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Fantasy and Fairy Tale in J. R. R. Tolkien's
Hobbit, Edith Nesbit's Enchanted Castle and
George MacDonald's Tale The Princess and the
Goblin

Prvky fantasy a pohádky v dílech Hobit J.R.R.
Tolkiena, Edith Nesbitové a Princezna a skřítkci
George MacDonalda

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Abstract

The thesis focuses on the comparative analysis of Tolkien's novel *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937) and two works which significantly influenced him: George MacDonald's *Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and Edith Nesbit's *Enchanted Castle* (1907). The first part of the thesis chronologically describes the development of English children's fantasy literature. The above-mentioned authors are characterized from the perspective of their life and work. The second and the main part focuses on the comparison of the discussed works, especially on the comparison of fantastic elements such as fairy-tale characters, a journey to the unknown, a fight against evil, magical objects and magic space (the castle, the forest, the abandoned landscape). This interpretation is based on Tolkien's concept of fairy tales and Propp's analysis of fairy tales.

Anotace

Práce se zabývá srovnávací analýzou Tolkienova fantasy příběhu *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937), a dvou děl, která Tolkiena významným způsobem ovlivnily: George MacDonalldovy pohádky *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) a fantasy románu Edith Nesbitové *The Enchanted Castle* (1907). První část práce chronologicky popisuje vývoj britské dětské fantasy literatury. Výše zmínění autoři jsou charakterizováni z hlediska jejich života i literární tvorby. Druhá a zároveň hlavní část práce se zaměřuje na komparaci analyzovaných děl, především na komparaci konkrétních fantastických prvků jako jsou pohádkové postavy, cesta do neznáma, boj proti zlu, magické předměty a kouzelný prostor (zámek, les, opuštěná krajina). Interpretace bude vycházet z Tolkienova pojetí významu pohádky a fantazie a z Proppovy analýzy pohádek.

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1. Introduction

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien is one of the greatest fantasy writers of the world. His works, among them *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, influenced many later fantasy writers. His unique secondary world, the Middle-earth enables the reader to enter the world full of magic and supernatural inhabitants, and experience incredible adventure together with its heroes. Tolkien himself was an avid reader of fairy stories and fantasy, as a result, he was influenced by great fairy tale authors as well. Those authors are above all George MacDonald, who is the author of several great fantasy fairy stories, and Edith Nesbit, who created stories for children full of magic and wonder. Their books provided Tolkien with several ideas for his own secondary world.

The main topic of this diploma thesis is the analysis and comparison of these three above mentioned author's stories: *The Princess and the Goblin* by George MacDonald, *The Enchanted Castle* by Edith Nesbit, and finally, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* by J. R. R. Tolkien. All these stories are fantasy fairy tales, and each of them depicts amazing adventures of its main characters, who find themselves in the middle of the fairy tale land. Each story is different. However, a number of similarities can be found there. The main part of the thesis deals with the comparison of fantasy elements, in particular, the fairy-tale characters, the fight against evil, the journey to the unknown, magical objects and the magic space. First, however, the thesis focuses on the definition and history of the genre.

The development of English fantasy fiction for children forms an important part of the thesis as well. The fantasy fiction for children did not really appear until the nineteenth century. Since then, several different approaches to fantasy fiction for children occurred. The suitability of the genre for children was several times questioned and the genre was much criticized. Still, many authors devoted their career to fantasy for children and countless wonderful stories were created.

Mentioning the authors from the perspective of their lives, as well as their work, is another important part of the thesis. I concentrate mainly on J. R. R. Tolkien and his work. His essay *On Fairy Stories*, in which he presents his original opinions concerning fairy tales is not only mentioned but also used as one of the criteria of the comparative analysis. During the interpretation of the stories, I also work with Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* and its character types and functions of dramatis personae.

2. Fantasy literature

*“Fantasy is the natural, the appropriate language for the recounting of the spiritual journey and the struggle of good and evil in the soul”*¹

Fantasy could be a relative term: *“one person’s fantasy is another person’s norm [...]”*² Sometimes it might be difficult to draw a line between fantasy and reality. One could include any fiction in the category of fantasy, even the realistic one. Obviously, there is no one and only definition for the genre, however, fantasy was precisely defined by many literary personalities. It can be characterized as *“the literature of the impossible”*³, *“its polar opposite is reality”*⁴ or *“a fiction involving the supernatural or impossible.”*⁵ Ursula Le Guin explained fantasy to be *“a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence. It is not anti-rational, but para-rational, not realistic but surrealistic, super realistic; a heightening of reality.”*⁶

In a certain way, fantasy has been there since the origin of human culture. *“The domain of modern fantasy is related to a long history of myth, legend, folk-tale and wonder tale, not to mention religion and the occult – forms of narrative which many have seen as expression of, or as being related to, deep and universal human drives.”*⁷

Most fantasy elements which occur in contemporary fantasy works come from ancient fears of witches, wizards, werewolves and other extraordinary beings. Fantasy stories in the form of oral folk tales appeared to respond to human deprivation or desire. Even though many of these stories disappeared during the age of Puritanism and reason, few of them got in some form into drama or literature.

Based on the real world, fantasy, though referring to the impossible, is often considered to be a critique or an allegory and it does not have to be author’s intention. As Tolkien, who himself dislikes allegory, claims in *The Lord of the Rings*, *“I think that many confuse ‘applicability’ with ‘allegory’; but the one resides in the freedom of the*

¹ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 1

² PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 10

³ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 10

⁴ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 10

⁵ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 10

⁶ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 10

⁷ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 8

reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author."⁸ Thus each reader might interpret each work of fantasy differently depending on his own experience.

