3]

The Tolkien family had been established in the West Midlands since the time of Tolkien's paternal grandfather, but Tolkien's maternal ancestors, the Suffields, had lived for many generations in what Humphrey Carpenter refers to as "the quiet Worcestershire town of Evesham".[4] In a letter to his son Michael on 18 March 1941 Tolkien declared:

"Though a Tolkien by name, I am a Suffield by tastes, talents, and upbringing, and any corner of that county [Worcestershire] (however fair or squalid) is in an indefinable way 'home' to me, as no other part of the world is." (TOLKIEN 1981: 54)

The connection with Worcestershire continued throughout Tolkien's life: his aunt had a farm in Worcestershire which gave its name, Bag End, to the home of the Bilbo and Frodo Baggins (CARPENTER 1977: 106). After the First World War Tolkien's brother Hilary bought an orchard and market garden at Blackminster, near Evesham.[5]

Tolkien dubiously associated his linguistic tastes and abilities with his ancestry, claiming a special connection with the medieval dialects that would be a major focus of his academic work. In a letter of 17 June 1955 to W. H. Auden Tolkien writes that: "I am a West-midlander by blood (and took to early west-midland Middle English as a known tongue as soon as I set eyes on it)" (TOLKIEN 1981: 213). The next month he writes to his American publishers, Houghton Mifflin, that

"I am in fact more of a Suffield (a family deriving from Evesham in Worcestershire) [than a Tolkien . . .] I am indeed in English terms a West-midlander at home only in the counties upon the Welsh Marches; and it is, I believe, as much due to descent as to opportunity that Anglo-Saxon and Western Middle English and alliterative verse have been both a childhood attraction and my main professional sphere." (TOLKIEN 1981: 218)

An earlier letter to his son Christopher in 1942 shows that the identification with Mercia was of longer standing: "barring the Tolkien (which must long ago have become a pretty thin strand) you are a Mercian or Hwiccian [. . .] on both sides"

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[3] See John TINKLER, "Old English in Rohan" in *Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings*, ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (1968: 164-69); T. A. SHIPPEY, *J. R. R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (2000: 91-97); Idem, *The Road to Middle-earth* (2005: 139-140).

[4] Humphrey CARPENTER, *J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography* (1977: 19). See also "Suffield family" in SCULL and HAMMOND, *Reader's Guide* (2006: 984-85).

[5] Hence the pun on Persia/Pershore in J. R. R. TOLKIEN, *Roverandom*, ed. Christian Scull and Wayne G. Hammond (1998: 14). On Hilary Tolkien see the brief biography in Angela GARDNER, ed., *Black and White Ogre Country: The Lost Tales of Hilary Tolkien* (2009: 61-70).

(TOLKIEN 1981: 108). Here the regional identification is refined even further: Hwicce was a small kingdom that was absorbed into Mercia during the eighth century, though its separate identity was to a limited extent preserved in the diocese of Worcester which covered more or less the same territory.[6]

The Anglo-Saxon bishop to retain his see longest after the Norman Conquest was St Wulfstan of Worcester, who died in 1095 and it is in this West Midlands area that continuities between Old and Middle English literature are most clearly visible. Much of Tolkien's academic work in the field of Middle English literature was on texts from the West Midlands, texts in the dialect to which, as we have seen, he claimed to have taken like a native. In his posthumously published translation of the fourteenth-century poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Tolkien notes that the language, metre, and scenery of the poet's work indicate that "his home was in the West Midlands of England".[7] Earlier in the Middle English period the poet Layamon lived in the West Midlands at Areley Kings, where c.1200 he produced his *Brut*, a version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history in English alliterative verse. A group of Middle English texts that feature prominently among Tolkien's academic publications were produced in the same West Midlands area at around the time Layamon was writing: a handbook for anchoresses, *Ancrene Wisse* and a related group of five religious texts preserved in Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Bodley 24 (TOLKIEN 1929: 104-126). Tolkien localized the production of these texts to Herefordshire; E. J. Dobson later narrowed this down to Wigmore Abbey in north-west Herefordshire; they are now thought to have been written in north Herefordshire or the southern tip of Shropshire.[8] Tolkien published on specialised aspects of the language of this group of texts and for many years he was engaged on the production of a diplomatic edition of the Corpus manuscript of *Ancrene Wisse* for the Early English Text Society, eventually published in 1962.[9]

This deep personal and professional engagement with the distinctive medieval literary traditions of the West Midlands strengthened Tolkien's sense of a strong regional identity. By choosing to identify as Mercian, Tolkien affirms the value of the local and the particular in the face of what we might now call globalization. John Garth reveals that in 1914 Tolkien was a supporter of Home Rule for the Irish because he believed that self-realisation was a nation's highest goal (GARTH 2003: 51). In a letter to his son Christopher in December 1943, Tolkien

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[6] See Della HOOKE, *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: The Kingdom of the Hwicce* (1985, especially pp. 12-20).

[7] J. R. R. TOLKIEN, trans., *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl, Sir Orfeo,* ed. Christopher Tolkien (1995), 1. In their edition of *Gawain,* Tolkien and E. V. Gordon had earlier maintained that the dialect of the surviving manuscript is that of south Lancashire, which is further north than would usually be considered the Midlands: see *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon (1925; corrected reprint 1930: xxii).

[8] On the importance of Tolkien's work to the study of these texts see Arne ZETTERSTEN, "The AB language lives" in *The Lord of the Rings 1954–2004: Scholarship in Honor of Richard E. Blackwelder*, ed. Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull (2006: 13–24).

[9] Cf. J. R. R. TOLKIEN, ed., *Ancrene Wisse: The English text of the Ancrene Riwle edited from MS. Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402*, Early English Text Society Original Series 249, introduction by N. R. Ker (1962).

bemoans the tendency to obliterate local differences in a uniform global culture, singling out the growing dominance of the English language as a "damn shame": "I think I shall have to refuse to speak anything but Old Mercian" (TOLKIEN 1981: 65). One sees, I think, a reflection of these views in the political settlement after the defeat of Sauron in the *Lord of the Rings*: Elwin Fairburn writes of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth (the Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, Ents and Men) that "They each preserve, without mutual hostility, their own speech and way of life and ethnicity" (FAIRBURN 199: 79). This diversity is fostered by Aragorn when he becomes King of the West, notably in the very high level of autonomy which he grants to the Shire under his rule.

By choosing to identify himself with terms dating from before the creation of a united kingdom of the English, Tolkien looks back to a period when the multilingual British and Irish Isles comprised a number of locally governed communities: these ancient identities are, he implies, more deeply rooted than is the recent "misuse" of "British". For Tolkien, identity is constituted, but not entirely determined, by ancestry, environment, and language: it is also at least partly a matter of personal choice, as when he consciously chose to identify as English, Mercian, or Hwiccian rather than as British. In this way, identity is an expression of desire and devotion, of where one's heart and home are. Tolkien was, as he put it, "at home only in the counties upon the Welsh Marches" (CARPENTER 1981: 21).

This sense of belonging to a particular place inspired Tolkien to construct a mythology appropriate for his country. He revealed in a now much-quoted letter to the publisher Milton Waldman in 1951 that he had long regretted that England possessed no mythology of its own comparable to the national mythologies of the Greeks, Celts, Scandinavians, Finns and other peoples. He explains that

"once upon a time (my crest has long since fallen) I had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story [. . .] which I could dedicate to: to England; to my country. It should possess the tone and quality I desired, somewhat cool and clear, be redolent of our 'air' (the clime and soil of the North West, meaning Britain and the hither parts of Europe: not Italy or the Aegean, still less the East)." TOLKIEN 1981: 144)

In 1956 Tolkien drafted a letter to a Mr Thompson in which he similarly recalled setting himself "to restore to the English an epic tradition and present them with a mythology of their own" (TOLKIEN 1981: 231). As is now well known, in his biography of Tolkien Humphrey Carpenter was inspired by such statements to write of Tolkien's "desire to create a mythology *for England*" (CARPENTER 1977: 89), slightly adapting Tolkien's talk of dedicating or restoring a mythology *to* England.[10]

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[10] A series of articles has appeared debating whether Carpenter's formulation is an appropriate or adequate description of Tolkien's undertaking: see Jason FISHER, "'Mythology for England'" in Michael D. C. DROUT, ed., *The J. R. R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment* (2006: 445–47; Carl F. HOSTETTER and Arden R. SMITH, "A mythology for England" and Anders STENSTRÖM, "A mythology? For England?" in *Proceedings of the J. R. R. Tolkien Centenary Conference, Oxford, 1992*, ed. P. Reynolds and G. H. GoodKnight (1995: 381-

The "body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story" to which Tolkien referred in his 1951 letter was never to appear in print in the form in which he at that time hoped Waldman would publish it, but Tolkien's writings on Middle-earth – *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, together with the posthumously published *The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales,* and associated texts in the History of Middle-earth series – comprise an interconnected body of myths, legends, and fairy-tales of extraordinary richness and complexity.

Whereas in the 1956 letter to Thompson Tolkien writes of presenting the English with "a *mythology* of their own" (italics added), in the 1951 letter to Waldman he writes of "a body of more or less connected *legend*, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story" (italics added). Christopher Garbowski (like others) describes Tolkien as a "mythmaker" (GARBOWSKI 2004), but the term *legendarium* is also often used to label the corpus of Middle-earth texts. Scholarly vacillation between the terms myth and legend (and fairy tale and fantasy) to describe Tolkien's writings mirrors a similar equivocation in Tolkien's own letters and in his essay "On Fairy-stories": Tolkien slips between the terms myth, legend, fairy-story, and fantasy.[11] No doubt this slippage reflects Tolkien's sense that myth, legend, and fairy-tale form a continuum, rather than a series of clearly demarcated genres: hence his reference in the letter to Waldman to a "body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story" (CARPENTER 1981: 144).

A narrow definition of myth would limit it to a story primarily about divine beings. Such a definition would exclude very nearly all of Tolkien's writing and cannot be what he meant when he wrote of creating a mythology, nor what readers and scholars of his work mean by referring to "Tolkien's mythology". Many definitions of myth require that the story must once have been accepted as having happened: this too would exclude Tolkien's work (although Tolkien did write in a letter that "I had the sense of recording what was already 'there' somewhere: not of 'inventing'" (TOLKIEN 1981: 145). Other key characteristics of myth are more clearly exemplified by Tolkien's creative writings: they are narratives set in the far distant past; they involve supernatural beings; and they convey or embody understandings of the nature of reality in narrative form.

The mythological focus of Tolkien's creative writing can be related to both Romantic and modernist strands of English literary tradition, as I have argued elsewhere (PHELPSTEAD 2014: 79-91). From the Romantic period, one can see parallels with William Blake's "private mythology". Early twentieth century modernist writers including James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and David Jones responded

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390 and 310-314; FAIRBURN, "A mythology" (1999); Michael D. C. DROUT, "A mythology for Anglo-Saxon England" in *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader*, ed. Jane Chance (2004: 229-247).

[11] J. R. R. TOLKIEN, *On Fairy-stories,* ed. Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson (London: HarperCollins, 2008). The lecture was delivered in 1939, published in 1947, and again in expanded form in 1964.

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to modernity by turning to mythological and legendary narratives from the past. Tolkien went beyond such use of this kind of story as ways of organising representations of contemporary reality: in the connected series of works comprising *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien instead took motifs and patterns from classical, medieval, and later mythological traditions and transformed them in combination with a wealth of wholly original material into a comprehensive new mythology of his own.

Tolkien's patriotic impulse, and what he referred to as its gradual waning, explains the evolving frame narrative with which Tolkien attempted to link his Elvish mythology with England – and its eventual replacement by an imaginary source in the Red Book of Westmarch: very early drafts of material that was incorporated into *The Silmarillion* feature a series of intermediary figures (including Eriol the Mariner and an Anglo-Saxon translator, Ælfwine) through whom stories were imagined as passing from Elvish into Old English; Tolkien later experimented with a time-travelling link between modern England and the legendary past.[12] Each of these narrative devices can be seen as an attempt by Tolkien to link his creative work with the particular country for which it was at that time intended: England. Traces of the attempt survive in the published *Lord of the Rings*, with its claims in the Prologue to be based on a manuscript copy of the diaries of Bilbo Baggins, Frodo's account of the War of the Ring, and other material preserved by Hobbits at the home of the wardens of the Westmarch: "This account of the end of the Third Age is drawn mainly from the Red Book of Westmarch" (TOLKIEN 2005: 14). The model for the Red Book of Westmarch is clearly the Red Book of Hergest, one of the two main manuscripts of the medieval Welsh story-collection known now as *The Mabinogion*, but the imaginary manuscript's association with the West*march* echoes too the name of the kingdom of Mercia.

In the preface to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien took issue with critics who had decided the book was an allegory, stating his dislike of that form and declaring that "I much prefer history, true or feigned" (TOLKIEN 2005: xxii). A taste for feigned history is something Tolkien certainly shared with Geoffrey of Monmouth, but for Tolkien a story that was not true history need not be untrue. When he writes in letters of his original desire to dedicate a mythology to England he claims to have renounced such a grand plan, implying that the patriotic motive may no longer be primary. The connection Tolkien made between imaginative writing and Christian theology in his poem "Mythopoeia", subsequently reinforced in his essay *On Fairy-Stories,* appears to have led Tolkien to the realisation that his work might aspire to a universal rather than merely national resonance: he came to believe that myths and related forms of story-telling can, to a degree, embody the truths revealed in Christianity.[13] In his long letter to Milton Waldman written in 1951 Tolkien's view of the relation between myth and reality takes on an almost Jungian hue:

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[12] On these frame narratives and their development see Verlyn FLIEGER, *Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology* (2005: 87–118).

[13] See further PHELPSTEAD, "Myth-making and Sub-creation" (2014: 79-91).

"I believe that legends and myths are largely made of "truth" and indeed present aspects of it that can only be received in this mode; and long ago certain truths and modes of this kind were discovered and must always reappear" (TOLKIEN 1981: 147).

Far from being a deviation from reality, myth enables a truer perception.

2. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Fabulous History, and National Identity

Geoffrey of Monmouth, the twelfth-century writer whose "history" of the kings of Britain is the well-spring of medieval (and later) Arthurian literature, was born around 1100, almost certainly in or near the Welsh town of Monmouth. He is referred to in contemporary documents as Galfridus Artur(us) (Geoffrey Arthur), perhaps because his father was called Arthur or because of his well-known scholarly interests in the British hero of that name (or both); in his *Historia regum Britanniae*, however, he refers to himself twice as Galfridus Monemutensis, Geoffrey of Monmouth.[14] Geoffrey locates King Arthur's court at Caerleon-on-Usk; he also praises Caerleon in book IX of the *Historia* (IX.156), and this may reflect his first-hand knowledge of the Roman remains there and perhaps, given the proximity of Caerleon and Monmouth, what O. J. Padel calls his "local pride in his home district of Monmouth" (PADEL 2000: 75). Michelle R. Warren has recently drawn attention to the way in which Geoffrey and other twelfth- and thirteenth-century historians of Britain are associated with border regions (WARREN 2000): this resonates intriguingly with Tolkien's self-identity as Mercian and as being "at home only in the counties upon the Welsh Marches".

Pro-Breton sympathies evident in his *Historia* have led some modern scholars to claim possible Breton ancestry for Geoffrey, a suggestion lent credibility by the fact that the lordship of Monmouth passed to a Breton family in 1075: Brynley Roberts writes that "It is possible that Geoffrey's family were among those Bretons who had been such a significant element in William I's forces, many of whom settled in south-east Wales".[15] For most of his life Geoffrey (like Tolkien) lived and worked in Oxford, but a further Welsh connection emerges at the end of Geoffrey's life, when he was consecrated as bishop of the north Walian see of St Asaph in 1152, three years before his death: there is, however, no evidence that he ever visited his diocese.

Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* was completed by 1138 (almost exactly 800 years before publication of the *Hobbit*) and quickly became one of the most popular non-religious texts of the Middle Ages; more than two hundred medieval

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[14] Prol. 3; XI.177. All references here to Geoffrey's text are to Geoffrey of MONMOUTH, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (2007). Further references will be given parenthetically in the main text.