Fantasy could be classified in many ways and there are many different approaches. Yet fundamental difference is between fantasy in our 'normal' world, where fantastic elements appear, (as in Edith Nesbit's *The Enchanted Castle*) and the 'other' fantastic world, where the fantastic elements are the norm. To emphasize the difference between them, these unreal fantastic worlds are usually thoroughly described. As in Tolkien's work, the Middle-earth is a whole well-described continent, including several maps and descriptions of its history or inhabitant.

Sometimes, fantasy can be identified with science fiction also called science fantasy. However, fantasy deals with a bit of a different reality. While science fiction can be possible, being set in the future where technological advances occur, fantasy rather deals with impossible.

2.1. Criticism of fantasy

Even though fantasy literature is now one of the leading genres among readers, there appears to be certain doubts about its acquisition. There could be two different approaches, it is either taken seriously or it is rejected. According to people who reject it, its popularity among readers "*is a sad reflection on the state of contemporary culture*"⁹ and it represents childishness and escapism.

The first criticized feature of fantasy is its childishness. Fantasy and children's literature could have some common elements; however, it should not be connected as one concept. An interesting opinion was expressed by J. R. R. Tolkien in his essay *On Fairy Stories*: "*the association of children and fairy tales is an accident of our domestic history. [...] Children as a class neither like fairy-stories more nor understand them better than adults do*"¹⁰ Thus association of fairy tales with children is not really unequivocal. This statement could be applied on fantasy as well. There is no direct connection between children and alternative worlds of fantasy stories. Adult readers

⁸ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 8

⁹ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 2

¹⁰ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 4

seem to have more reasons to enjoy fantasy literature. Fantasy offers the reader “*an alternative world where motivations, actions, needs and gratifications are simpler and more direct than in the desperately complex and subtle real world.*”¹¹ Thus, this alternative world can be perceived as means of relaxation from the real world’s difficulties. Still adult critics demand some profound meaning, therefore while reading the fantasy story they concentrate on the meaning or the moral of the story rather than the fantasy world itself. That is why fantasy has quite low prestige among adult readers. However, R. L. Stevenson, for example, had the opposite viewpoint. As he said in a debate over the adventure novel in 1965, the heroes cannot be too moral, intellectual or clever. Adventure novel should above all consist of danger, passion and fear, otherwise the tale is just absurd.

Typical features of fantasy literature are simplicity and innocence. These features are related to books for children as well. As children need to be protected from the loss of their innocence, they are also considered to be “*closer to the unknown, the unseen and mythical. Children are equated with primitives, who have (it is assumed) a simple faith in animism [...]*”¹² The ability to make oneself believe, to absorb into the text is thus easier for children. For this reason, the absorption into fantastic texts appears to be childish. The postmodern adult readers also consider fantasy as fun but there is no place for fun in the adult world. Fun, innocence and simplicity is therefore considered childish too. However, children are rather free, on the other hand, adults force themselves into living too controlled and grown up lives. Having fun or absorbing the fantasy text denote rather freedom than childishness.

Another common criticism is connected with the idea that fantasy literature is escapist. However, the idea of fantasy as an escapist literature is not really accurate. Fantasy worlds are not created unrestrainedly or entirely originally. These worlds are primarily based on our real world. “*If there is virtually no connection between the real and the fantastic, except distortion, then we arrive at the absurd and nonsense.*”¹³ Therefore, we do not truly escape from our world. Fantasy could be rather used as a metaphor or a comment on the reality. Each reader easily recognizes dragons, hobbits or

¹¹ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 4

¹² PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 6

¹³ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 8

fairies to be impossible. On the contrary, a work of realism introduces very accurate stories, which are possible to read as if they were no fiction at all.

“[...] *fantasy allows us to speculate, to explore possibilities, to indulge our private selves – to consider imaginatively things that cannot be (as opposed to speculation on things that might be, which produces science fiction): it would seem to offer worlds of infinite possibility, of expansiveness, of liberation.*”¹⁴

Even though human imagination could be endless, fantasy seems to be limited. There are few motifs which recur in most stories usually involving sorcery and heroes fighting monsters. Due to this repetition, these motifs are becoming a cliché. Another problematic area of fantasy literature is the inequality of gender. Fantasy heroes are most often male characters, on the other, hand females are given only minor roles in some stories. For instance, characters in Tolkien’s *Hobbit* are predominantly males. However, it should be noted that fantasy literature is not the only aspect of people’s life omitting women, it is rather a general tendency of the society, which fortunately keeps disappearing over time.

¹⁴ PETER HUNT AND MILLICENT LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. New Ed, 2003. p. 2

3. Fairy tales

A fairy tale is a story of wonder and enchantment. It is one of the oldest yet most popular forms of literature. “*The fairy tale survives because it presents experience in vivid symbolic form. Sometimes we need to have the truth exaggerated and made more dramatic, even fantastic, in order to comprehend it.*”¹⁵ For instance, *Beauty and the Beast* might imply that appearance does not reveal everything about a person and that love is very powerful. However, the message may differ for each reader. There is one message for a child, there might be another for a middle-aged adult. Many of these stories were not initially intended for children, though.