[15] Brynley F. ROBERTS, "Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*" in Rachel Bromwich, A. O. H. Jarman and Brynley F. Roberts/ eds., *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), 97-116 (98). For further discussion of possible Breton sources and connections see J. E. Caerwyn WILLIAMS, "Brittany and the Arthurian legend" in Rachel Bromwich et al., *Arthur of the Welsh*, 249–72 (1991: 263-66).

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manuscripts of the text survive today and over fifty of these are from the twelfth century. Two translations were made into French within twenty years (Gaimar's lost version of the 1140s; Wace's by 1155); Layamon's English version appeared c.1200 and translations into Old Norse and other languages followed, including – intriguingly – three thirteenth- and two fourteenth-century versions in Welsh. The various Welsh versions, known collectively as *Brut y Brenhinedd*, became the most widely copied of all medieval Welsh narrative texts (HUWS 2000: 12) and Geoffrey's version of events seems largely to have superseded other traditions about Arthur circulating in Wales, even where those traditions were in fact of greater antiquity.

Geoffrey's work fills in what had been perceived to be a gap in British history, recounting the deeds of the island's kings from the arrival of the Trojan refugee Brutus, great-grandson of Aeneas, after whom the island of Albion was re-named Britain, through to the last of the British kings, Cadualadrus (Cadwaladr) in the seventh century, a period of around 1900 years. Geoffrey's work has always divided readers, but its importance cannot be denied: his *Historia* is one of the most influential of all medieval texts.

Just as Tolkien claims to be translating the Red Book of Westmarch, so Geoffrey claims at the beginning and end of his work merely to be translating an ancient book shown him by Walter Archdeacon of Oxford: "quendam Britannici sermonis librum uetustissimum" (Prol. 2; "a very old book in the Britannic/British/Breton tongue"; cf. XI. 177 and XI. 208). There is an ambiguity here as *Britannia* and related words in medieval Latin could refer either to Britain or to Brittany. An old book in *Britannici sermonis* could therefore, be in either Welsh or Breton. At the end of the *Historia* Geoffrey forbids his contemporaries William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon to write about the kings of Britain, leaving them to tell of the Saxon kings, because, Geoffrey says, they do not possess "the book in British, which Walter, archdeacon of Oxford, brought from Brittany" (librum illum Britannici sermonis quem Walterus Oxenefordensis archidiaconus ex Britannia aduexit (IX. 208)). Probably the context requires that *Britannia* here be translated Brittany, since it is hard to see how a book could be brought from Britain to Oxford, but it is possible that a book in Welsh (or Breton) might be brought from Brittany.

No such "very old book" covering the history of Britain up to the seventh century survives or is known from other texts to have existed in either Welsh or Breton. Readers and scholars have taken very different views of Geoffrey's claims but most have dismissed them as typical of medieval writers' need to claim a source even when being wholly original. Geoffrey certainly used a number of earlier texts, principally Gildas's sixth-century *De excidio Britanniae,* the ninth-century *Historia Britonum* attributed to Nennius, and Bede's early eighth-century *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, but although he may well have drawn on Celtic traditions of some kind, if not a full-length historical manuscript, the vast bulk of Geoffrey's history is, as far as we know, entirely his own invention. The very fact that Geoffrey's history was translated into Welsh suggests that no similar account previously existed in that language, though the Welsh translators assume Geoffrey's very old book was in Welsh; one Welsh version (falsely) claims that

Geoffrey himself translated his history *back* into Welsh (*kymraec*) in old age (WARREN 2000: 78-79).

Michael Faletra has recently described Geoffrey as "mocking" scholarship in his vague source references (2000: 64). It has also been suggested by Valerie Flint that the whole work is a parody of the national histories of England being produced by Geoffrey's contemporaries (1979: 447-468). A few scholars have, however, believed that Geoffrey may have had access to Welsh or Breton source material that no longer survives.[16]

Geoffrey makes King Arthur central to his *Historia,* and so to later medieval chronicle and romance. Building on earlier traditions and transforming them, he creates the earliest known account of Arthur's life from birth to death, a narrative that takes up between a quarter and a half of the whole *Historia.* Tolkien and E. V. Gordon write in their edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* that Geoffrey's *Historia* is "the origin or earliest record of much Arthurian matter" (1930: xxvi), and many motifs that became characteristic of Arthurian literature make their first appearance in the work, including Arthur's conception at Tintagel, Mordred's treachery, and Arthur's fatal wounding and removal to Avalon.

Unlike Tolkien, Geoffrey left no letters, lectures, or other evidence of his national identity and allegiance. Although he was born in Wales, his history was written for the Anglo-Norman elite (by whom Geoffrey was later honoured by elevation to the see of St Asaph) and is not in any straightforward sense patriotic Welsh propaganda. John Gillingham argues that a new English identity emerged in historical writing of the 1130s, a sense of "Englishness" that embraced both English (Anglo-Saxon) and Norman (GILLINGHAM 1990: 99-118). The formation of this identity was linked with political crises of the 1130s and with the fortunes of Norman claims on Wales, for, as Michael Faletra notes, historical writing flowered contemporaneously with and in support of Anglo-Norman expansion in Geoffrey's native Wales (2000: 61). Indeed, writing in the mid to late 1130s, Geoffrey must have been aware how precarious Norman power was in south Wales; there was a revival of Welsh sovereignty in the kingdom of Glamorgan from 1136, and Welsh insurgents temporarily regained Caerleon, among other places, from Norman control.

In his *Historia* Geoffrey certainly admires the heroism of the early Britons, but he also follows the sixth-century writer Gildas in blaming the British for their defeat by Anglo-Saxon invaders; Geoffrey says that divine retribution has come because of the Britons' "pride" (Descrip. 5) and attributes the contemporary subservient state of the Welsh to their failure to maintain unity among themselves (XI. 185).

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[16] Sebastian Evans idiosyncratically argued in his translation of Geoffrey (which Tolkien and Gordon recommend in their edition of *Gawain*) that Geoffrey's "very old book" could have been in *English*: see Sebastian Evans, trans., Geoffrey of MONMOUTH, *Histories of the Kings of Britain* (1912: 244). Lewis and Currie take this bizarre claim as the starting point for an unconvincing argument that Tolkien's *Book of Lost Tales* was an attempt to imagine what Geoffrey's "ancient book" may have been like: see Alex LEWIS and Elizabeth CURRIE, *The Epic Realm of Tolkien: Part One-Beren and Lúthien* (2009: 182-87).

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So, as Faletra writes, Geoffrey legitimates "Norman colonization of Wales by creating and perpetuating textual myths of the innate defeatedness – and the inevitable defeatability – of the British people" (FALETRA 2000: 82).

At the end of the *Historia* Geoffrey suggests that the Welsh are now called "Welsh" and no longer known as Britons because they have proved unworthy of their ancestors' name (XI. 207). For Geoffrey, the valour and strength of the early Britons has been transferred to the Bretons rather than maintained by the Welsh: having described the foundation of Brittany as the establishment of a "second Britain" (*alteram Britanniam* (V. 86 cf. V. 88)), Geoffrey depicts several British kings as depending on Breton support (as William I had done in the Norman Conquest); in Book XI a character (Caduallo) attributes the weakness of the Britons to the fact that their best men had all settled in Brittany (XI. 195).

These pro-Breton sympathies may, as we have seen, be linked to Geoffrey's Monmouth origins. They led J. S. P. Tatlock in his influential work on the *Legendary History of Britain* (1950) to characterise Geoffrey as a Breton patriot promoting a pan-Celtic alliance of Welsh and Bretons; Faletra notes that "this model of Geoffrey as the mouthpiece of the Celtic fringe has informed much subsequent scholarly work" (2000: 61). More recently a number of scholars have, however, become more sensitive to the ways in which Geoffrey writes in the service of Norman, or Anglo-Norman, rule. Roberts and Gillingham argue that Geoffrey attempts to cater to both Welsh and Norman audiences; Schichtman and Finke show that where Geoffrey manipulated his known source material he did so in ways designed to please his Norman patrons.[17] The most recent work in this area has tended to see Geoffrey as much less consistently pro-Welsh or even pro-Breton and much more supportive of Anglo-Norman sovereignty than earlier scholarship was disposed to do. Faletra thus writes that

"Despite the occasionally pro-Briton, and indeed pro-Celtic implications of Geoffrey's text, and despite the fact that he seems to glorify the kings and heroes of the ancient Britons, the *Historia regum Britanniae* [. . .] finally supports the Normans in their tenure of an *imperium* over all of Britain." (FALETRA 2000: 61)

At first sight, this may seem a bold claim, as the *Historia*'s narrative concludes in the seventh century, some four hundred years before the Norman Conquest of 1066: how, then, can it support Norman rule? The answer lies in the last three words of the above quotation: "all of Britain". Geoffrey consistently presents the island of Britain as a *single* political entity, from his description of *Britannia, insularum optima* (Britain, the best of islands) in Book I onwards. His history traces the successive dominance over the whole island by Britons, Romans, and then Saxons; by showing that successive peoples proved incapable of maintaining sovereignty over the ideal political unit that is the whole of Britain, Geoffrey is able to imply that the Normans are now the rightful successors of previously dominant peoples. He traces a *translatio imperii* from Britons to

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[17] ROBERTS, "Geoffrey"; John GILLINGHAM, (1990). "The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain", *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13: 99-118; Martin SCHICHTMAN and Laurie FINKE, "Profiting from the Past: History as Symbolic Capital in the *Historia regum Britanniae*", *Arthurian Literature* 12 (1993), 1–35.

Romans to Saxons and leaves the reader to see that as the Saxons proved unable to withstand Norman conquest, the Normans are now rightful rulers of the whole island, not only of England. Tolkien maintained that the idea of Britishness was invented to support the union of the English and Scottish crowns; there is a sense in which Geoffrey of Monmouth promoted a similar concept of island-wide unity for comparable political reasons back in the 1130s. For Geoffrey, unity is strength; in his history the failure of rulers to maintain unity is often the cause of their defeat: with Mordred's treachery even Arthur's great empire falls to internal conflict. Writing in the 1130s, including during the first years of Stephen's troubled reign (1135–54), Geoffrey offers a timely warning to the Anglo-Norman elite of the dangers in civil war.

3.   Tolkien's Knowledge of Geoffrey's Work

Comparing Tolkien and Geoffrey, their work and its relation to contemporary issues of national identity, is illuminating regardless of any direct connection between the two writers. In fact, though, Tolkien knew Geoffrey's work well. Tolkien's familiarity with Geoffrey's writing is evident in the edition of the Middle English romance, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* on which he collaborated with E. V. Gordon. The edition was originally published in 1925, before the appearance of editions of Geoffrey by Edmond Faral and Acton Griscom and Robert Ellis Jones with which Tolkien could have become acquainted later. So Tolkien and Gordon refer students to the earlier and inferior editions by J. A. Giles and San Marte [A. Schulz] as well as to the Everyman translation by Sebastian Evans.[18] They make fairly frequent reference to Geoffrey in their editorial material and notes.

We can also detect an affectionate nod to Geoffrey in the mock scholarly Foreword to Tolkien's *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1949), with its claim to be a translation from "very Insular Latin" into English of a legend that affords a glimpse of "life in a dark period of the history of Britain" and its statement that "Since Brutus came to Britain many kings and realms have come and gone" – which happens also to be an accurate one-line summary of Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae*.[19] The foreword suggests that the tale must have taken place "after the days of King Coel, maybe, but before Arthur or the Seven Kingdoms of the English" (TOLKIEN 1999: 8).

Tolkien nowhere refers to Geoffrey as a model for his creative writing. We know, on the contrary, that Tolkien deliberately rejected the idea of retelling the Arthurian legend that Geoffrey had popularised and in his 1951 letter to Waldman,

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[18] J. A. GILES, ed. (1844). *The British History of Geoffrey of Monmouth*, trans. A Thompson, rev. edn (London: James Bohn); SAN MARTE, [A. Schulz], ed. (1854). *Gottfried's von Monmouth Historia Regum Britanniæ, mit literar-historischer Einleitung und ausführlichen Anmerkungen, und Brut Tysylio, altwälsche Chronik in deutscher Uebersetzung* (Halle: Eduard Anton); and Evans in MONMOUTH, *Histories of the Kings* (1912).

[19] J. R. R. TOLKIEN (1999). *Farmer Giles of Ham: 50th Anniversary Edition,* ed. Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond, London: HarperCollins.

Tolkien explicitly denied that the story of Arthur was English enough for his purposes: "Of course there was and is all the Arthurian world, but powerful as it is, it is imperfectly naturalized, associated with the soil of Britain but not with English; and does not replace what I felt to be missing" (TOLKIEN 1985: 144). Tolkien's only attempt at retelling Arthurian legend, his poem on *The Fall of Arthur*, remained an unfinished fragment and was not published until 2013.[20] But although elsewhere Tolkien quite deliberately avoided the material which Geoffrey of Monmouth had popularized, given Tolkien's evident familiarity with the *Historia* it is not impossible that Tolkien realised that in his narratives of Middle-earth he was doing something in some ways similar to the work of his Oxford-based predecessor.

4. A Modern Geoffrey (and a Medieval Tolkien?)

Whether or not Tolkien was aware of any similarities between his creative project and that of Geoffrey of Monmouth, it can be argued that both writers were constructing national mythologies, Tolkien offering the English people a specifically English mythology and Geoffrey promoting the idea of a united Britain rightly under Anglo-Norman rule. Scholars have compared Tolkien's determination to make good England's lack of a mythology to Elias Lönnrot's creation of the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala*, in the nineteenth century.[21]

Just as Tolkien's national myth-making means he can appropriately be compared with figures like Lönnrot, so he might be thought of as a "modern Geoffrey of Monmouth", doing something similar in the twentieth century to what Geoffrey did in the twelfth. But it is also possible to see things from the other direction: the evidence that we have of what Tolkien thought he was doing might offer an insight into what Geoffrey was doing, or might have thought he was doing. Geoffrey left no letters, no theoretical lecture on the nature of myth or historiography, and few comments about his aims and intentions. Assuming that the "very old British book" to which he defers is a fiction, one cannot help wondering what he thought he was doing inventing stories and passing them off as history when he knew that in fact he had made them up: did he expect people to believe he had used a British/Breton source? Or did he expect them to see through that fiction? We can never know, of course. But perhaps Tolkien's conception of myth-making as expressive of a certain kind of truth (other than the literal and historical) is relevant here.

Reflecting on medieval understandings of the genre to which Geoffrey's work claims to belong encourages one to think along these lines. Although I have referred to the *Historia regum Britanniae* as myth or legend, it presents itself (not least in its title) as history. Its fanciful contents mean it conveys very little history

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[20] J. R. R. TOLKIEN (2013). *The Fall of Arthur*, ed. Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins.
[21] On parallels between Tolkien and Lönnrot see, for example, Verlyn FLIEGER, "A mythology for Finland: Tolkien and Lönnrot as mythmakers" in *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader*, ed. Jane Chance (2004: 277-83).

in the modern sense, but medieval conceptions of historical writing were rather different from ours. In the Middle Ages history was seen as a rhetorical or persuasive genre and it was perfectly normal and expected that historians would use their imaginations in order to bring out more effectively what they perceived to be the underlying historical truth, even though this often meant writing what is, to us, fiction. The most obvious and widely prevalent manifestation of this is the invention of speeches which are put into the mouths of historical characters but which cannot possibly be verbatim records of what they actually said. Medieval people believed that one might use the imagination in order to arrive at a deeper historical truth; this does not mean that they were incapable of distinguishing between history and fiction. The early reception of Geoffrey's *Historia* is instructive here: although Henry of Huntingdon was taken in by it, William of Newburgh was not deceived:

"in order to expiate the Britons of their sins, a writer has emerged in our times who has woven the most fantastic lies regarding them […] This man is called Geoffrey, and he is surnamed Arthur due to the fact that he put the fabulous deeds of Arthur into Latin, drawing from the old yarns of the Britons and from his own imagination and cloaking them with the name of actual history." (in MONMOUTH 2008: 289)

Tolkien, of course, has also been criticised by unsympathetic readers for indulging in fantasy. Elizabeth Solopova writes that Tolkien's success

"in creating an illusion of historical truth may be partly responsible for a persistent suspicion that he actually believed in the legends and mythology that he invented. The same question is sometimes asked about him, as is asked about medieval writers whose work appears to be somewhere on the borderline between history and fiction: is it deliberate invention or did they think that they were writing history?" (SOLOPOVA 2014: 241)

We know that Tolkien invented Middle-earth's history and we know that he knew that that was what he was doing. But we have also seen that he wrote in a letter that he had "the sense of recording what was already there somewhere". At a time when the dividing line between history and fiction was more blurred than it later became, might it be that Geoffrey of Monmouth would have said something similar about his own work, even though he also knew he was inventing it? Verlyn Flieger has written that "The chief function of any mythology, real or feigned, is to mirror a culture to itself, giving it a history and identity" (FLIEGER 2005: 139). It is this gift of a history and identity which Geoffrey and Tolkien offer to twelfth-century Britain and twentieth-century England. Neither writer, I think, would accept that a feigned history could not also be true on a deeper level.

So, not only was Tolkien a kind of modern Geoffrey of Monmouth, but Geoffrey of Monmouth was a kind of medieval Tolkien, too. The comparison is illuminating in both directions. Both these Oxford-based writers born outside England produced enormously popular pseudo-historical fantasies that have stimulated many other creative artists in various media, just as Tolkien hoped might happen when he wrote to Waldman of a desire to "leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama" (TOLKIEN: 1981: 145). National identity was a fundamental driving force behind the two writers' creativity. Whereas Tolkien rejected the idea of Britishness, in the modern sense, and identified

himself as English (not British), or more locally as Mercian or Hwiccian, Geoffrey's work embodied an alternative vision of the island of Britain as a single, united polity. Nevertheless, however narrowly national the impulse behind their writing may have been (and Tolkien, at least, came to realise that his English mythology had more than merely national resonances), the work has, in both cases, outgrown its origins and been read, admired, and adapted by people of many other nationalities.

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MYTHOLOGY AND COSMOLOGY IN J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

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Abstract: In my article, beside the homage to J.R.R. Tolkien's work, I'll try to explicit the Indo-European mythological structure within *The Lord of the Rings.* This structure, according to Dumézil, contains three functions: the royal function, the warrior function, and the productive function. By introducing these functions, Tolkien has provided his story a cosmological and metaphysical dimension based on the proposition "All is One". The second part of my article is dedicates to explain the importance of this proposition in Tolkien's work.

Key words: Tolkien – *The Lord of the Rings* - mythology – cosmology – All is One.

Sixty years after the publication of *The Fellowship of the Rings*, the first volume of *The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien's work has reached an international prestige and a worldwide acknowledgement. With its Hollywood adaptation on the big screen during the last decade, his story has now become even more famous and celebrated as a masterpiece. However beyond the agitation of all the renown and the fame, it is legitimate for real admirers of his work to seek the profound significance of his oeuvre. What was Tolkien's authentic ambition by writing this epopee that is *The Lord of the Rings*? In an attempt to answer this question, I will at first, point out mythological elements that structure his novel. These elements will then lead us to a better understanding of its cosmological background based on a metaphysical proposition: "All is One".

As Georges Dumézil demonstrated through his life's works, all Indo-European myths are based on a tri-functional structure: the royal function, the warrior function, and the productive function (DUMÉZIL 1995). These three functions reflect the main concerns of all human societies, which are the need for religion, protection, and perpetuation. This structure is still observable though other means. For example, in France under the *Ancien Régime* in the 18th century*,* her society was divided in three orders: the clergy, the nobility, and the *Tiers-Etat*. It is also the main form of social organization within most traditional societies. As spiritual and intellectual creations, figures of Gods in myths symbolize abstract ideas stemming from simple social needs. For example, in Latin culture, Mars represented war while Jupiter represented royalty. As ideas and representations of values, Gods are out of time and thereby, remain in a kind of immutable eternity. They are expressions of human desire for the absolute, which means they are out of the human world, a world that suffers from imperfection and alteration. This immutable eternity leads to a problem: if Gods are beyond the human world, then how could

those ideas and values manifest in it? The answer can be found in epopee, where ideas and values are transposed into the human level through heroic figures in order to put ideas into action and then, escape from eternity's emptiness (CASSIRER 1955: II). This means, *stricto sensu*, that *The Lord of the Rings* is an epopee, not a myth. The difference is that epopees are mediations between universal and particulars permitting a harmony between the cosmos and human society. Heroes are then articulations between Gods and humans. In others words, heroes make possible the recognition between humans and Gods, between the phenomenal world and the ideal world. Without heroes, Gods shall remain merely abstractions without any of contents. Without heroes, humanity shall remain captive in their individualism and be unable to access culture; culture meaning to assemble every single man despite their differences and their particularism. More than that, transposition from myths to epopees aims to maintain and to perpetuate a stable social frame for future generations by transmitting cultural values shared within society (ARENDT 2006). At this point lays the crucial significance of books like *The Lord of the Rings*.

If one looks more closely into Tolkien's work, one can find that the tri-functional structure appears clearly in the background of *The Lord of the Rings*. However in some way, the former cosmologic hierarchy is not respected. There are many Christian elements introduced by Tolkien that I will point out in the second part of my article. For now, let us clarify the three functions in Tolkien's work. The royal function is incarnated by Aragorn, and in a different level, Gandalf. The warrior function has a double figure: Gimli and Legolas. Generally, the Hobbits assume the productive function. As I indicated previously, these characters and heroes embody moral values defined by ancient cosmology.

Firstly, the royal function must remain virtuous and pious. These values are essential for he who has the responsibility to lead and to rule. Aragorn, whose destiny is to be king, reflects those values in every word, in every gesture. For

example, at the end of Minas Tirith's battle, Aragorn went to the house of the healing and successively healed, one by one, his companions fallen during the battle because: "The hands of the kings are the hands of a healer, and so shall the rightful king be known" (TOLKIEN 1993: 897). It is interesting to remark also that the feat of the Paths of the Dead's crossing was indirectly told by Gimli after the battle which increases the merit of his action, and at the same time expresses the admiration and the trust that the warrior placed in his king and captain. "I was held to the road only by the will of Aragorn," admitted Gimli before leaving Legolas to tell the story (TOLKIEN 1993: 908). Aragorn's royalty appears not only by itself, but also through the eyes of his brothers-in-arm and friends. This point shows us that Tolkien was very aware of one of the most important political principle for an ancient ruler: the Prince has to know how to govern himself in order to govern others (FOUCAULT 2001). In others words, the King's self-government is the fundamental condition to guarantee harmony and order in his kingdom. The King's ethic is the main condition for a harmonious society (DUMÉZIL 1995: I). The Gondor's Steward, portrayed as an envious and iniquitous character, incarnates, from this point of view, the exact opposite of king's ethic. It explains why his politic against Mordor's invasion turns into a disaster. Not only does he lose his most capable captain and son, Faramir, at a crucial moment because of a foolish decision: he is not willing not to "yield the River and the Pelennor unfought", but he also lost the faith of his soldiers after Faramir's death (TOLKIEN 1993: 848). This contrast between two kinds of leadership brings out the central influence of the king's virtue on his kingdom's destiny. This influence reflects once again the cosmology doctrine, which is at the base of traditional mythology. Moral values defined by the cosmos' order are conditions that guarantee peace and stability. Then harmony on Earth can be considered as a reflection of harmony in the sky. And this harmony on Earth, in Middle-Earth in the case of Tolkien's books, could truly be established only when two other functions faithfully follow the royal function's lead.

In a different way, the royal function is also incarnated by Gandalf, especially Gandalf the White. Here the magical element takes over the moral value. This point indicates another important dimension of the royal function, which is the manifestation of his power as symbol of his link with the cosmos or a superior Force. In his typology of domination's forms, Max Weber showed that charismatic domination came from a magical power of prophets, sages, therapists, jurists, leaders, or heroes (WEBER 1995: 3. §10). This magical power, or charisma in his terminology, is an extraordinary quality of a person who is blessed with forces or supernatural power inaccessible to common man. He is then considered by others as an envoy of Gods, or at least of a superior force: "a servant of the Secret Fire, wielder of the flame of Anor" as he claimed himself (TOLKIEN 1993: 348). Thus, Gandalf's figure is a representation on Earth of a superior power, which is not clearly identified as Christian God but rather a cosmological force. His closeness and his familiarity with animals, and his knowledge of Middle Earth's mysteries and races make him more a pagan pantheist than a Christian priest. Even the allusion of a mysterious life after life, causing his metamorphosis from Gandalf the Grey into Gandalf the White, has a profane aspect because he seems to acquire a new soul in his former body. This detail reveals an ancient belief in metempsychosis.

The second function has a double figure as well which are Gimli and Legolas. These figures belong to a typical heroic representation of the warrior function. Gimli incarnates the Strong, the Herculean type who is hot-tempered and rude. He always desires to engage immediately in a fight in order to resolve every problem. He usually uses a mace, an axe, or simply the strength of his arms. As a solitary fighter, he used to be in the vanguard. Legolas is more of a benefactor type. That means he is more attentive to moral or social effects of his skills and his actions. He is known for his agility and his archery skill. Usually well-armed, he is an archer with extraordinary projectiles (DUMÉZIL 1995: I). In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Boromir belongs also to the warrior function but his role is quite a negative one: he is here essentially to remind lectors about the danger of warrior's outbreak.

Warriors always have an ambiguous place in every society. They are certainly admired and glorified by the majority, but at the same time feared and suspected because of their power to destroy. Indeed, he can be employed to defend his community. But, in the other hand, he might destroy it. This appears to be the essential problem of a warrior's ethic: how can a warrior manage to master himself in order to efficiently serve his community? In this perspective, Boromir represents the fellowship's weak component and a danger for its harmony: as a human being, he is dominated by his lust for power. Just like Isildur's lust for power that led him to conserve the Ring instead of destroy it, Boromir succumbed to the Ring's spell: "Why not Boromir? The Ring would give me power to Command. How I would drive the hosts of Mordor and all men would flock to my banner!" said the warrior to Frodo before tempting to take the Ring by force (TOLKIEN 1993: 418). This scene clearly reflects the human weakness of temptation, and shows at the same time that a warrior's lack of self-control always leads into a rupture. From another point of view, one can perceive through this critique of human desire that some catholic elements have been mixed with those from ancient cosmology. Human desire disturbs the cosmos' order. Human desire brings man to his own doom. This condemnation of human desire has deep Catholic roots but placed in a cosmologic frame, it becomes a little harder to recognize. This cosmology identifies God as nature, *Deus sive natura*, according to Spinoza's expression (SPINOZA 2010: 366-367). Then the critique of human desire appears more like an ecological matter than a moral matter. Nevertheless, in the end, these two perspectives rejoin themselves in a common concern: human salvation.

On the contrary, Gimli, the dwarf, is elaborated in such a way as to minimize the aggressiveness and to soften the representation of a warrior's furor. His small size diminishes lector's impression of ferocity. Gimli often makes jokes on himself and on his own race, even if he considers it very highly. This dialectic between a warrior's gentleness and brutality has been exploited by different cultures, if not all of them. In diverse mythologies, there are several parts under a blind rage, where

warriors are capable of brutalities and inhumanities beyond imagination, and then some moment later, they appear to be compassionate and benevolent. For example, one can easily think about Achilles who, under the spell of vengeance, ravaged his enemy's body but then seemed to be touched by a father's pain and loss (HOMER 1999: 22-23). This point indicates a cultural process aiming to soften man's aggressive impulses. In other words, epopee seemed to point out that gentleness is an attribute of virility and strength as well (DE ROMILLY 1979). And Gimli manifests precisely these seemed-to-be opposite qualities in his character. But then, there is still something rude, even animal, in dwarves: they live in mines, beneath the earth, and physically they are quite unpleasant. This resemblance with animals has two significations quite different. In one hand, it reminds all lectors the possibility of a warrior's outbreak, turning himself into a beast and then being able to destroy what he is sworn to defend. We have then a clear opposition between self-control and madness, madness considered here as a regression into bestiality. But on the other hand, it perpetuates and deepens the idea of a correspondence between a warrior's outer form and his inner form, like his soul. The classic example is naturally Scandinavian *berserkir* whose name means « with bear's (*ber*) cover (*serkr*) ». According to Dumézil, « it seems that former Germans had no difficulty to attribute to the same man different ''souls'' and further, the ''outer form'' had been considered as the clearest characteristic of personality» (DUMÉZIL 1985: 208-209). Once again, this traditional metaphor of animal is also found in Gimli's description.

The principle of correspondence between a warrior's outer form and his inner form is also valid as one turns his gaze to the other representative of the warrior function, Legolas, the Elf Prince. Unlike Gimli, he incarnates a pure moral principle. His immaculate beauty reflects his moral purity, the source of all warriors' nobility. His absolute loyalty to Aragorn in every situation, as attested to his sworn to fight "for the love of the Lord of the White Tree", shows that he has mastered his furor in order to faithfully serve the society, represented here by the royal function

(TOLKIEN 1993: 912). His disdain towards the dwarves in the first volume shows a tension inside the warrior function. On one hand, we have an idealistic perfection of moral and beauty (Legolas) and on the other hand, a rude behavior without elegance and grace (Gimli). This tension points out the gap between two extremes inside the warrior function: an ideal of perfection and the risk to regress into a beast. The friendly relationship that Gimli and Legolas succeed to develop along their journey marks reconciliation between these two extremes, reconciliation necessary to the old society's harmony and to the cosmos' order.

Now let us talk about the Hobbits. In the mythological structure, the productive function is usually represented by twins, just like our Hobbit pair: Frodo and Sam or Merry and Pippin. They are mainly characterized by their kindness, docility, and devotion. In their mythological origin, they do not fight. However in Tolkien's epic transposition, they sometimes use swords but mostly, they employ the sharpness of their mind and the vivacity of their intelligence. Traditionally, the third function devotes itself entirely to the royal function, indicating thereby a complete submission of a subject towards his sovereign. However, Tolkien inverses this aspect by making Frodo the fellowship's heart and center. The other characters seem to be here simply to help him to fulfill his mission. Somehow, the theme of fidelity is still conserved in the story but with some variation. For example, Sam's devotion to Frodo, or the fact that Pippin becomes a guard serving under the Steward of Gondor's command. However, submission to the royal function is no longer the main quality of the productive function. It was rather replaced by brotherhood in *The Lord of the Rings*. The fellowship's breaking rang clearly the end of the former cosmological order and along with it, values that promoted the tri-functional structure. Thus, starting from *The Two Towers*, Tolkien modified some aspects of this function by giving the Hobbits a very important part of the story. Frodo's journey to the Mordor marks a real difference with the former mythological structure. The Hobbits as representations of the productive function seem to gain their independence from the royal function and also from the former cosmologic

order. Frodo's mission to destroy the Ring is as important as the warriors, if not more. By this third function's liberation, Tolkien introduces some crucial elements of Christian doctrine. The Ring can be compared to the Cross, and Frodo's journey to Jesus' march to the Golgotha. The Ring symbolizes very explicitly the burden of mankind's sin: their lust for power, their will to conquer, and their immoderate pride. In this perspective, Frodo's ultimate ambition is to bring redemption to every creature and the entire world. In other words, the savior of the world is not a heroic warrior figure anymore but a little and humble creature. This modification reveals a very deep Christian belief that the poor and the humble are those who can really save the world. That is why Heaven is promised to them (THE HOLY BIBLE, MATTHEW 5:3-12). Exactly like the end of the book where Frodo leaves Middle-Earth alongside the Elves to the land of eternity. But this modification also points out a democratic tendency of western societies beside the Christian theological basis. Because of workers increasing importance in every modern society, Hobbits as productive function's representation acquired a much more significant part in such an epopee as *The Lord of the Rings*. I am not saying here that there is a communist tendency in Tolkien's way of glorifying the humble, but one should remember, when reading his story, of all the social struggles in the 19th and 20th centuries that our author was a direct witness. This social reality attests somehow to the struggle for recognition, especially for fundamental rights that characterize western democracies (HONNETH 1996). And this recognition, in Tolkien's book, appears with the valorization of the Hobbits as the third function. This point shows how myths and epopees are not merely fictions, but are permeable to social context and evolution of ideas, whether political ideas or theological ideas (DUMÉZIL 1995: I). In addition, the enthusiasm for Tolkien's work nowadays might not be a simple mode opened by Hollywood, but rather a sign of youngsters' need for stable moral values in front of all the cynicism and the individualism in western societies.