Traditional fairy tales were not read from books as today. They were orally passed from one generation to another, as a part of a folklore. There was not one particular author. The stories were passed and slightly changed each time they were told. Nowadays, the fairy tales are written down by a certain author or authors and thus static. Those fairy tales are called literary fairy tales. Obviously, the literary fairy tales are rather different from the orally passed fairy tales, however, they appropriate many motifs and traditions from the oral fairy tales. Literary fairy tales usually combine these motifs with elements of contemporary literary genres, in order to adapt oral storytelling to the readers’ needs. Fairy tales often point out morality. There is usually fight of good against evil. Evil and bad qualities are punished. Some authors emphasized contemporary issues such as poverty, ecology, religion or political beliefs. Unlike legends, fairy tales are generally not specific in case of time and place. Fairy tales are often set ‘once upon a time’ and ‘far, far away’. There are no actual people as well.

This topic is further defined later in the chapter about Tolkien and his essay *On Fairy Stories*, in which he describes a fairy story from his point of view. His approach is very interesting and original.

¹⁵ LURIE, Alison. *Boys and Girls Forever: Children's Classics from Cinderella to Harry Potter*. 2004. p. 125

4. Children's literature throughout the British history

4.1. The beginnings of children's reading

At the present time, childhood is seen as a special period of life. Hence, there are countless opportunities for kids to read books, which are made exclusively for them, full of colourful pictures, rhymes and games. Very often, those works support children's imagination by containing supernatural beings or magic. Nonetheless, up until the eighteenth century, the children books were quite a rare occurrence. In fact, children's literature did not become notable till the nineteenth century.

Fantasies, fables and stories rich in imagination were published for centuries but these works were not designed specifically to children. Children were not perceived as innocent and pure as we see them now. Childhood was not seen as a special period of life, during which children must be protected from the harsh reality. Typically, "*many people, even in the 1760s, expected children to be greybeards while they were still in petticoats.*"¹⁶ For instance, a prominent educationalist from the seventeenth century, Jan Amos Komenský, showed life to children as it really was and as he and his children experienced it. In his educational books for children he illustrated death, wars, diseases and generally hardship as a natural part of life. Childhood was not really separated from adulthood; therefore, the books only reflected the reality of this time.

The eighteenth-century fantasy can be characterized by pragmatism and naturalism. A typical model is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. However, "*across the literary board, the improbable or the highly coloured, from Dickens to Conan Doyle [...] slid down the literary scale of repute.*"¹⁷ Works of that time used only some elements of fantasy. The eighteenth-century fantasies were not recommended to children, though. Stories which contained supernatural beings such as witches, fairies, giants or dragons were perceived as an exclusively adult literature. At this period, the books for young children should have been simple and factual, otherwise it was believed they could corrupt their minds by showing an untrue image of the real world.

¹⁶ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 12

¹⁷ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. 2003, p. 16

4.2. Nineteenth-century children's stories

The tales specially designed to address children were first published at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Benjamin Tabart. He successfully published tales called *Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper: A Tale for the Nursery* (1804) and *Collection of Popular Stories for the Nursery* (1804). More and more tales were written for children until the fairy tale became exclusive part of children's literature.

Still, fantasy narratives were mostly accessible to adults during this period. At this time, especially Gothic novels flourished but there was no such equivalent for children. One of the earliest fantasy fictions is called *Glenowen; or, the Fairy Palace* (1815), written by Eleanor Sleath. The work tells the story about two orphans, who meet Fairy Peribanou. Not only is she a fairy, she also comes from another world, which was an innovational approach at that time.

In tales with animals, the anthropomorphism appeared and children's fascination with animals was used by several authors to convey various moral messages. "*This juxtaposition of the imagined and the real, the never-land where animals by turns talked and danced like people and behaved as brute creation, was reflected in much of children's literature during this period.*"¹⁸ Morality started to be a stable characteristic feature of children's literature. Using animals as a medium was certainly farsighted, considering the children's affinity with animals.

The first half of the nineteenth century was characterized by the start of the industrial revolution. Innovative technologies and inventions along with the growth of railways went along with political and social changes. All these changes naturally influenced literature as well, the great age of Romantic literature was coming to an end, and in children's literature moral tales thrived, focusing on morality based on Christianity. Realistic and factual literature prevailed in this period. This time was greatly dominated by utilitarianism; therefore, children were taught good behavior, factual and practical information. This approach was first criticized by Catherine Sinclair in her story *Holiday House* (1839). In the preface to this story, she wrote: "*In this age of wonderful mechanical inventions, the very mind of youth seems in danger of becoming a machine; and while every effort is used to stuff the memory, like a cricket-*

¹⁸ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 74

*ball, with well-known facts and ready-made opinions, no room is left for the vigour of natural feeling, the glow of natural genius, and the ardour of natural enthusiasm.”*¹⁹

The story is still rather moral and religious, however, children depicted in the story are naughty, they break things and generally behave as common kids. Their grandmother and uncle, who take care of them, are very tolerant and forgive the kids everything. This combination was quite new in this period.

4.3. The rise of fantasy in children’s literature

The nineteenth-century fantasies such as the brothers Grimm’s stories were written particularly for children. “*The golden age of children’s literature*”²⁰ started in 1860s and continued with fantasy stories by Carrol, MacDonald, Nesbit, Kipling, Potter, Graham and others. At this period, a futuristic and eyes-opening genre science fiction emerged, which came as a contrast to backward-looking fantasy.