Despite the fact that the basic mythological structure has been modified under

religious and political influences, the main metaphysical proposition remains the same. *The Lord of the Rings* perpetuates the affirmation that "All is One" (WISMANN 2012: 198ss). This affirmation draws its strength from the former cosmology, but on the other hand, from the Christian belief in the creative power of Word. From a cosmological point of view, "All is One" means "Nature is One". In other words, the totality of all things can be unified in one and unique substance which is Nature, or in Tolkien's world, Middle-Earth. In this perspective, different races in the story are merely different expressions of the same substance that constitutes this world as a totality. That is why each race has to have their own language in order to express, in its own way, its relation to the totality. However this totality, unlike all the former mythologies, no longer represents nor pretends to be a metaphysical principle permitting to explain the whole world. It rather indicates a horizon of symbols that thickens the story and the languages the author develops. "All is One" becomes, within the novel, an aesthetic principle rather than an explicative principle. If Tolkien managed to develop each race's history and characters, his intention is to enrich its language with historical and mythical significations, and then becoming a real instrument of expression. Tolkien has always considered the Esperanto as a dead language because it lacks this essential historic and mythic dimension. It is merely a language of service, which one uses to name things but not to communicate. Communication supposes a meaning level that exceeds the simple fact of nomination. It means that language is more than a toolbox where one can easily find his readymade utensil in order to describe reality (CASSIRER 1955: I). That is why a sentence will always contain more significations than a simple addition of words that compose it and a text more sense than an aggregation of sentences. The strange and mysterious calling of Tolkien's novel that happens in most reader's mind seems to have its secret precisely in this dimension of language, and in its capacity to describe a vision or an imagination's creation. There is no doubt that each race was not simply what it just is, but signified much more than that because each race symbolized particular values as I have established previously with the tri-functional structure. And in the

same way, their languages carried more than just sounds and syllables. They also contain a dimension of symbols and significations that exceed simple noises (CASSIRER 1955: I). Here lies the reason why one can immerge oneself in Tolkien's world because somehow it has more meaning than the bare real world. This is due to the tri-functional structure and to the former cosmology.

From a Christian point-of-view, language has in its essence a holy dimension. The Word always has something magical and mysterious because it has something to do with immaterial forces and creation (CASSIRER 1955: II). In the story, to be able to speak another race's language like Gandalf or Aragorn supposes knowledge of mysteries, and a power on things and other creatures. One can also think of Sauron who invents, by himself, the Black Speech in order to unify and to rule the Orcs. This shows that, in the linguistic level, language is a universal element that can suppress differences and unify the diversity. Thereby, it permits to maintain stability where there was only confusion and changing. In the artistic level, creating a new language means to create a whole race's history, legends, and myths, which ultimately means to create an entire world. However, this creation, as one can easily observe, is not a physical creation but an intellectual creation, which imparts significations to human spiritual life. In this perspective, Tolkien's effort to create new languages, especially the Elvish, means pushing further creation's process in order to express more profoundly the unity of his world and the unity based on consistency of its history; history that is contained in language itself. As a representation of physical perfection, as well as moral perfection, the Elves must have a perfect language too. It does not mean that Elvish has to have the perfect grammar, but rather it has to have the longest and richest history compared to other races. This point explains why they are the first race to have a language and are immortal.

By this observation about creation, I do not insinuate that Tolkien considered himself as a god, but such an operation belongs to a long past of western culture's

meditation about what creation and what art is. This meditation came from philosophical questions about the world's creation and the meaning of existence. Tolkien's answer is a double one. Firstly, he borrowed the tri-functional structure of Indo-European myths in order to give a historical dimension to his oeuvre. A dimension that also enriches his work with a metaphysical proposition: "All is One". Secondly, from this mythological dimension he created languages, which are artistic and concrete answers to the meditation about art and creation. Ordinarily, language has an ambiguous position: it can be used as a tool to nominate things in order to simplify and manipulate the reality (for example, technical and bureaucratic languages). It can also have a poetic purpose that no longer aims to manipulate things, but creates new significations and perceptions of the reality. In Tolkien's novel, the languages he created are not mere tools, but symbols reflecting values stemming from the tri-functional structure and the cosmological order. In other terms, languages are extracted from their dimension of designation to enter into the universe of pure signification where each language is a manifestation of the totality.

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BEREN AND RHAEGAR AS TWO KIND OF HEROES

The cultural transmission of the topic of love

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Abstract: The aim of this contribution is to reflect on the characteristics of Beren and Rhaegar, two heroes. What links these two characters is that they both have love stories. J. R. R. Tolkien and G. R. R. Martin place an emphasis on the more attractive love dimensions of these characters than on the epic aspects. We aim at comparing both characters and examining similarities and differences between them. In order to accomplish this, we have to bear in mind the specific approach of each respective author to their stories. We will compare the development of both love stories, from the perspective of their different natures.

Key words: High Fantasy – Culture – Literature – Heroes.

Introduction

Our intention in this text is to explain how two fantasy heroes share the same love motif in their respective stories and, at the same time, reflect on their

connection to other classic myths. Both J. R. R. Tolkien and G. R. R. Martin had been readers of classic texts and, so, it is important that we appreciate the influence of mythical stories on their books.

Firstly, we aim to make a short summary of the stories of the main characters in this contribution.

Prince Rhaegar, the heir to the Iron Throne, abducted Lyanna Stark and murdered in Dorne. Lyanna was the daughter of the Warden of the North and betrothed to Robert Baratheon while Rhaegar was married to Princess Elia Martell. Lyanna died inside the Tower of Joy while Rhaegar was slain in single combat by Robert Baratheon during the Battle of the Trident.

The story of Lúthien and her fate is tied to Beren. She was the daughter of Thingol and she fell in love with Beren against her father's will. They, after many hardships, reached Angband and recovered a Silmaril. Lúthien died of grief when Beren died but, after singing a song of sadness, she and Beren were granted new lives together.

We focus on an analysis of these heroes because their influence is crucial on the works they feature in. Beren belongs to *The Silmarilion* (TOLKIEN 1977)*,* but at the same time refers to *The Lord of the Rings*, via Aragorn's love story (TOLKIEN 1993 [1954]), while Rhaegar's story is frequently remembered in the *A Song of Ice and Fire* universe (MARTIN 2000) as one of the reasons for the different battles between family houses.

By analyzing both texts, we appreciate a certain cultural transmission between them and notice how the same motifs of pre-rationality fluctuate between different texts. In this study we will explain how human beings need to create heroes and identify with non-rational actions in order to understand reality. Myths are the clearest demonstration of this, because from ancient times they

have answered questions to human beings and helped them conquer their fears.

Bearing in mind the relevance of pre-rationale stories to our lives, we will try to justify the presence and influence of heroes in these stories. Existential questions about our place in the universe have worried human beings throughout the ages and so humans have created characters who transcend our reality and bring hope to our lives. Thus, we will attempt to offer an explanation of the necessity and validity of myths, highlighting their function as predecessors of literary works such as Beren (Tolkien) and Rhaegar (Martin).

1. A brief approach to High Fantasy

We can define High Fantasy as a subgenre of fantasy fiction that is set in invented or parallel worlds, and is founded upon a diverse body of works in the already very popular genre of fantasy. High fantasy came to eminence through the works of authors such as Mass (MASS 2012), Rothfuss (ROTHFUSS 2007), or Sanderson (SANDERSON 2010). High fantasy is a recurring genre in Young Adult Literature, and is primarily characterized by its focus on a conflict between good and evil. If the literature is successful, it is able to capture our imagination and suspend disbelief in two major ways: firstly by internal consistency in the fantasy world and secondly by the protagonist's own belief in his or her experiences (LUKENS 2007: 21).

These stories are generally serious in tone and often epic in scope, dealing with themes of grand struggles against supernatural, and often evil forces. Typical characteristics of High Fantasy include elements such as elves and dwarves, magic, wizards, invented languages or quests.

High Fantasy worlds may be to a greater or lesser extent based on real world milieus, or on such legends as the Arthurian myth. When the resemblance to existing mythologies is strong, and particularly when real-world history is used, High Fantasy has the logical of an alternative world. When the scope is not on

the epic scale, and deals with the hero's personal fight against evil forces, epic fantasy may develop into the genre of sword and sorcery literature. For example, we can highlight heroes such as Thomas Covenant, Osberne Wulfgrimsson, Solomon Kane, Conan or King Arthur.

Some characteristics of this subgenre are: a target audience of adults or teens, and not children; an invented world, continent, or country (for example, Earthsea, Middle-earth or Westeros); specifically built cultures, sometimes with constructed languages and religions (for instance Elvish or Valyrian); medieval technology, often with a feudal social structure; magic, frequently performed by wizards and the like; non-human races such as elves and dwarves; an array of monsters and mythical creatures like trolls and unicorns; a pantheon of gods who meddle in human affairs; and epic battles between good and evil.

The fantasy writer creates a new and unique world for the characters, hoping to make readers believe that this other world not only could but does indeed exist within the framework of the book. The acceptance of this other world requires an ability to make the imaginary universe credible on the part of the writer.

2. On fantasy stories

Stories biased towards character rather than plot focus on the personality and inner life of the hero. In one sense, fantasy stories are almost always "about" one or more characters. In most stories, though, the tale is not about the character of the protagonist.

The structure of a story based on character is simple. The story begins at the moment the main character becomes so unhappy, impatient or angry with their position in life that they begin a process of change. It ends when the character either settles into a new role or gives up the struggle and remains in the old role (JONES 2005). Beren is an example of the mortal hero who accomplishes a seemingly impossible task. The task is to recover one of the stolen Silmaril

jewels from the iron crown of Morgoth, The Lord of Darkness. This quest echoes the Greek tale of *Jason and the Argonauts* in its execution of a task believed to be impossible. If we remember Jason's story, to summarise, he had to regain the throne stolen from his father by his uncle Pelias. To do this he had to bring him the Golden Fleece. Jason and the Argonauts battled Harpies and giants and then, in Colchis, he had to complete three seemingly impossible tasks. Finally, Jason returned to Lolcus with the Golden Fleece.

Also, for the end of the heroic tale of Beren and Lúthien, Tolkien borrowed from the Greek myth of *Orpheus and Eurydice*. In this case, they got married but Eurydice was bitten by a snake and died. Orpheus travelled to the Underworld to bring her back to life. Hades and Persephone let him go but Eurydice had to walk behind him and he was forbidden from looking at her. Orpheus turned to look at her near the entrance and she was immediately sent back to the Underworld. Beren dies of wounds sustained in recovering the Silmaril. Then the King of the Valar intervenes giving Lúthien two choices.

In the story, something is wrong with the fabric of the universe; the world is out of order. In classic literature, this can also include, amongst other events, the appearance of a monster (*Beowulf*), the "unnatural" murder of a king by his brother (*Hamlet*) or of a guest by his host (*Macbeth*), or the reappearance of a powerful ancient adversary who was thought to be dead (*The Lord of the Rings*). In all cases, a previous order—a "golden age"—has been disrupted and the world is in a state of flux, a dangerously unpredictable place.

These are event stories, examining the effect of occurrences on the stories. Too many writers of event stories, especially epic fantasies, don't learn from Tolkien. Instead, they imagine that the reader won't be able to understand their world if they don't begin with a prologue showing the state of their invented world. For instance, we can mention the prologue in Christopher Paolini's *Eragon*. This is not the case of G. R. R. Martin who offers us various points of view, introducing the plot-lines of the different noble houses of Westeros, the Wall, and the

Targaryens. Tolkien includes the Beren and Lúthien story as a chapter in *The Silmarilion*, while Martin divides the allusions to Rhaegar into the different books of the complete work.

3. The popular necessity for heroes

In the beginning were thunder and lightning, light and darkness, water and fire, then, onomatopoea appeared and, finally, the myth as personification of nature, which helped erase our fears by taming nature through words. The myth is not a scientific explanation but is a primitive narrative, told to satisfy deep religious desires and moral issues. In these myths we can find the origin of allegories and the way to moralize societies and their people. As we have mentioned, Tolkien was probably inspired by *Orpheus and Eurydice*, and used them as a basis for his heroes, in the same way as Martin used *Hades* and the myth of *Persephone*. This entails the invention of a new language and literature and, at the same time, is the origin of the literary characters we discuss in this contribution.

The myth is a complex cultural construction, and through it we try to find meaning in human life. Through myths, human beings experience extraordinary things and acquire powerful visions of the future. In the world of fiction, we are able to feel that we can achieve things that in our real lives are not possible. The world of fiction and myth allows us to imagine a better future, albeit impossible. As May states, without the myth we are a minor race, unable to go beyond word and listen to the speaker (MAY 1991). By using myth, we can establish a relationship between the pre-rationality of myths and the creation of heroes such as Beren and Rhaegar, whose behavior tries to give an explanation to beliefs, wishes and life. Thus, if the reader identifies himself with Beren or with Rhaegar they can feel themselves to be a kind of hero albeit in a fictional world, which can mirror feelings in the real world.

The figure of the hero is essential in understanding reality. Beren and Raeghar are based on mythic stories and have similarities to them. Both stories examine the topic of love. The difference of these stories to classic myths lies in the nature of mass media and the inclusion of these characters on different media platforms. Going beyond merely oral tradition, these characters and their stories are disseminated through television, cinema or the internet. Paradoxically, in the universes of both Tolkien and Martin, Beren and Rhaegar are well known characters but have not had the media attention of other characters created by their authors.

4. Classic and contemporary myths of modernity

The relevance of myths to the development of society is important because myths are continually present in different social media (literature, painting, sculpture, mass media and so on). Against rationality, humans being need to develop explanations for questions about life which cannot being solved or answered by rational science. This is because myths are still present in our culture and societies. For example, we can mention four important modern myths, whose representative characters are Don Quixote, Faust, Robinson Crusoe and Don Juan. In these characters, we discover influences on our contemporary societies, because the myths refer to human universals (such as love, death, ideals and hopes). Because of this, we can read these stories and use them to answer many questions both in fiction and in reality, because the collective imagination interprets them as main axes of social thought. Idealism versus rationality, love versus isolation, or the character of the conqueror are archetypes in our societies, and those aforementioned characteristics, although not real, are taken by us as a model or a rationale to explain daily events.

Heroes are necessary references for people who use them to compare their real life situations with the fictional. In fiction the hero overcomes adversity and fights against evil or natural obstacles and, above all, fights against power structures that are imposed on them by society. A classical example of heroes

or superheroes is shown in Superman and Batman. They have different qualities. The first one has supernatural qualities and the second uses technology. Both fight against evil and become a reference for citizenship. The hero can be seen as the attempt of the citizen to promote equality in society. This happens in the case of Beren and Rhaegar who, at the same time, also have ancestors in classic mythology.

Firstly, Beren and Lúthien mirror the famous couple described by Ovid, *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Jen Stevens points outs the transformation made by Tolkien in adapting these mythical characters into his *Silmarilion* (STEVENS 2004: 119-131). Other influences for the creation of Beren and Lúthien are *The Legend of Good Woman* (Chaucer) or *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare). On the other hand, in the case of Rhaegar and Lyanna Stark we find a parallel with the classic myth of *Hades and Persephone*. One day Hades, God of the Underworld, saw Persephone and instantly fell in love with her. Persephone was gathering flowers on a plain in Sicily when Hades suddenly appeared, thundering across the plain in his four-horse chariot. The god swooped down upon Persephone, scooped her up with one arm, and literally and figuratively deflowered her—leaving the plain scattered with blossoms of every colour. Resemblances between both stories exist in the three aspects of sudden falling in love, kidnapping and deflowering. Those elements are used by Martin to create his characters and the new story.

In Rhaegar's case there is the construction of a myth within the story. In *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the other characters mention him as a myth, he is an example of a pre-rationale creation about whom there is little information. Little by little, the characters give us information, all the while raising some never truly answered questions. For instance: was he the dragon that they were trying to revive?