Even with the dominance of moral and religious tales in the first half of the nineteenth century, fantasies and fairy-tales were still published. The brothers Grimm’s folk-tales, which were published in Britain as *German Popular Stories* in 1823, inspired many other authors of fairy-tales. Although the suitability of their stories for children was much questioned, their collection of stories is still difficult to surpass. Chapbook literature, consisting of traditional fairy-tales and nursery rhymes, arose again. For instance, James Kendrew published many books, including *Adventures of the beautiful Little Maid Cinderella*, *The Entertaining Story of Little Red Riding Hood*, *The history of Jack the Giant-Killer*, or *The Surprising Adventures of Puss in Boots* (1815-1841). Orlando Hodgson published *Robin Hood* and *Children in the Woods* during 1830s. It proves wide-ranged popularity of these traditional fairy-stories among classes and ages. In fact, these stories are all well-known by all generations up today.

Sir Henry Cole was dissatisfied with the quality of children’s literature at that time. He himself had eight children and, for that reason, he wanted to create books which all the children would really enjoy. “*Under the pseudonym of ‘Felix Summerly’*, Cole announced the publication of *‘The Home Treasury of Books, Pictures, Toys, &c.*

¹⁹ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 84

²⁰ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. 2003, p. 17

purposed to cultivate the Affections, Fancy, Imagination, and Taste of Children', and, employing the best artists and printers he could find, he began issuing such stories as Jack the Giant-Killer and Little Red Riding Hood from 1843 onwards."²¹ He believed that the graphical quality of the children's books was very important. For that reason, his books were colorfully printed and decorated with various ornaments. Despite Cole's initial aim "to appeal to the imagination rather than the understanding"²², several tales contain a preface, informing the reader about the historical origin, and there seems to be strong morality and religiousness within the stories. For instance, in the *Little Red Riding Hood*, Cole avoided the traditional, violent concept of this story and came with the happy end instead, focusing on the little girl's morality. Still, it was a big step from the period of facts and instructions, which prevailed during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In 1845 William James Thoms started to produce several versions of the original chapbook stories for children. Other authors' collections followed until Sampson Low published *The Home Treasury of Old Story Books* (1859), which gathered all the fairy-tales from Cole's and Thoms' collections. However, it was Cole and Thoms who helped to save the traditional fairy-tales and brought them back to the middle-class children.

As a result of this process, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Victorian fantasy rose, using supernatural elements and secondary worlds. Other factors which influenced the expansion of fantasy in this time are, for instance, the popularity of Gothic novels or Toy Theatres. Animal fantasies were also very popular, as I mentioned earlier. Great works of this age worth mentioning are *Frankenstein* (1818), *The Butterfly's Ball* and the remarkable *Christmas Carol* (1843). Finally, due to archeological discoveries exotic creatures were discovered, which made people of that time marvel at extraordinary matters.

Pioneering fantasy of this period is definitely *Phantasmion* (1837), written by Sara Coleridge. This work combines mystery and the supernatural with romantic elements. She once said about fantasies for children:

"If you ask me what advantages a young person could possibly derive from such a tissue of unrealities, I should say that every work of fancy [...] feeds and expands the

²¹ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 88

²² HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 89

mind; whenever the poetical beauty of things is vividly displayed, truth is exhibited, and thus the imagination of the youthful reader is stimulated to find truth for itself."²³

The fantasy genre was finally seen as a beneficial instrument for the young mind to grow, which was a big step from the opinions which prevailed in the previous century.

Richard Henry Horne participated in the series of books for nursery children and subsequently wrote an astonishing story called *The Good-Natured Bear* (1846), in which a friendly bear tells the story of his life. Another of his significant stories is *Memoirs of a London Doll* (1846), which describes the life journey of a living wooden doll. In comparison, Mark Lemon wrote the tale called *The Enchanted Doll: A Fairy Tale for Little People* (1849). The story seems to be "too grimly moralistic"²⁴, nevertheless, it contributed to the improvement of the position of fantasy in this period.

By 1840s one of the most remarkable authors of children's books appeared, his name was Hans Christian Andersen. He was born in Denmark and even though his education was poor at first, he made his way to become a significant writer. His book *Eventyr fortalte for Børn* (1835), which can be translated to English as *Tales told for Children* (in 1846 first translated to English by Mary Howitt as *Wonderful Stories for Children*), includes well-known stories such as *Little Ida's Flowers* or *The Princess on the Pea*. His collections of tales were not only old fairy-tales gathered together. In fact, Andersen created all the stories by himself either using his own imagination or using an inspiration from the stories he heard in childhood. Even though being a Dane, Hans Christian Andersen undoubtedly enriched and influenced English children's literature as there were exactly twenty-one different Andersen's collections of tales published by 1870.

Throughout these years, the society was changing. People inclined more to humane ways of thinking, education was supported. The process, going from the utilitarianism to the dominance of fairy-tales, denoted growing tendency to see childhood in a different way at last. In the middle of the nineteenth century, childhood became more enjoyable time.

²³ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 91, 92

²⁴ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 93

“*The Romantic movement’s rediscovery of the imagination was one of its most vital contributions to the development of nineteenth-century literature.*”²⁵ People became more interested in unreal and fantastic worlds, narratives from the Middle Ages or dream-worlds. A new kind of children’s literature emerged, concerning children’s interests and needs. Fantasies supported children’s imagination, which was supposed to be free at this stage of life, but it was decreasing gradually while growing up. Fairy-tales were conclusively established as children’s stories.

Fairy tales and fantasies were often recreated from traditional folk stories and legends. Authors were influenced by the brothers Grimm and other German authors; Hans Christian Andersen’s collections of fairy-tales were their inspiration as well. Even though these stories were not as much didactic and religious as they used to be, there were still elements of morality. Children were given a lesson through fairy-tales. Significant writers of fairy-tales of the second half of the nineteenth century were, for instance, William Makepeace Thackeray, who wrote *The Rose and the Ring* (1855), or Frances Browne with her stories called *Granny’s Wonderful Chair* (1857), or Charles Dickens with his *Holiday Romance* (1868). At the end of the century, fairy tales were written more in a parodic way, and especially Dickens and Thackeray employed this mode in their stories, while others were joining.

One of the most significant fantasy writers of the nineteenth century, and perhaps of all time, is Lewis Carroll with his major work *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). *Alice* is a brilliant and unique story about a young girl, who finds herself in the imaginative other world inhabited by extraordinary beings. While these creatures often get her into unusual situations, she proves her good character, even though she is still a child. At the final moment, she finds out it was all just a dream. *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871) is a sequel following the original. Carroll’s works greatly depict the child’s nature and behavior, which is perhaps due to Carroll’s affection for children. Through Alice’s eyes, he criticized social habits such as “*tea and dinner parties, games of croquet or chess, the protocols of polite conversation [...]*.”²⁶ And, through the character of the Duchess, he ridiculed the didactic elements which prevailed in many current books for children, as she uses every opportunity to moralize.

²⁵ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 101

²⁶ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 142

His original approach to children's literature brought a new view on fantasy and fiction, moreover, he inspired a number of other writers.

Charles Kingsley was greatly fascinated and inspired by nature. In *The Water-Babies* (1863), he “*tried ... to make children and grown folks understand that there is quite a miraculous and divine element underlying all physical nature*”²⁷ *The Water-Babies* is a story, which reflects not only Kingsley's fascination with nature but also his criticism of the society and a moral allegory. It starts with the misery of a poor little boy called Tom, who sweeps chimneys of rich people's houses. At the beginning of the story, he dies by drowning and becomes a water-baby. This process of Tom becoming the water-baby is a combination of moralizing (Tom's form and status is based on his previous actions) and a description of the underwater world. The major part of the story takes place in water; however, Tom is allowed to return home eventually.

In 1868 the magazine *Good Words for Young* was founded. One of the first publishers was George MacDonald with his story *At the Back of the North Wind* (published as a book in 1871). Later, as he became an editor, MacDonald published a fairy-tale *The Princess and the Goblin*, and his childhood stories entitled *Ranalph Bannerman's Boyhood*.

4.4. The turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries

One of the most notable authors not only of fairy tales is Oscar Wilde. His collection of fairy tales *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (1888) was undoubtedly influenced by Andersen, however, the fairy-tales are used as “*an attempt to mirror modern life in a form remote from reality – to deal with modern problems in a mode that is ideal and not imitative.*”²⁸ His second collection of fairy-tales was *The House of Pomegranates*, written in 1891. Both genuinely reflect Wilde's view of the society, the contrast between the rich and the poor, religious motifs and philosophy.

Nevertheless, the predominant genre of this period became adventurous stories. The great expansion of the British Empire during the second half of the nineteenth

²⁷ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 145

²⁸ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 140

century was the main reason. The British control of India, Burma and a part of Africa broadened the public interest in these issues. These exotic places became a pattern for various thrilling adventure stories for children. The stories were based on joining the probable aspect of the story with the extraordinary aspect. Both must be included and in harmony as the adventure story is supposed to be not only exciting but also trustworthy. The young hero, usually an ordinary boy, must deal with numerous difficulties during his journey. The moral message is a distinctive feature of this genre as well. The writers put emphasis on honesty and courage, as well as on loyalty to the British empire. Even though the British empire was the key source of the adventure stories, traditional folk-tales and fairy tales made the foundations. The folk-tale structure could be seen in Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (first published in *Young Folks* in 1881). There occur typical folk-tale's aspects, such as "hero, quest, struggles and homecoming."²⁹ Moreover, it is all intermingled with imaginative elements.

Edith Nesbit is an important author of literature for children. She wrote many stories full of magic and adventure. These fantasy stories were much appreciated and influenced several authors and their works.

4.5. The twentieth century

During the first half of the twentieth century, traditional tales and folk-tales were retold by several authors. The most significant author of this category was certainly Arthur Ransome, as he wrote *Old Peter's Russian Tales* (1916), which is collection of twenty-one Russian folk-tales. Other authors, who contributed to this genre were Amabel William-Ellis with her *Fairies and Enchanters* (1933), Harcourt Williams with his *Tales from Ebony* (1934) or Angela Thirkell's German origin collection of tales called *The Grateful Sparrow* (1935).

Even though retelling traditional stories was still thriving, original works of fantasy were even more prominent. As a reaction on the awfulness of the war, Hugh Lofting wrote *The Story of Dr Dolittle, being the History of his Peculiar Life at Home and Astonishing Adventures in Foreign Parts, Never Before Printed* (1920), and it was one

²⁹ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 152

of the first fantasy to be written in the twentieth century. Later, he wrote a sequel *The Voyages of Dr Dolittle* (1922). Although the original was quite racist, the series imply elements of compassion behind it. Stories of Mary Poppins written by Pamela Lyndon Travers are another great fantasy, depicting idea of magic occurring in everyday life. The three main books concerning Mary Poppins' character are *Mary Poppins* (1934), *Mary Poppins Comes Back* (1935), and *Mary Poppins Opens the Door* (1936) and there were other books after war.