In *A Game of Thrones*, Jorah Mormont tells Daenerys: "Your brother Rhaegar was the last dragon, and he died on the Trident. Viserys is less than the shadow of a snake" (MARTIN 2013 [1996]). So maybe Rhaegar was actually part-

dragon. This wouldn't be completely unexpected from a Targaryen. Indeed, some believe that, because of their Valyrian blood and other qualities, such as being able to tolerate heat, having premonition-like dreams or being dragon lords, the Targaryens are actually closer to gods than to men. This statement implies making Rhaegar's character an enigma which is in accordance to the definition of myth. This happens because his character cannot be explained from a rational point of view, but instead must be understood from within a fictional context.

Both Beren and Rhaegar are thus heroes related to classic mythology and who help explain the popular and human necessity to create heroes and identify with them.

5. Comparison between Beren and Rhaegar

Works by J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis are consolatory, where the rightful king is the one who claims the throne because the world is, in the end, rational and moral. Perhaps the best example is the character of Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings.* Tolkien coined the term *eucatastrophe* to describe the unforeseen twists and turns that often take place at the end of our favourite fairy tales and legends, as when the villain's evil becomes an instrument in his own downfall. *The Lord of the Rings*, for example, delivers its fair share of "fortunate" calamities such as Sauron's forging of the One Ring. Placing so much of his power in this external object gives the heroes a chance to defeat him once and for all simply by destroying his Ring (HARVEY 2003). On the other hand, Martin is likely to draw not only from more obscure fantasy writers but also from horror or historical fiction, what allows him to bend genre rules and subvert the same conventions he initially may seem to support (VERHOEVE 2011).

The beginning of Beren and Lúthien's story tells us:

"Among the tales of sorrow and of ruin that come down to us from the darkness of those days there are yet some in which amid weeping there is joy and under the

shadow of death light that endures. And of these histories most fair still in the ears of the Elves is the tale of Beren and Lúthien. It is a story regarding hope and goodness." (TOLKIEN 1977)

Rhaegar's story is about anger with Robert Baratheon while it also functioning as a fairy tale of sorts for the generations to come, who will tell this tale of sexual violence and revenge to their own children as a way of explaining why Westeros is as it is.

Beren's fate regards the ring of Barahir and is about his death. So, in the text we can find this:

"For this ring was like to twin serpents, whose eyes were emeralds, and their heads met beneath a crown of golden flowers, that the one upheld and the other devoured; that was the badge of Finarfin and his house; Then Melian leaned to Thingol's side, and in whispered counsel bade him forgo his wrath. "For not by you," she said, "shall Beren be slain; and far and free does his fate led him in the end, yet it is wound with yours. Take heed!" (TOLKIEN 1977)

When we reflect on Rhaegar's character, although most references portray him as exhibiting bad behaviour, we have to take the assertions beyond their face value. There is a certain ambiguity in how Ned Stark views the Targaryen prince. Ned recalls his victory at Harrenhal, in a dream of the year of the false spring, seeing Rhaegar carry the day and then bear the crown for the queen of love and beauty. When he gives the trophy to Lyanna instead of his wife, princess Elia, "all the smiles died".

The importance of prince Rhaegar is emphasised by him being the origin of the *Game of Thrones* (the first book of the *A Song of Ice and Fire* saga). Thus, we are first introduced to him on the occasion of King Robert Baratheon's visit to Winterfell, the hold fast of his old comrade in arms Ned Stark. Robert justifies the war in which he and Ned had fought, and during which he usurped the dynasty that preceded his own, in part because he believes that the heir to that

dynasty kidnapped, raped, and killed Lyanna, Ned's sister and the woman Robert was pledged to marry (LOWDER 2012: 17).

Beren's reasons for seeking conflict are described in the text:

"Then for the second time Huan spoke with words; and he counselled Beren, saying: 'From the shadow of death you can no longer save Lúthien, for by her love she is now subject to it. You can turn from your fate and lead her into exile, seeking peace in vain while your life lasts. But if you will not deny your doom, then either Lúthien, being forsaken, must assuredly die alone, or she must with you challenge the fate that lies before you – hopeless, yet not certain. Further counsel I cannot give, nor may I go further on your road. But my heart forebodes that what you find at the Gate I shall myself see. All else is dark to me; yet it may be that our three paths lead back to Doriath, and we may meet before the end." (TOLKIEN 1977)

In both cases, love is one of the central points:

"There came a time near dawn on the eve of Spring, and Lúthien danced upon a green hill; and suddenly she began to sing. Keen, heart-piercing was her song as the song of the lark that rises from the gates of night and pours its voice among the dying stars, seeing the sun behind the walls of the world; and the song of Lúthien released the bonds of winter, and the frozen waters spoke, and flowers sprang from the cold earth where her feet had passed." (TOLKIEN 1977)

In Rhaegar's case we can see that combined with the romantic vision of Lyanna as a tragic figure are the contrasting characters of prince Rhaegar. The man said to have started the war with his alleged abduction of Lyanna Stark is thought of as a man who acted because of love. Daenerys believes Rhaegar died for the woman he loved and that he even died with her name on his lips. Both characters, Thaegar and Beren die in the same way: death. However, in the aftermath of their deaths are very different. In the case of Beren there is hope:

"These were the choices that he gave to Lúthien Because of her labors and her sorrow, she should be released from Mandos, and go to Valimar, there to dwell until the world's end among the Valar, forgetting all griefs that her life had known. Thither Beren could not come. For it was not permitted to the Valar to withhold Death from him, which is the gift of Iluvatar to Men. But the other choice was this: that she might return to Middle-earth, and take with her Beren, there to dwell again, but without certitude of life or joy. Then she would become mortal, land subject to a second death, even as he; and ere long she would leave the world forever, and her beauty become only a memory in song.

This doom she chose, forsaking the Blessed Realm, and putting aside all claim to kinship with those that dwell there; that thus whatever grief might lie in wait, the fates of Beren and Lúthien might be joined, and their paths lead together beyond the confines of the world. So it was that alone of the Eldalie she has died indeed, and left the world long ago. Yet in her choice the Two Kindreds have been joined; and she is the forerunner of many in whom the Eldar see yet, thought all the world is changed, the likeness of Lúthien the beloved, whom they have lost." (TOLKIEN 1977)

Rhaegar was sad. As Bran Stark, Ned's son, tells his brother's children: "Robert fought a war to win her back. He killed Rhaegar on the Trident with his hammer, but Lyanna died and he never got her back at all" (LOWDER 2012: 18).

As we have seen, both Beren and Rhaegar have two different love stories but share the same unfortunate ending. They are considered heroes because of their actions and their fight against circumstances (both are involved in a love story with opposition from their beloved's father). Although the characters are very different we can establish a timeline and we can consider G.R.R. Martin as a student of Tolkien. If we do there is a relationship between both characters, a kind of inspiration for the younger reader (Martin).

6. Conclusions

In the end, we can understand two kinds of heroes and we can find universal topics such as courage, leadership or love. Beren is the rational and moral hero who receives the recognition of the other characters and the love of Lúthien:

"Then Thingol's mood was softened; and Beren sat before his throne upon the left, and Lúthien upon the right, and they told all the tale of the Quest, while all there listened and were filled with amazement. And it seemed to Thingol that this Man was unlike all other mortal Men, and among the great in Arda, and the love of Lúthien a thing new and strange; and he perceived that their doom might not be withstood by any power of the world. Therefore at the last he yielded his will, and Beren took the hand of Lúthien before the throne of her father." (TOLKIEN 1977)

Rhaegar is different. Ser Kevan Lannister says this when he imagines that, had King Aerys accepted Lord Tywin Lannister's proposal to marry his daughter Cersei to Rhaegar, the Dragon Prince might never have looked twice at Lyanna. We have to bear in mind that Rhaegar was exceedingly intelligent and excelled at anything he put his mind to. Rhaegar was also said to be quiet, private and bookish and was considered melancholic at times. This profile can maybe justify his romantic love for Lyanna Stark.

Both characters have a disgrace to them. Prince Rhaegar's attitudes in Summerhall are especially representative of this aura of tragedy and sadness surrounding him:

"And yet Summerhall was the place the prince loved best. He would go there from time to time, with only his harp for company. Even the knights of the Kingsguard did not attend him there. He liked to sleep in the ruined hall, beneath the moon and stars, and whenever he came back he would bring a song. When you heard him play his high harp with the silver strings and sing of twilights and tears and the death of kings, you could not but feel that he was singing of himself and those he loved." (MARTIN 2000)

The fate of both characters is death. Maybe this fact makes them more attractive to readers.

We conclude this contribution with some remarks. Firstly, readers identify themselves with the adventures of these characters because they are written as part of a romantic narrative. At the same time, Beren and Rhaegar are both

depicted as brave. Both are immersed in epic battles; the former in Morgoth and the latter in the Trident. Both Beren and Rhaegar have love as a motif in their lives. However, other characters refuse their love. In Beren's case, although he died, there is hope and a semblance of a happy ending. In Rhaegar's case the shadow of doubt still hangs over him, partially because *A Song of Ice and Fire* remains an unfinished work thus preventing us from knowing if there will be any further developments with Rhaegar that might cast a new light on his character.

In conclusion, we have found evidence to demonstrate these two heroes share common themes such as romance, adventure or conflict and, above all, play an important role in their books. There is no doubt that they are heroes who contribute greatly to the world of High Fantasy.

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OF DEAD HEROES AND MUTABLE FACES:

A study of *A Song of Ice and Fire*'s Rhaegar Targaryen

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Abstract: This study's point of departure is centered on the material absence of Rhaegar Targaryen from the narrative of George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, since, at the outset of the series, the death of the Prince of Dragonstone is already an event of the past. To the reader, therefore, Rhaegar is crafted not by description or diegetic events, but out of legend itself, carved by the memories and rumors of the people of Westeros and Essos—the major settings of the series. The present study will, hence, interpret Rhaegar as an amalgam of truth and imagination. It is noted how, frozen in this mire of divergent representations, the reader can never be in possession of an authentic idea of Rhaegar and is forced, instead, to collect and make sense of the scattered pieces of factual and fictional evidence provided by a plethora of accounts and second-hand reports of his life and deeds. It is the ultimate purpose of this paper to prove that, through the multiplicity of representations of the hero figure, George R. R. Martin is recreating the process of mythologization required to give birth to legend and myth. In other words, it is demonstrated how Rhaegar's legendary status is only achievable through a posthumous reevaluation of the character's past deeds, his death setting up a revisionist framework that is responsible for the rupture of the border separating man from hero. As a consequence of this reevaluation, the character is appropriated, rewritten, and

manipulated into a symbol to serve a specific purpose, be it to represent a beacon of hope, the countenance of the enemy, or the afterimage of an idyllic, albeit irretrievable, past. To clarify this reading of the character, I explore Joseph Campbell's ideas on the figure of the hero, and briefly consider other representations of traditional heroic figures such as Cú Chulainn and Achilles. I conclude that the character of Rhaegar not only fits the archetype of the hero but also subverts it, by interpreting its heroic role as an equivocal symbol, since profuse and impossible to fixate. A hero, therefore, perennially changing his face.

Keywords: *A Song of Ice and Fire*; George R. R. Martin; Rhaegar Targaryen; the hero's journey.

The Meandering Essence of the Hero

Heroes are not the most original of characters. Forged from a puissant alloy, compound of human and divine, the hero is cast from an exemplary model, brought to life as the mirror-image of a higher meaning, the diligent envoy of an absent god. By god, of course, it is meant only that the hero is the facsimile of an authorial or communal intention: the heroic figure is a fragment of a larger moral and ideological meaning. It is a reproduction, first, of itself, that is, the incarnation of a codified, time-eluding pattern, and second, of the pseudodivine significance that is unreachable and inaccessible to the mortal eye—divine only in the sense that it is the object of the author's, individual or communal, god-like and/or god-inspired manipulation. The heroic archetypal image is hence a proxy for the intangible, as well as the epitome of the tangible plane. It simultaneously exists as the greatest of its race, the most valiant fighter of its tribe, the most agile warrior in its army, the wittiest quester, the cheekiest banterer, and as the blessing-bestower, elixir-bearer minor deity which guards and protects its community.

The object of the present study[1] is a hero who due to a rather unfortunate circumstance – his death under the usurping weight of Ser Robert Baratheon's Warhammer – was unable to fulfill his prophesied future: Rhaegar Targaryen, Prince of Dragonstone, brother of Daenerys Stormborn, once thought to be the 'prince that was promised.' Rhaegar is a significant character in George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, an eluding figure of mystery and erudition, made more so since the first of the five novels thus far published opens fifteen years after Rhaegar's death. His presence, however absent his bodily frame, reverberates nonetheless through the five novels of the, as yet incomplete, heptalogy, as the present study will, one hopes, attest. In this short essay, I shall strive to sketch a portrait of the prince as a young man by taking into account the metamorphic conversion of Rhaegar the man to Rhaegar the hero. I shall focus on this heroic mythologization in order to unearth the mechanics lurking beneath the liminal matter of the text, and which are employed by the author of the series

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[1] This article was written in the fall of 2014, a few years before the conclusion in 2019 of the eighth and final season of the *Game of Thrones* series adaptation of George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*. It, therefore, excludes any information, twist, or revelation contained in that season or, for that matter, in any of its preceding seasons, particularly those that might confirm or contradict anything written here (more specifically, regarding Daenerys' fate and Jon Snow's parentage). It is a well-known fact that the final seasons of the HBO adaptation would respect Martin's plans for the ending of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, even though the overall adaptation greatly deviated, at times, from its source material (there is an argument to be made that Daenerys Targaryen's unfortunate fate in the adaptation matches that of the yet unpublished, and perhaps unwritten, original, for instance). However, since the last published volume of the *Song of Ice and Fire* series is still its fifth entry, *A Dance with Dragons* (published in July 2011), the argument made in the present article remains unchanged. Further, since we, as readers of the original series, have no concrete understanding of the extent of the HBO series's deviation from Martin's endgame plan for *A Song of Ice and Fire*, I think it is wise to keep the degree of speculation limited solely to the published material. It is also prudent to mention that in the years that followed the writing of this article, two other *Song of Ice and Fire*-related books were published by Martin: *A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms* (2015), which collected three previously published novellas narrating the tales of Dunk and Egg, and *Fire & Blood* (2018), which is the first instalment of a *Silmarillion*-like ambitious project that charts the history of the Targaryen in Westeros. None of these books expand our knowledge of Rhaegar Targaryen much further than what was already known and established about the character.

to produce a determinate effect—that of presenting the fallibility of belief in the heroic figure, the credulous, atavistic superstition that perpetuates the 'higher' character of Rhaegar Targaryen whilst disrobing him of his more human characteristics. To this end, I shall begin by exploring the renowned American mythologist Joseph Campbell's thoughts on the figure of the hero in world mythology and its indelible link to the unseen divinity. This will be followed by an anatomy of the deconstructive principle exercised by George R. R. Martin, that is, the elements in the text that allow for a redefinition of a particular character after his or her departure from the narrative stage. Rhaegar's father, Aerys II, the Mad King, will be used as an example of this principle. From that perspective, I shall move on to an analysis of Rhaegar and the multiple ideas of the hero—or anti-hero—yielded by the mythologization of the silver-haired, peace-inspired, book-enamored character.

First, a word of caution. This paper shall not endeavor to study the yet undisclosed biographical details of Rhaegar Targaryen. It was not the fruit of fortuitous chance that made the Targaryen heir the source of speculation and rumor. The narrative of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, to be sure, is ridden with convincing red-herrings and possible hints at the identity of Eddard Stark's bastard. Further, the unfinished state of the series does nothing to mitigate the proliferation of theories. Yet, whilst many enthusiasts of the series still argue relentlessly over the possibility that the Prince of Dragonstone might have been the fountainhead whence the Snow child originated, the present paper shall not attempt to visit these probable suggestions, for they are presently held to be nothing more than aimless speculation.