Other eminent fantasy stories written in the twentieth century came from John Masefield. This author created not only stories for children, but also poems, dramas and other novels. His greatest children's fictions include adventure stories such as *The Bird of Dawning* (1933) or *Dead Ned* (1938). Although these books, along with his historical novels, were initially written for adults, they found their way to children's libraries. Masefield's two best-known novels contributed to children were "farragos with little to hold them to the earth, totally extravagant mixtures of talking animals, witches, highwaymen, the sea story, archetypal and legendary characters, grotesquely wicked governesses, and villains quite capable of kidnapping the Dean and Chapter of a cathedral."³⁰ The novels are *The Midnight Folk* (1927) and its sequel *The Box of Delights* (1935).

These authors are relatively popular up today, however, one of the most significant authors of the works of imagination creating during the twentieth century is undoubtedly John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.

Enid Blyton became one of the most successful children's book writers. She "had published her first pamphlet, *Real Fairies*, in 1923 and by the end of 1945 she had written over 100 children's book of fiction, and nearly 100 retellings and school readers."³¹ She wrote numerous books during the Second World War; however, she appears to be one of few who did not reflect the war in her stories. Blyton's works include lots of original fantasies, many of them very successful. In fact, most of her books became very well-liked. To name some of them, the most popular were *The Adventures of Wishing Chair* (1937), which was her most successful fantasy, *The Secret*

³⁰ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 215

³¹ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 216

Island (1938), and in conclusion, *Five on a Treasure Island* (1942), which was her most successful series.

Arthur Ransome, whom I mentioned earlier, not only retold folk-tales, in fact, he wrote several generally recognized books, introducing the real life and family values to his child readers through his fairy-tales. For instance, reading *Swallows and Amazons* (1930) “*the children develop skills which they use in practical circumstances. These structures help to universalize this secure, middle-class world [...]*.”³² Therefore, his child characters were usually “*well-behaved and supportive, with a strong adherence to social and moral codes.*”³³ As well as other authors of this mid war period, Ransome’s books written during the war, such as *Secret Water* (1939), *Missee Lee* (1941) or *The Picts and the Martyrs* (1943) might be seen as allegories.

Arthur Ransome’s stories certainly inspired many other authors. For instance, Pamela Whitlock and Katherine Hull, who are two young girls of age fifteen and sixteen, brought Ransome a manuscript of their own story for children. The story is based on Ransome’s writing style; however, it differs in its children’s spontaneity. The story called *The Far-Distant Oxus* (1937) was a great success and Ransome himself called it “*this year’s best children’s book*”³⁴.

After the two world wars, the fantasy genre embraced history as a center topic. Historical fantasy uses a rewritten and modified historical setting to create a new imaginative world. The authors who contributed to this genre were especially Leon Garfield and Joan Aiken. Next to the historical fantasy, the post-war period brought the time travel fantasy as well. The idea of time travelling came from Edith Nesbit, therefore the post-war authors of time travel fantasy books are directly or indirectly influenced by Nesbit’s works (*The Story of the Amulet*, *The House of Arden* and its sequel *Harding’s Luck*). Due to the post-war uneasiness, the fiction concerning the past centuries was created, as well as the stories looking into the future. Futuristic dystopian literature for children flourished during this period. “*Writers for children began to engage skeptically with myths of progress, drawing on historical evidence of primitive existences and regimes of superstitious bigotry to project such societies into imagined*

³² HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 218

³³ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 218

³⁴ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 220

*futures on the far side of nuclear war or other global disaster.*³⁵ Skepticism towards future arose after war, however, along with that, science fiction for young readers was beginning to flourish, especially in the USA.

The twentieth-century fantasies flourished again in Britain and USA, particularly thanks to the two World Wars. As a reaction, the authors publishing the in the twenties and the thirties created escapist worlds, and thanks to them, the popularity of fantasy grew. Among these authors was J. R. R. Tolkien with his *Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937). In 1960s J. R. R. Tolkien dominated the fantasy genre with his three-volume novel *The Lord of the Rings*. At the end of the twentieth century, the British fantasy genre started to symbolize the situation of Britain. The “*element of rejection of the human world [...] is characteristic of tensions in British fantasy of this period.*”³⁶ As Britain kept losing its old glory and the contrast between the past and the future became very distinct, fantasy authors’ concentration on regression, nostalgia and conservativeness was seen in most fantasies for children, as well as for adults.

Even though fantasy became quite popular in the twentieth century, it still seemed to be a controversial topic for some readers, who saw it as subordinate among other literature genres. Some did not even accept it as a work of art. C. S. Lewis made a good point in this case:

*“Of course, a given reader may be (some readers seem to be) interested in nothing else in the world except detailed studies of complex human personalities. If so, he has a good reason for not reading those kinds of works which neither demand nor admit it. He has no reason for speaking for condemning them, and indeed no qualification for speaking of them at all. We must not allow the novel of manners to give laws to all literature.”*³⁷

Different people have different opinions. Each reader has got his or her own favorite genre of literature. Therefore, there should be no such thing as superior and subordinate genres of literature, because each genre is unique and artistic in its own way.

³⁵ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 272

³⁶ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. 2003, p. 21

³⁷ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. 2003, p. 22

5. George MacDonald

"I write, not for children," he wrote, "but for the child-like, whether they be of five, or fifty, or seventy-five."³⁸ This approach to fairy tales is quite similar to Tolkien's, because they both saw fairy tales as a genre that can offer more and not only children would enjoy their content.

George MacDonald was born into the Victorian age in 1824, in Huntly, Scotland. He was not only a writer, but also a preacher, critic and translator. In case of his writing career, it could be said that he was a universal writer. He wrote in many different styles including fantastic or realistic novels, poetry, essays or short stories. Regarding the genre, MacDonald is best-known as a children's fantasy literature writer.

MacDonald can be perceived as a theologian as well, even though he never claimed to be one. In fact, he hated the dry and complicated theories about God. On the subject of his religiousness, he was strongly influenced by Frederick Denison Maurice, a radical Christian intellectual: "*both of them taking a stance against certain Anglican or Calvinist doctrines such as predestination, or eternal punishment, and each of them holding a firm belief that God would allow no man to live forever outside his love.*"³⁹ Faith in God and MacDonald's view of the world created out of God, by which he expressed his love are important themes of his fantasies. To MacDonald, God not only created the world, he is still present within everything around us. Accordingly, in his books he often celebrates the beauty of our world. These themes can be seen in works such as *Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women* (1858), *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) or *Lilith* (1895).

MacDonald was inspired by above-mentioned Charles Kingsley and his fantasy *The Water-Babies*, especially in his stories for children. Although while Kingsley relies on the natural aspect in his stories, MacDonald uses aspects of the other world, which *North Wind* certainly represents. However, some might say, he and Kingsley are both rather influenced by contemporary culture with its specific problems. Their common interest in, or rather worry about poor people's life conditions takes shape in several of

³⁸ MACDONALD, George. *A Dish of Orts: Chiefly Papers on the Imagination, and on Shakespeare*. 1893

³⁹ *The George MacDonald Informational Web* [online]. 2007

their works. Most similarities could be found in Kingsley's fairy story *Water-Babies* and MacDonald's fairy tale *At the Back of The North Wind*. The second one tells a story about a poor but noble boy named Diamond and his travelling with the North Wind. Diamond, as well as Kingsley's Tom (*The Water-Babies*) experience specific form of suffering, through which they are learning. Besides, their learning process is governed by supernatural being from another world. This process of 'purgation' they came through is connected with suffering in a form of death, loss or other adversity, which eventually leads to knowledge and realizing of the child.

MacDonald's viewpoint of suffering is another interesting subject. He himself knew what suffering means. He lost several members of his family due to illness, he suffered from one too. Part of his life was spent in poverty as he had no steady income. However, MacDonald still believed in God's unconditional love, therefore he believed the suffering leads to a greater good. In *Phantastes*, he wrote: "*What we call evil, is only the best shape, which, for the person and his condition at the time, could be assumed by the best good.*"⁴⁰ Suffering, or in other words evil is good in some way, according to MacDonald.

George MacDonald was predominantly a fairy stories writer. The remarkable story, which is also subject to this thesis, is called *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872). This story takes place in the fairy tale world full of goblins and other beasts and it tells a story about a young princess Irene and a young miner Curdie. Things get mixed up with the presence of Irene's extraordinary great, great grandmother, who brings the magic element to the story. Eleven years later, MacDonald published a sequel called *The Princess and the Curdie* (1883), which is rather gloomier than the first story. The end of the story is almost apocalyptic: "*One day at noon, when life was at its highest, the whole city fell with a roaring crash. The cries of men and the shriek of women went up with its dust, and then there was a great silence.*"⁴¹ The tragic end was caused by the greediness of the citizens, who had been digging under their own foundations. The gloominess of the story might express MacDonald's disillusion, which aroused out of the contemporary society. He wished a better world, therefore he connected his fairy tales and fantasy with Christian motifs.

⁴⁰ MACDONALD, George. *Phantastes: a Faerie Romance for Men and Women*. 1992. p. 185

⁴¹ HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 148

MacDonald also wrote several short stories in the fantasy or fairy tale genre. Among the best are *The Golden Key*, *The Wise Women* or *The Castle*. He also wrote two admired fantasies designed rather for adult readers: *Lilith* and *Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women*. Both takes place in a reality of a dream.

MacDonald inspired many authors, who were creating after him. The most significant authors influenced by MacDonald's publications were, for instance, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, and especially Clive Staples Lewis. MacDonald also (with his family) happened to be a friend of another great fantasist, Lewis Carroll, whose he was sort of a mentor.

George MacDonald with his wife Louisa raised eleven children. He died in 1905, aged eighty.

6. Edith Nesbit

Edith Nesbit was born in Kennington, London in 1858. She spent a part of her childhood travelling throughout Europe with her mother and her sister, who suffered from tuberculosis. To get a treatment, they travelled to France, Germany and Spain, where Edith had a chance to be educated. After their return, the family moved from London to Kent, which was the place Nesbit became charmed by. Later, when she got married, she started to use her literary talent to make money. At the beginning of her career as a writer, she was writing diverse types of publications into magazines or newspapers, such as poems, articles or stories. From 1896 to 1897, Nesbit wrote a series of articles for the story papers *Girl's Own Paper* as her first extended writing for children. These stories were full of games and adventures experienced by children protagonists.

Nesbit needed to support her husband financially, therefore she wrote *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* (1899). This story was not completely her original idea, she reworked several well-known stories. She even wrote sequels, first *The Wouldbegoods* (1901) and later, *The New Treasure Seekers* (1904). Inspired by the brothers Grimm's fairy tales and their idea of three ill-chosen wishes, Nesbit wrote stories based on intentionally or accidentally outspoken wishes that usually bring nothing but problems. The message is clear: “*getting what you want does not necessarily bring happiness*”⁴². This motif in several forms can be seen in fantasies such as *Five Children and It* (1902), *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904) and in *The Enchanted Castle* (1907).