We turn our eyes now to the matter at hand. That the hero is an afterimage of its metaphysical progenitor (one need only peruse the New Testament for an elucidation of this concept) was proposed by Joseph Campbell in his seminal study of the hero figure, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). According to Campbell:

"the hero and his ultimate god, the seeker and the found—are . . . understood as the outside and inside of a single, self-mirrored mystery, which is identical with the mystery of the manifest world. The great deed of the supreme hero is to come to the knowledge of this unity in multiplicity and then to make it known" (CAMPBELL 2008: 31).

As the echo of an unseen howl, therefore, the allegorical spirit of the hero is contained in the visible and literal outline of the character. On the surface, the hero is already a suggestion of the neutral, all-encompassing divine. To contribute to this binomial existence, it is worth noting the perspectival variegation of Rhaegar Targaryen which, as we will see, comprehends a considerable range of heroic or anti-heroic conceptions, fluctuating between the roles of villain and martyr, traitor and savior, crown and claw. Campbell's words on the heroic formal plasticity, and the pragmatic application of the heroic values, may further elucidate this point: "The hero is the conscious vehicle of the terrible, wonderful Law, whether his work be that of butcher, jockey, or king" (CAMPBELL 2008: 206).

The union of the two worlds, divine and human, entails the conscious partaking of the bread of the outcast. Whilst the hero may long be celebrated as savior of its community or as half-divine offspring, it is also known that there will never be an absolute locus for its feats and antics amongst either society, divine or human. Trapped between these two dimensions, the hero stands in what one may term a Foucauldian heterotopian zone, a place of inbetweeness, its innermost essence being neither here nor there, neither mortal nor immortal. The hero is crystallized, its human features lost, the pinnacle of full divinity never reached. In essence, to become like god is to part with the material vessel that lends it the heroic nature. We are forced toward a possible conclusion. Heroes are neither lowland nor summit, but the ladders that bind and unite both.

On the Poetics of Heroism in *A Song of Ice and Fire*

I shall now attempt to expose the basic principles of the abstract mythologized character in George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, keeping in mind that the figure of Rhaegar Targaryen is but an example of such transformational process and, as such, not a singular categorial element of the series's mythological system. One should rather conceive Rhaegar as a symptomatic example of the textual mythological model. That is to say that the programmatic armature behind the elaboration of Rhaegar's character *in absentia* may be extrapolated to other figures in the text, such as the protofeminist Queen Nymeria or the tyrannical Aerys II, the Mad King. The latter, for example, evinces the characteristics of the supposedly totalitarian chieftain of the past establishment that is vilified by the succeeding ruling power, an act of false counterposition which memorizes less favorable aspects of the dead monarch in order to glorify the present establishment.[2] In this case, the political conceptual opposition is developed within the fallacious dialectic Targaryen/Baratheon or, rephrased in other terms, authoritarianism/populism. Whilst not being a direct representative of the people of Westeros, a populist rebel of sorts, it is hardly questionable that Robert Baratheon enacts the desire of a certain rebellious party dissatisfied with the monarchical despotic power by usurping the Targaryen throne and opening up the—until then remote—possibility of political renewal. The Targaryens, one should note here, had been in power for centuries and had also been responsible for the unification of the Seven Kingdoms that compose Westeros. In this sense, Robert Baratheon is the populist antic, beheading kings and emperors to prove the mortality of the political system. His later haphazard regal exercise, culminating with his, far from glorious, inebriated death, should not be regarded as a direct consequence of this earlier function, since his rebellion against the Targaryen crown was but the effect of an initially recalcitrant impulse to fight off a transgression of ethical conduct, namely the rape of Lyanna Stark. In other

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[2] For an example of this manipulatory tendency, see the conclusion to the eleventh chapter (excluding prologue) of *A Storm of Swords*, written in the perspective of Jaime Lannister: George R. R. Martin, *A Storm of Swords* (New York: Bantam Dell*,* 2005), 158-60.

words, Baratheon the liberator should not be equated with Baratheon the king. If one position concerns itself with the dynamics of monarchical succession and injustice, the other leans toward the organization and ruling of a nation.

The strategies George R. R. Martin employs in the construction of a mythological model consciously reflect the desire to represent an amalgamation of seemingly contradictory versions of the same individual. Robert is rebel and lord, Aerys is tyrant and victim of his madness. In this world, and to these characters, the past is never the same. It is a flexible concept, adaptable to suit the needs, whether ideologically charged or not, of the one recalling it. The process of mythologization that allows for this flexibility manifests a set of characteristics worthy of note. We will focus on how this process of mythologization works in relation to Rhaegar and the books' poetics of heroism, but the same reasoning may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to other characters (like Aerys) who are mythologized differently.

The first characteristic is the unconscious abnegation of the self. In Rhaegar's case, to become a hero the individual is called upon to undergo a trial of paradox: one must fade into inexistence and let one's identity become the vessel through which the ideology of a people (or an author) is communicated. The self is no longer the sum of attitude and philosophy, action and reflection, but the envoy of something else, located beyond the confining shell of the individual cosmos— what Philip K. Dick would call the *idios kosmos*; its conceptual counterpart is the *koinos kosmos*, or the shared world outside the self, a dichotomy derived from Heraclitus's fragment 89.[3] A transformation is undergone, in which the hero strips off the skein of reason and passion entangled around their body and lets themselves be clothed by an external moral cocoon. The mythologization of the hero, yet human and palpable as such, requires thus a sublation of the self to the

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[3] Pamela Jackson and Jonathan Lethem, ed., *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 925. The translation of the fragment provided in the aforementioned edition of Philip K. Dick's diaries, titled *Exegesis*, follows: "The waking have one common world, but the sleeping turn aside each into a world of his own."

anxieties and demands of the macrosystem within which such self interacts. Once the self is stripped away, the process of mythologization necessitates the confirmation of the heroic status through an absence of presence, which confirms, by virtue of its negation, the transformed heroic identity. In other words, once self-abnegation is validated, the hero must take a step back and withdraw from the stage. This withdrawal, what I above called 'absence', is what crystalizes the hero figure within its community. With the rejected and absent self-removed from the quotidian, the process of reinvention is set in motion, and the hero is absorbed into the *koinos kosmos.*[4]

An ontological understanding of the hero then entails a consideration of the inherent duality of the concept: the hero-within-itself, that is, the hero as it is, the ego; the hero-without-itself, that is to say, the hero externalized, whose identity is negated in order to be converted into a mythological vessel. The representation of Rhaegar Targaryen in *A Song of Ice and Fire* is chiefly based on the latter heroic conception, the hero-without-itself. The character is only introduced as a recollection, an ambivalent memory of the better days of yore or of the despotic times of tyranny and absolutism. This posthumous construction of the character has, in the reader of Martin's series, a palimpsestic effect: one is allowed a glimpse of the nature of Rhaegar as he once was but, owing to the corroding power of memory, that image is now impossible to differentiate from the scribbled personae rewritten by the remembrance of other characters. The effect produces a Rhaegar that is at once human and not-human: in other words, it allows for the manifestation of the identity of the heroic figure. Yet this manifestation, dependent as it is on the hero's simultaneous being and non-being, can also be the source of slander and hatred. The palimpsest, after all, can be besmirched by the fingers of enmity. Rhaegar may be transformed not into a messianic knight, but a fiendish behemoth of vice. An Ovidian shapeshifter, the mythologized hero is hence exposed to any sort of transformative action, given its retroactive and posterior composite character.

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[4] See also Lou Stathis, afterword to *Time Out of Joint* by Philip K. Dick (New York: Gollancz, 2003), 218-19.

The Hero in the World

A hero's beginnings are seldom uneventful. The words of Ser Barristan Selmy, renowned Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, if anything, point out the noteworthy, awe-inspiring childhood of the young Rhaegar:

> As a young boy, the Prince of Dragonstone was bookish to a fault. He was reading so early that men said Queen Rhaella must have swallowed some books and a candle whilst he was in her womb. Rhaegar took no interest in the play of other children. The maesters were awed by his wits, but his father's knights would jest sourly that Baelor the Blessed had been born again (MARTIN 2005: 111).

One recalls the childhood deeds of the young Cú Chulainn, as recorded in the Irish epic *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Here, too, are the more experienced men brought to their knees by the arcane talents of the hero. Alienated from the older boys at King Conchobar's training camp at Emain Macha, the young Sétanta—Cú Chulainn's childhood name—performed an impressive feat to the eyes of his fellow men, dodging the countless javelins, hurling balls, and hurling sticks thrown at him, and then going into a war-spasm of sorts—the *ríastrad*—thus defeating fifty of the boys who were attempting to persuade him, by force, to submit to their protection.[5]

Another interesting point is the reference to Rhaegar as the reincarnation of Baelor the Blessed, underpinning the heroic claim of the Targaryen Prince by postulating a direct connection between the two Targaryen noblemen, i.e., the rebirth of one as the other. Baelor, one notes, was regarded as a "pious gentle septon-king who loved the smallfolk and the gods in equal parts, yet imprisoned

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[5] Thomas Kinsella, *The Táin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 77. Alternatively, see Ciaran Carson, *The Táin* (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 37-38.

his own sisters" (MARTIN 2011: 854). Once more, the all-encompassing heroic archetype is associated with Rhaegar.

The mention of the Prince's precocious erudition, the reference to a legend told by the common people of the young Targaryen's gestation period, the clueless intellects of the wise: these elements, of a suprahuman and folkloric essence, help Rhaegar stand out, amongst his people, as a hybrid of mortal and supernal competences. There is already a teleological impulse conceived at the time of the child's infancy, which is hinted at by the words of Ser Barristan Selmy. The child is capable, even before leaving the mother's womb, of performing astonishing tasks, inconceivable to any other man, knight or commoner. The telling folkloric rendition of Queen Rhaella's pregnancy foreshadows the child's quasi-divine capabilities. The lack of common interest between ordinary infants and Prince Rhaegar is another confirmation of the character's estrangement from the narrow reality that surrounds him. His nature demands more challenging occupations, and it is here that the heroic features of Rhaegar will come into play. His aptitude for the quill, the word, the harp, and the sword, will establish him as the beacon of salvation. He is the messianic figure that has come to redeem his people and challenge the enemies of virtue.

The Prince's life relentlessly ascended to the bittersweet pinnacle of glory and hubris. A pivotal moment in the fate of Westerosi politics took place at the infamous tourney of Harrenhall, organized by Lord Whent. The event had been covertly organized by Prince Rhaegar, as the unified future of the Seven Kingdoms was perilously balancing on the tip of a fine needle:

The prince, it is said, had no interest in the tourney as a tourney; his intent was to gather the great lords of the realm together in what amounted to an informal Great Council, in order to discuss ways and means of dealing with the madness of his father, King Aerys II, possibly by means of a regency or a forced abdication (MARTIN, GARCÍA, ANTONSSON 2014: 124).

Again, the image of Rhaegar as the archetype of political stability surfaces. He was to take command of the troubled vessel and lead his people to safer shores. The tourney was marked by the appearance of a mysterious knight, deemed by the present audience 'The Knight of the Laughing Tree.' Despite King Aerys's efforts to uncover the identity of the knight—thinking that it was young Jaime Lannister, mocking his regal pomp—the mysterious figure disappeared during the night, never to be seen again. Interpretative murmurs, the weavers of countless tapestries of theories, suggest that the knight was none other than Lyanna Stark, under cover of the anonymous helm, avenging a bullied crannogman (MARTIN, GARCÍA, ANTONSSON 2014: 126).

It was Rhaegar who eventually won the competition. Although not a customary victor in the kingdom's tourneys, Rhaegar, so *The World of Ice and Fire* (a companion book to the series) records:

surprised all by donning his armor and defeating every foe he faced, including four knights of the Kingsguard. In the final tilt, he unhorsed Ser Barristan Selmy, generally regarded as the finest lance in all the Seven Kingdoms, to win the champion's laurels (MARTIN, GARCÍA, ANTONSSON 2014: 126).

And then, the act of wonder came to pass. As the victorious knight of Lord Whent's competition, it was incumbent on Prince Rhaegar to choose a fair lady of the audience and name her the 'queen of love and beauty.' Walking up to Lyanna of House Stark, sister of Benjen, Eddard, and Brandon Stark, the Prince placed on her lap a "simple garland of pale blue roses", consciously ignoring his own wife, Princess Elia Martell, and enraging his father's bannermen (MARTIN, GARCÍA, ANTONSSON 2014: 127). Indignant cries were suppressed by the eldest of the Stark heirs, Brandon, who saw Rhaegar's act as a dishonor to Lyanna, as she was betrothed to Robert Baratheon. Months later, the act of theft, initiated with the offering of the fateful garland, would be concluded. Like Launcelot and his catastrophic passion for Guinevere, a passion that led King

Arthur to a monumental tomb,[6] Rhaegar kidnapped Lyanna Stark, finding her "[n]ot ten leagues from Harrenhal", setting in motion a chain of events that would culminate with the fall of House Targaryen and Ser Robert Baratheon's ascension to the Iron Throne (MARTIN, GARCÍA, ANTONSSON 2014: 127).

Nearly every major character of the series, be it Jaime Lannister, Eddard Stark, or Jon Connington, cherishes or entertains an old memory of Rhaegar. Robert Baratheon, for example, early in the first volume of the series, *A Game of Thrones*, confesses to Ned Stark that he frequently dreams of Rhaegar's death, adding that he would have murdered the Prince of Dragonstone innumerable times more, as hammered judgement for the rape of Lyanna, with whom he was betrothed. The boisterous king declares, "A thousand deaths will still be less than he deserves" (MARTIN 2003: 44). But the usurping king is not the only character to suffer the presence of Rhaegar in his dreams. Ser Jaime Lannister too is haunted by the fallen Targaryen. The Prince is a central actor in the surreal theatre of one of Jaime's fever-dream hallucinations, accompanied by his trusted men, "crowned in mist and grief with his long hair streaming behind him . . . the rightful heir to the Iron Throne" (MARTIN 2005: 612). As he faces Jaime, the Prince's guard accuse Tywin's son of not maintaining his vows and leaving Rhaegar and his children unsafe and unprotected. Chiming in with these accusations, Prince Rhaegar, who is "burn[ing] with a cold light, now white, now red, now dark" whispers despondently, disappointed by Jaime's failure: "I left my wife and children in your hands" (MARTIN 2005: 612). This hallucinated reflection of Jaime's guilt and inability to transcend the lack of integrity shown as a member of the Kingsguard, having chosen his father's life over the king's and his son's, demonstrates the power of the hero figure as an effigy of multiple purposes. First, Rhaegar's appearance in the dream denotes the sorrow and dismay of one abandoned by a trusted companion. Second, it draws attention to Jaime's unethical behavior that caused the downfall of political and social stability: the

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[6] In some versions, at least. Tales of King Arthur's death vary, of course, as legends often do. I am basing this comparison on Thomas Malory's rendering of the Arthurian legends, *Le Morte Darthur*.

moral dilemma posed by King Aerys II minutes before his death by the sword still troubles the experienced knight. Third, the reference to the Prince's status as rightful heir to the Iron Throne points out the loss of hope both on a macro- and microsystemic way: the usurper that now occupies the throne—Jaime's own son, Joffrey—is despised as the unlawful ruler of a community, Westeros, by both the monarchical laws of said community and the personal morality of Jaime Lannister, the individual. Fourth, the Prince's mention of his children also evinces a loss of hope on the matter of lineage: now that Rhaegar's children are deceased, there is no hope of the prophecy of 'the prince that was promised' ever coming into being. Jaime does not appear to give much thought to the existence of Daenerys Stormborn, especially because the accepted view of the prophecy is concerned with the male Targaryen line. As Maester Aemon informs Samwell Tarly, "It was a prince that was promised, not a princess" (MARTIN 2006: 646-647).

I would like to introduce here a brief thought on Aegon, son of Rhaegar, who was thought by the Prince of Dragonstone to be 'the prince that was promised', but whose death at the hands of Ser Gregor Clegane did not allow for such hypothesis to come to fruition. When the child was born, Rhaegar composed a song for him as a commemoration of the birth of the prophesied prince. To his wife Elia, Rhaegar said, "He has a song . . . He is the prince that was promised, and his is the song of ice and fire" (MARTIN 2003: 512). However, as Maester Aemon later confesses to Samwell Tarly, this idea of Aegon as the prophesied prince might have been the product of wishful thinking, the consequence of mistranslation. The old Maester suggests that it is perhaps Daenerys, and not Rhaegar or Aegon, that may be called the true 'prince that was promised'. He says:

Rhaegar, I thought... the smoke was from the fire that devoured Summerhall on the day of his birth, the salt from the tears shed for those who died. He shared my belief when he was young, but later he became persuaded that it was his own son who fulfilled the prophecy, for a comet had been seen above King's Landing on the night Aegon was conceived, and Rhaegar was certain the bleeding star had to be a comet.

What fools we were, who thought ourselves so wise! The error crept in from the translation. Dragons are neither male nor female, Barth saw the truth of that, but now one and now the other, as changeable as flame. The language misled us all for a thousand years. *Daenerys* is the one, born amidst salt and smoke. The dragons prove it (MARTIN 2006: 647).

Recent developments in the series, namely in the fifth volume *A Dance with Dragons*, hint at the survival of Aegon, but the true identity of the child fostered by Ser Jon Connington has not yet been confirmed. As for Daenerys, one is yet to conclude whether the young Khaleesi will survive the long path toward the much-coveted throne forged out of swords.

The hero's formative period, composed, as we have seen, of preternatural circumstances, can act as a sort of moral enchiridion that codifies the character's ethos, replacing the departed figure with a surrogate handbook of the good practice of kingship. The hero's purpose is only finalized as text. That is to say, although Rhaegar is dead, his mythologized character might still be of some use.

The dead hero may have a purpose, for instance, in the education of Daenerys Stormborn, Rhaegar's sister, who is still in her formative years. One episode that demonstrates this point occurs when a portrait of Rhaegar is offered to the young Khaleesi by her most trusted counsellors, Ser Jorah Mormont and Ser Barristan Selmy. In a famous exchange between these two characters, Selmy evokes the Prince's virtues, whilst Mormont condemns Rhaegar's folly and his inability to see beyond his own strict moral code. Like Eddard Stark, so too was Rhaegar the victim of a moral beheading, so to speak, because his ethos was incompatible with that of the surrounding world. Mormont hints that it was Rhaegar's valiance, braveness, and honor that in the end condemned the Prince to an early grave (MARTIN 2005: 330).

Curtailing Heroism

Consider now the hero's death. Meeting Robert Baratheon at the ford of the Trident, Rhaegar sported a stately breastplate, ornamented with "the three-headed dragon of his House, wrought all in rubies that flashed like fire in the sunlight" (MARTIN 2003: 44). Like Achilles's shield — famously described by Homer in *The Iliad*, in an ekphrastic fashion so often quoted, as a mirror to the design of the universe — Rhaegar's armor appears to embody the elemental character of the world, the crimson jewels incrusted in it resembling fire itself. As Rhaegar falls in battle, the crafted breastplate bursts and its rubies are dispersed through the riverbed. Immediately, "men of both armies scrabble[ ] in the swirling waters for rubies knocked free of his armor," either desperately holding on to the hero's material nature or in vain pursuit of their own greed (MARTIN 2003: 44). Ripples of this event flowed, borne away from the center by the withering breath of time. After this incident, Rhaegar's place of death became known as Ruby Ford. This revealing geographical appropriation marks an important contribution to the mythologization of the hero, for even after the Prince's bodily departure from life, he is able to exact control over the local (and imaginary) landscape, through his influence on the practice of place-naming. One may see how Rhaegar, shortly after his demise, has already become an element of etiological significance.

It is pertinent to note how the mythologization of Rhaegar within the world of the series affects one's own reading of the character outside of it. Martin's mythological model works both outside the text, as structure, and inside the text, as culture, history and memory. Just as we, readers, experience Rhaegar in fragments, the characters of the series also experience and interpret Rhaegar through a broken prism. From his untimely defeat to the elaboration of a mythical status, Rhaegar underwent a mythologizing process that courted and performed the disintegration of the Targaryen Prince's factual and tangible existence, and led the way to the formation of a multitude of symbolic Rhaegars. Yet the proliferation of masks, and of Rhaegars, as it were, suggests that the Prince of Dragonstone, bearer of countless posthumous identities, is incapable of setting in motion any substantial social, political, ideological, metaphysical, or spiritual

change. While it is true that, as a heroic model, Rhaegar gives rise to events which play a relevant part in the relentless power struggles between the numberless political factions in the series, on the whole, the perennially shapeshifting hero is unable to evoke a unified and coherent idea of himself on his community.[7] If anything, the inexorable movement of retroactive invention makes Rhaegar not the prince that was *promised*, but the prince that never *was*.

While admittedly, as we have seen, the heroic figure of Rhaegar in *A Song of Ice and fire* possesses a broad spectrum of personalities, an integral part of a universal system of herohood, it is precisely the inconsistency between these various elements, as opposed to the union of opposing concepts, that renders the Targaryen Prince powerless to have any major significance on the social, political, and economic landscape of Westeros. As evidenced by the death of Rhaegar—and also Eddard Stark and Jon Arryn, among others—the Seven Kingdoms require a more material, down-to-earth leader, capable of putting in practice their governmental policies while concomitantly dodging the slithering movements of the fatal warhammer. The inexorable paradox is that Westeros demands a leader that can be and not be simultaneously, a leader who can maneuver the double-edged moral blade. This hypothetical leader must transcend the inherent and contradictory duality that the archetype of the hero and the process of its mythologization demand. In Rhaegar's case, his inadequacy as a leader figure owes itself to the incompatibility of his multiple significances. He is but one among many departed symbols, more powerful only because of the proximity of his death to the narrative's present. The Prince of Dragonstone may be the paragon of virtue and vice, the son of a God and a demon-lord, a skilled strategist and a harbinger of war, he may be the house of

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[7] Granted, these 'events' are yet to be confirmed as having any significant impact on the Westerosi political landscape. Consider, for example, Daenerys's abolitionist and liberal administrative strategies, with the Mother of Dragons' decision to remain in Slaver's Bay and strengthen her army, releasing the countless men and women still under the yoke of slavery, politically gravitating toward the ethical path of her older brother.

many faces, yet therein lies also the seed of his ideological dissolution. As a dialectical symbol, carrier of such powerful, yet antithetical, concepts, there is not in Rhaegar Targaryen the ideological fortitude to resist the burden of universal metaphor and the decay of kingship.

The hero must wither away into the legendary past, a Rhaegar no more tangible than a half-forgotten memory. Dead heroes, after all, do not make powerful politicians. The fragmented echo of the heroic Rhaegar, now incarnadine shards to be picked up at random by intrepid researchers, suggests a powerful truth. The hero, little else than a tower of mist, must be the means but never the end.

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG HEROES
IN *THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING*
AND *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE*

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Abstract: This paper will attempt to analyse the role of children and young heroes in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* and C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* based on Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and his treatment of the hero during the first adventure stage, the Departure. The paper focuses its analysis on the selected heroes of the second book of *The Chronicles of Narnia,* the Pevensie siblings — Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy — , and the four Hobbits — Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin — chosen for the first book of *The Lord of the Rings.* Once this is understood, we may pursue the question as to what extent Campbell's scheme is valid in delineating the nature of children and heroism as reflected in the selected novels.
Keywords: *The Fellowship of the Ring – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* – Children – Hero.

In 2006, Catherine Schlegel and Henry Weinfield published a clear and updated translation and introduction to Hesiod's poem *Works and Days* (700 BC). In his work, Hesiod presents the "Five Ages of Man". The first and most glorious is the Golden Age, when there was a time where men could live with the gods in harmony and life was easy, "In the beginning [there

was] made a race of mortals that was gold. These people lived in Krono's time, when he was heaven's King; Like gods they lived, with carefree heart, remote from suffering" (SCHLEGEL/ WEINFIELD 2006: 60). Secondly, the Silver Age comes, an age where an ungodly race of men is destroyed by Zeus because they refused to venerate the gods, "A second, much inferior race, a silver race of men, Neither in understanding nor in stature like the other" (*Ibid*: 61). Then, the Bronze Age, a time where men lived only for war, but were undone by their own violent ways, "Then Zeus the father made another race of mortal ones, In nothing similar to the silver –this third race he made bronze And of the ash tree" (*Ibid*: 61). After this one, we find the Heroic Age, an age in which men lived with honour and participated in great battles such as Troy "A race of heroes, godlike men" (*Ibid*: 62). Finally, the Iron Age, that is the time where Hesiod belongs —and us—, an age abandoned by gods where life is surrounded by dishonour and suffering, the worst of all ages "I wish that I were not among this last, fifth race of men…For this race now is iron indeed, and never, night or morn, Will leave off from their suffering" (*Ibid*: 62).

European mythologies use Greek, Roman and Nordic mythologies as a reference. As a starting point they used the epic and heroic legends in which humans were the featured protagonists. This type of mythology is what interests us in this study about the heroic role of the characters Frodo and his three Hobbit friends[1] in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), the first book of the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* (1955) by J. R. R. Tolkien, and the Pevensie siblings in the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950)*,* the second book in the final heptalogy order of *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1956) by C. S. Lewis.

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[1] "Hobbits are an unobtrusive but very ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth… For they are little people, smaller than Dwarves: less stout and stocky, that is, even when they are not actually much shorter" (*LotR* 1-2).

In *The Magical Worlds of Narnia: a Treasure of Myths and Legends* (2005), David Colbert summarizes the five ages of humanity listed by Hesiod. Colbert adds that, apparently, Lewis shares Hesiod's vision of God having created men in total perfection and that, since then, the species has been degenerating progressively (2005: 86-89). We can add to Colbert's interpretation another that is still more relevant. In *The Chronicles of Narnia,* there is a golden age that is called to mind throughout the remainder of the books. It is a period in which Narnia is ruled by the Kings Peter and Edmund and their sisters, the Queens Susan and Lucy in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. These years comprise a wonderful and idealized time that passes from generation in unscathed from one generation of Narnians to the next, and represents the First Age of Man according to Hesiod.

And then he remembered (for he had always been good at history when he was a boy) how those same four children who had helped Caspian had been in Narnia over a thousand years before; and it was then that they had defeated the terrible White Witch and ended the Hundred Years of Winter, and after that they had reigned (all four of them together) at Cair Paravel, till they were no longer children but great Kings and lovely Queens, and their reign had been the Golden Age of Narnia (*CoN* 57-58).

Almost at the very beginning of *The Fellowship of the Ring,* when Tolkien writes about topics concerning hobbits, he too, situates the reader, in an age similar to Hesiod's Fourth Age, the Age of Heroes: "Those days, the Third Age of Middle-earth, are now long past, and the shape of all lands has been changed" (1996: 2).

This is the time that interests us, the age of the heroes. Those two previous references are examples which show that both Lewis and Tolkien were clearly familiar with Hesiod's work. Yet did they also share his ideas on heroism? Or did they stray far from tradition? Did they strive to develop

something completely new? By the year 1949, when Lewis had started *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Tolkien was immersed in *The Lord of the Rings*, Joseph Campbell, the North-American theorist of myths published his influential study about *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.*[2]

Tolkien, Lewis and Campbell were men of similar ages and similar backgrounds and it is not surprising that Campbell's theories overlap the concept of heroism shared by both other writers[3]. For this reason, out as we carry out a more exhaustive analysis of the hero in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*, we will use the scheme that talks about the Hero's Journey proposed by Campbell. There are several reasons for this choice: the first is the chronological similarity in the progression development of the hero; secondly, the ease with which his theories can be compressed and applied quickly and accurately to these specific works of Lewis and Tolkien.[4]

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[2] "Campbell posits the existence of a *Monomyth* (a word he borrowed from James Joyce), a universal pattern that is the essence of, and common to, heroic tales in every culture. While outlining the basic stages of this mythic cycle, he also explores common variations in the hero's journey, which, he argues, is an operative metaphor, not only for an individual, but for a culture as well" (JCF, http://www.jcf.org/new/index.php?categoryid=11).

[3] Chance writes in her chapter about "Heroic Narrative Structure" compiled in her book *The Lord of the Rings, The Mythology* how Campbell's structure can be applied easy to Tolkien's masterpiece: "Joseph Campbell, in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, has designated "Departure" and "Return" the significant phases in monomyth of the hero's quest. So, too, do they mark the beginning and end of Tolkien's epic-romance. What the four Hobbits learn on their adventures both wounds and heals them and the Shire" (2001: 128).

[4] Chance adds how created characters in Tolkien's story "were deeply influenced by medieval Renaissance models, among them the fairy-tale hero (Frodo), the epic hero and the healing King (Aragon), the loyal retainer Wiglaf and Bedivere (Sam Gamgee), and the Grendel-like monster in *Beowulf* (Gollum, originated in *The Hobbit*)" (2001: 15).

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In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell tries to apply the tenets of psychoanalysis, especially from the school of C. G. Jung, to the study of mythologies[5]. After pointing out that one can easily superimpose dream symbolism and certain characteristic elements of myths, Campbell, goes on to list and rank their occurrence in the mythologies of most diverse cultural groups.

Campbell's model is divided into three stages: Departure, Initiation and Return. They are all essential parts of any hero's adventure and can readily be found in the legends, traditions and rituals of all the peoples of the world. To Campbell, these symbolic systems represent natural creations of the human mind and he further goes on to point out that the disturbing situation in which Western society seems to have immersed itself in recent times could be traced to the progressive discredit into which mythologies have fallen and how mythology itself has been damaged by a world where 'the rational' is worshipped. And arguably the ultimate standard bearer of 'the rational' is the inexorable, unbending, and voracious force of capitalism to which the world has harnessed itself. Severely crippled, the mythological and the divine, accompanied by the symbols that they embrace, find themselves fleeing for shelter in the only space left to hide, their birthplace – the unconscious. Is it possible that without collective mythological systems, modern man has come to isolate himself?

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[5] Carl Jung's notion of cultural archetypes and of the *collective unconscious*, which he (Campbell) felt provided the foundation of mythological thinking in a great diversity of cultures. He mixed in a hefty dose of both Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis in his work, seeing the hero's journey as a simultaneous journey of the ego to achieve oneness with the world, to overcome its fears of both id and superego, of the seductive Mother and the ogre-like Father. Cf. Douglas Mann (2008), *Understanding Society* (Oxford UP).

Analysis

Following the scheme proposed by Campbell, let us take a closer look at the concept of heroism as exemplified in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Fellowship of the Ring,* focusing on just the first point — Departure — as presented in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

Before we begin, it is worth mentioning that, in the case of Lewis, our study does not coincide with the more traditional view in which the Pevensie siblings do not figure among the heroes presented in the chronicles[6]. And as for Tolkien's novels, we should make it clear that while clearly indebted to Jane Chance's "Heroic Narrative and the Power of Structure" as presented in her work *The Mythology of Power* (2001) our work here suggests a new way of interpreting what Departure encompasses: seeing it not as individual movements within the first two novels of the trilogy as Chance proposes[7], but rather as one, single, unique movement comprising the concept of Departure that is valid for *The Lord of the Rings* as a whole.

1. **Departure**

By nature, young people are inquisitive. They rarely hesitate to ask a question if they are confronted by something that lies beyond that which they have come to understand. Adults often misinterpret this curiosity. For example, a student looks out a classroom window. An adult taking notice

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[6] E. J. Kirk carries out a general survey on the Chronicles of which we highlight the chapter "The People and Creatures of Narnia" dedicated to the heroes that come together in the work. See Kirk, *The Chronicles of Narnia. Beyond the Wardrobe. The Official Guide to Narnia* (2005). Allen Lucy Shea also sees Aslan, as in the case of Kirk, as "The Greatest Hero" and also mentions none of the children who belong to our world —Pevensie siblings — as possible heroes of the story that happens in Narnia. See Shea (1993), *C. S. Lewis and the Chronicles of Narnia: A study of heroes.*

[7] See Chance, Table 1. Narrative Pattern in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001: 134-135).

assumes the student is easily distracted, and attempts to refocus the child's attention.

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe tells of four London siblings, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. Because of the constant German aerial bombardment during World War II, they are sent to a house in the country inhabited by an elderly teacher and his housekeeper. When they arrive, just a quick glance is enough for them to discover that the mansion is huge, and full of rooms and passageways. Forced to play indoors because of the uncooperative weather, the youngest of the quartet, Lucy, discovers a cupboard while playing hide-and-seek with her brothers and sister. Driven by curiosity, she tries to open it.[8]

'Nothing there!' said Peter, and they all trooped out again – all except Lucy. She stayed behind because she thought it would be worthwhile trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked. To her surprise it opened easily, and two mothballs dropped out (*CoN* 15).

The Fellowship of the Ring refers to four Hobbits, Frodo and his three Hobbit friends — Sam, Merry and Pippin — who will have to carry one special ring to Lórien. This ring, named the One Ring, belonged to Sauron, the Dark Lord, who is looking for it because the ring is extraordinarily powerful and would help Him to enslave the Middle-earth — a fictional world created by Tolkien[9]. Bilbo Baggins, Frodo's uncle, possesses a mysterious ring. When

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[8] Why a Cabinet? Colbert (2005: 25-29) points that the choice of Cabinet is motivated by the fact that there was no better than the home somewhere for the own Lewis and adds the most likely influence of a history of Nesbit 'The Aunt and Amabel': "In Lewis home was a wardrobe that his grandfather had made for him - and which", according to his brother, Warren, was the inspiration for the title of the first of the Chronicles... It seemed to be lighted by stars, which is, of course, unusual in a booking office, and over the station clock was full moon'.

[9] When Simonson speaks about the Middle Earth, he underlines the importance of the place: "Creating a secondary world in which the different traditions are given space to interact with natural ease, Tolkien constructs a powerful alternative to high modernism in

he puts it on, he becomes invisible. On his 111th birthday, Bilbo decides to leave the Shire and give all his belongings to his nephew Frodo, but incomprehensibly, he refuses to abandon "his ring". In *The Hobbit* (1937) written by Tolkien, Bilbo is the one who finds a ring in a deep cave and takes it back to the Shire, opening the door to the future events that will occur to his nephew and friends in *The Lord of the Rings*. Gandalf, Bilbo's wizard friend, explains to Frodo just what this extraordinary and dangerous ring is. While speaking with Frodo, Sam Gamgee, Frodo's best friend, is driven by curiosity and cannot resist the temptation of listening secretly Gandalf's story.

'Well, well, bless my beard!' said Gandalf. 'Sam Gamgee is it? Now what may you be doing?
'Lord bless you, Mr. Gandalf, sir!' said Sam. 'Nothing! Leastways I was just trimming the grass-border under the window, if you follow me.' He picked up his shears and exhibited them as evidence.
'I don't,' said Gandalf grimly. 'It is some time since I last heard the sound of your shears. How long have you been eavesdropping?'
'Eavesdropping, sir? I don't follow you, begging your pardon. There ain't no eaves at Bag End, and that's a fact.'
'Don't be a fool! What have you heard, and why did you listen?' Gandalf's eyes flashed and his brows stuck out like bristles (*LotR* 62-3).

2."The Call to Adventure"

Both stories begin with a seemingly happenstance situation which arouses the curiosity of children, and will later place them into precarious situations and into the midst of unknown circumstances that they do not initially understand. The element of *chance,* being in the right place at the right

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portraying the recapitulation of previous tradition implied by writing in the mode of ironic myth" (2005: 168).

time[10], is the first stage of the journey of initiation and reveals a yet unsuspected world in which the protagonists are exposed to an unexpected situation. At some point, the error ceases to be merely an accident and becomes a pathway to some undisclosed destination that beckons them on. It appears as a preliminary demonstration of invisible forces of chance that begin to come into play and that will eventually lead to "The Call to Adventure".

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy, who has felt an attraction to the old wardrobe since the first time she laid eyes on it, advances, driven by a force that is no longer mere curiosity. The wardrobe is, to all appearances, simply a piece of. But it becomes the entrance to a different world. This happens by the will of Aslan, an almighty being who, while unknown to the Pevensie siblings requires their presence to save Narnia.

'This must be a simple enormous wardrobe!' thought Lucy, going still further in and pushing the soft folds of the coats aside to make room for her. Then she noticed that there was something crunching under her feet. 'I wonder is that more mothballs?' she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hand. But instead of feeling the hard, smooth wood of the floor of the wardrobe, she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold (*CoN* 16).

Frodo, although reluctant at the beginning, accepts the task of bringing the Ring to Lórien as Gandalf has asked. He needs time to give up his peaceful

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[10] David Colbert (2005: 67) explains how Lewis does not follow a regular pattern governing the inputs and outputs to the world of Narnia. His friend Tolkien differing with him about this lack of internal regulatory order of the magic that is repeated throughout the Chronicles. "Other writers might have invented a single rule for moving characters into Narnia and out of it." Lewis invented new tricks whenever he felt like it: a wardrobe, a painting, the call of Horn, magic rings…". This casual attitude towards the rules of Narnia is one reason Lewis' friend J. R. R. Tolkien didn't love the Chronicles.

life in the Shire, until the call of duty becomes too compelling, and the adventure unfolds:

They began to hum softly, as hobbits have a way of doing as they walk along, especially when they are drawing near to home at night. With most hobbits it is a supper-song; but these hobbits were hummed a walking-song (though not, of course, without any mention of supper and bed). Bilbo Baggins had made the words, to a tune that was as old as the hills, and taught it to Frodo as they walked in the lanes of the Water-valley and talked about Adventure (*LotR* 76).

The protagonists of both works, having once accepted the call to adventure, do not know precisely where this call will take them[11]. Narnia and Middle-Earth, just like our world, have different countries, Islands and seas. Therefore, the stories' protagonists are directed to unknown regions where possible treasures and/or dangers may lurk: distant and unknown lands, a forest, an underground Kingdom, a desert island, a place under the sea or in heaven, or a myriad of possible destinations; yet no matter how remote or seemingly unrelated, these places, all share a strange, fluid existence replete with magic, strange beings, supernatural events and impossible dreams.

'But do you really mean, sir,' said Peter, 'that there could be other worlds – all over the place, just round the corner – like that?'

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[11] Duriez (2003: 99-100) picks up a conversation that Tolkien and Lewis kept about the unknown, the world that lurks on the other side and that starts with the adventure of the trip: "Tolkien sucks on his pipe to encourage its dying embers". "Some of the Scientifiction evokes wonder around – sometimes offers much glimpses of genuine other worlds". There's some appalling stuff, too, but that's true of all the genres. "Space and time stories can provide Recovery and Escape". He says the last two nouns with sudden loudness, perhaps to emphasize that they should have capitals. "I hope to soon on this quality as lecture of Fairy Story". I relish stories that survey the depths of space and time". "To be sure, to be sure", Lewis agrees.

'Nothing is more probable,' said the Professor, taking off his spectacles and beginning to polish them, while he muttered to himself, 'I wonder what they *do* teach at these schools' (*CoN* 57).

'Do you feel any need to the leave the Shire now – now that your wish to see them has come true already?' he asked.

'Yes, sir. I don't know how to say it, but after last night I feel different. I seem to see ahead, in a kind of way. I know we are going to take a very long road, into darkness; but I know I can't turn back. It isn't to see Elves now, nor dragons, nor mountains, that I want – I don't rightly know what I want: but I have something to do before the end, and it lies ahead, not in the Shire. I must see it through, sir, if you understand me' (*LotR 85*).

3. "Refusal to the Call"

While Frye defined in his *Powerful Words* (1990) the classic hero as someone who "tends to be a tragic figure, divided by a combination of human and divine," the young heroes of this study have no divine part that affects their creation. They are heroes of flesh and blood with real mothers and fathers. They are not children of deities although it is true that there is always an aura of mystery about their parents, who are always presented in the vaguest of terms. The hero can obey this call to adventure or attempt to avoid it, In the latter instance, such refusal turns the adventure into a negative. In what Campbell refers to as the "Refusal of the Call" (2008: 49) he states, "Walled in boredom, hard work, or 'culture,' the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved". When this happens, the individual becomes unhappy and incomplete and this will eventually destroy it. In both novels we see a clear examples of this process. Some of the main characters deny their responsibility and try to avoid their destiny:

'I – I wonder if there's any point in going on,' said Susan. 'I mean, it doesn't seem particularly safe here and it looks as if it won't be much fun either. And it's getting

colder every minute, and we've brought nothing to eat. What about just going home?' (*CoN* 66).

'I do really wish to destroy it!' cried Frodo. 'Or well, to have it destroyed. I am not made for perilous quests. I wish I had never seen the Ring! Why did it come to me? Why was I chosen? (*LotR* 60).

However, this attitude does not commune with the spirit of heroism presented in this study, for despite their doubts and fears, and guided by a sense of right and duty, both characters, Susan and Frodo, begin to assume their heroic stature as they put aside their own security and self-interest:

'I've a horrid feeling that Lu is right,' said Susan. 'I don't want to go a step further and I wish we'd never come. But I think we must try to do something for Mr. Whatever-his-name is – I mean the Faun' (*CoN* 67).

'No!' answered Frodo, coming back to himself out of darkness, and finding to his surprise that it was not dark, and that out of the window he could see the sunlit garden. 'Or perhaps, yes. As far as I understand what you have said, I suppose I must keep the Ring and guard it, at least for the present, whatever it may do to me' (*LotR* 60).

4."Supernatural Aid"

The acceptance of the call involves a "Supernatural Aid". As Campbell points out (57), the first meeting of the day of the hero tends to be with a protective figure, often an old crone or old man, who provides the adventurer with amulets to ward off or counter-act the evil forces which would otherwise annihilate them.

When Lucy enters Narnia through the wardrobe, the first creature that she stumbles upon is a Faun, telling who informs the girl about Narnia and her situation within it. Having arrived in the magical land, Lucy and her brothers and sister find that a beaver and his wife will be the ones to lead and assist the Pevensie siblings throughout their adventure. However, the

true supernatural aids —in keeping with Campbell's model— appear when Father Christmas delivers gifts to Lucy, Peter and Susan (at this point Edmund has escaped with the White Witch). These magical items include a sword, a shield, a bow and arrows, a horn a dagger and a potion[12]. All of them will be of great value in this first volume, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and all the ones to follow. To understand the meaning of "magic" in the context of the Chronicles, see Downing (2005: 120-124) where he writes that "Nowadays the word magic refers most often to sleight-of-hand tricks performed by entertainers. Lewis used the term more seriously and more broadly to describe anything marvellous or unexplained, from divine mysteries to diabolical sorcery. Most of the ideas and attitudes in the chronicles stay consistent from the first book in the series to the last.

Some of the pictures of Father Christmas in our world make him look only funny and jolly. But now that the children actually stood looking at him they didn't find it quite like that. He was so big, and so glad, and so real, that they all became quite still. They felt very glad, but also solemn...
"Peter, Adam's Son," said Father Christmas.
"Here, sir," said Peter.
"These are your presents..."
[...] "Merry Christmas! "Long live the true King!" and cracked his whip, and he and the reindeer and the sledge and all were out of sight before anyone realized that they had started (*CoN* 115-117).

The Fellowship of the Ring also presents this figure of an old crone or old man in the character of Tom Bombadil, a fellow capable of communicating with Nature, "I know the tune of him. Old grey Willow-man!" (117), while

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being the only creature that the ring cannot affect "Then Tom put the Ring round the end of his little finger [...] There was no sign of Tom disappearing!" (130). In a sense, Tom Bombadil looks like as he belongs to the world before the world the Hobbits know existed. At the end of the hobbits' misfortunes in the Old Forest[13], Tom saves the four Hobbits from a terrible death while giving them valuable weapons for their adventure.

But Tom shook his head, saying: 'You've found yourselves again, out of the deep water. Clothes are but little loss, if you escape from drowning [...] For each of the hobbits he chose a dagger, long, leaf-shaped, and keen, of marvelous workmanship, damasked with serpent-forms in red and gold' (*LotR* 141-2).

5. "Cross the First Threshold"

Heroes, according to Campbell (64), should "Cross the First Threshold" that take them from their world to the world of the unknown. They must move on through their adventure until they reach a place where "the hero …comes to the 'threshold guardian' at the entrance of the magnified power. Such custodians bound the world in all four directions." In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, once the Pevensie siblings realize that something terrible is occurring in this newly discovered world in which they find themselves (Chapter 6, 'Into the Forest') they meet their guardian-to-be, a Talking Beaver, who will invite them to his house where they will also meet the

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[13] Throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, Nature is exceptionally important. The relation that characters and events have with the different manifestation of the natural world will determine the fate of the Ring. Patrick Curry, in his chapter about "Middle-Earth: Nature and Ecology" says: "Every forest in Middle-earth —Mirkwood, the Old Forest, Fangorn, even Woody End in the Shire — has its own unique personality. And none of them is more memorable than the green city of Caras Galadhon in Lothlórien, 'the heart of Elvendom on earth,' the height of whose mallorn-trees 'could not be guessed, but they stood up in the twilight like living towers [...]'. Tolkien does not romanticize nature, however. You can easily freeze to death, die of overexposure, drown or stave in Middle-earth." (2004: 52-53).

Beaver's wife (Chapter 7, 'A day with the Beavers'). *The Fellowship of the Ring* follows exactly the same pattern. Once the Hobbit are in the Old Forest, which also gives its name to the chapter, the next episode is "In the house of Tom Bombadil" where, among other things, they also meet Goldberry, Tom Bombadil's wife.

6. "The Belly of the Whale"

The idea that the passage over the magic threshold is a transit to a sphere of rebirth tends to be symbolized with the image of "the Belly of the Whale". Campbell says: "The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died" (74). When our heroes of Narnia — Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy — leave our world and cease to exist in this, in some way, it is as if they had died for us, but to once again become aware of who they are and where they are, seem to be able to conquer or control the force of the threshold. There is an episode where one of the brothers, Edmund, is unable to control the force of his own avarice and, having been easily hypnotized by all the White Witch's vain promises is driven to the point where his situation becomes uncontrollable. As a result, he becomes prisoner of the Witch, captured and without hope; yet continuing to grow as a person and all the while preparing the path for his true development as a hero:

Meanwhile the dwarf whipped up the reindeer, and the Witch and Edmund drove out under the archway and on and away into the darkness and the cold. This was a terrible journey for Edmund [...] And Edmund, for the first time in this story, felt sorry for someone besides himself [...] The dwarf obeyed, and in a few minutes Edmund found himself being forced to walk as fast as he could with his hands tied behind him. He kept on slipping in the slush and mud and wet grass, and every time he slipped, the dwarf gave him a curse and sometimes a flick with the whip (*CoN* 121-128).

Something similar happens with the four Hobbits when Tom Bombadil frees them from the barrow-downs. They were almost dead, the four of them, inside the belly of the earth, but are reborn just as naked as they came into the world: "Run naked on the grass, while Tom goes a-hunting!" (140). Unfortunately for our heroes, this is nothing more than mere chimera, because despite the hero apparently is in control of the situation, there is something in it that drags them far away and cannot avoid being swallowed by the unknown.

'How perfectly dreadful!' said Susan as they at last came back in despair. 'Oh, how I wish we'd never come.'
'What on earth are we to do, Mr. Beaver?' said Peter.
'Do?' said Mr. Beaver, who was already putting on his snow-boots. 'Do? We must be off at once. We haven't a moment to spare!' (*CoN* 91).

Conclusion

Joseph Campbell recognizes three stages in the development of the heroic adventure. Our interpretation of Campbell's heroic system for C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* has shifted the readers attention to the first stage, the Departure, and the characters of the Pevensie siblings: Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy, and four Hobbits: Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin.

The study has pointed to a parallel between the four young Hobbits who appear in *The Lord of the Rings* who, in a certain sense, represent that same idea of innocence and youth that we see with the Pevensie children in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Additionally, they possess pure and truly heroic spirits as set forth by Campbell, and pass through the various stages of

Departure, namely: The Call to Adventure, Refusal to the Call, Supernatural Aid, the Crossing of the First Threshold, and the Belly of the Whale.

This article is intended as the first step to further studies that will explore these characters as heroes in the entire series that comprises *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy using the complete model proposed by Campbell. These later explorations will take into account not only the Departure, but also Campbell's framework for Initiation and Return.

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