Edith Nesbit's stories often echo her own life experience. For instance, Edith's father died, when she was only four years old, therefore she spent most of her life without father. Hence in her books, the character of father is usually absent. Mothers are often busy, which, in fact, makes a perfect setting for the children to enjoy numerous adventurous experiences. Nesbit spent many years living in the country in her beloved Kent, which provided setting to several of her books.

Overall, Edith Nesbit wrote more than sixty books for children. She also published several works for adults, including collections of poems and novels,

⁴² HUNT, Peter. *Children's literature: An Illustrated History*. 2001. p. 176

however, these publications were never as successful as her books for children. Her stories for children are written in a humorous and ingenious way, they are full of twists and turns, which children experience during those adventurous explorations. For Nesbit wrote especially fantasies, these twists and turns are often caused by magic and supernatural characters, which occur in everyday life.

Edith Nesbit died in 1924, aged sixty-six.

7. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien

7.1. Tolkien's life

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born on the 3rd January 1892 in Bloemfontein in Orange Free State. Both his parents came from England, but Tolkien's father moved to Africa to work there as a manager of state bank. However, in the age of three, Tolkien moved back to England with his mother and his younger brother. His early life can be characterized by deprivation and insecurity, which started when Tolkien's father was supposed to join the rest of the family, unfortunately, he became ill and later died. Not only the family lost its father and husband, the situation also led to their bad financial situation. In the age of twelve, his mother died as well, therefore he and his brother were sent to distant relatives, and later to their guardian's acquaintances.

Meanwhile, Tolkien entered King Edward's school in Birmingham, where he became very successful, showing interest especially in languages and literature. Due to his fascination with languages, he had a chance to attend classes concerned with philological and linguistic studies of English in Oxford university. After graduation in 1916, he finally married his only love, Edith Bratt, with whom he had fallen in love earlier before studies.

Soon after the wedding, Tolkien joined the British army in the First World War. He was sent to France, where his regiment got involved in the battle of the Somme. At the end of the year, however, Tolkien became ill, and consequently, he was sent back to England few months later.

After the war, his professional career started to be very successful. For some time, he worked on the *New British Dictionary* in Oxford together with Henry Bradley. In 1920, Tolkien received an appointment of Reader at the University of Leeds and in 1924 the university made him a professor. His academic work included participation on revitalization of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, edition of the Middle English poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* or production of groundbreaking article concerning the Middle English work *Ancrene wisse*. Tolkien was also considered to be one of the leading experts on the Old English poem

Beowulf, and his lecture, *Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics* (1936), is largely accepted study of this poem by academics. However, after 1940, Tolkien published very little academic works “yet this was not a case of laziness, or lack of inspiration [...]. Rather, his undoubted philological brilliance had been diverted into fiction.”⁴³

After he retired, Tolkien received honourably doctorates and honourably fellowships from several universities including Oxford University. His works of fiction were much admired by public, especially his three-volume novel *The Lord of the Rings*.

Once the war ended, Tolkien’s life eventually became secure and favourable. Marrying his first and final love, he began his successful academic and literary career, and he could also enjoy being a father of four children, John, Michael, Christopher and Priscilla. Tolkien died in 1973, two years after his wife Edith died.

7.2. Tolkien’s work

Studies of linguistics and literature directly influenced his works. Throughout Tolkien’s academic career, there was a persisting conviction that language and literature are categories, which are indivisible: “just as early works of literature illuminated the history of the language, so the history of language was vital part of literature.”⁴⁴ This approach appeared also in his fiction, first in the *Hobbit, or There and Back Again* later in *The Lord of the Rings*, where Tolkien created languages in which these stories would have been told. The setting of the story is a mythological world inhabited by dragons, dwarves, goblins, wizard, elves and other mythological beings. The elves are seen as the oldest and superior race, therefore, Tolkien created elvish languages. Quenya and Sindarin are the ancient elvish languages, which create complex with the mythological setting.

Tolkien was greatly influenced by above mentioned George MacDonald. MacDonald’s stories were among Tolkien’s favourite when he was a child. As

⁴³ SHIPPEY, T. A. J. R. R. *Tolkien, writer and philologist. Oxford DNB. 2007. p. 3*

⁴⁴ SHIPPEY, T. A. J. R. R. *Tolkien, writer and philologist. Oxford DNB. 2007. p. 3*

Tolkien once wrote: “*To them⁴⁵ in different ways I owe the books which most affected the background of my imaginations since childhood.*”⁴⁶ Tolkien was mainly influenced by MacDonald’s fantasy writing and its relationship with faith and imagination. They both agreed that fairy stories should not be written for children only and that the meaning of the fairy tale differs with its reader. There should not be one meaning for all. On the other hand, Tolkien did not appreciate MacDonald’s usage of allegory or moralization in his stories. Conversely, Tolkien avoided these phenomena.

Moreover, Tolkien opened up a new imaginative space. He created his own secondary world called Middle-earth based on traditional legends and folk-tales, and through his works, readers can observe its rich history, distinct rules, extraordinary inhabitants and geography. Those aspects are consistent throughout all his Middle-earth fantasies, which makes the world complex, original and thus more fascinating.

Affected by the time he lived in, his fantasy stories are greatly nostalgic and escapist. Throughout all the stories, the Shire represents old ideals and security of home. “*The world is moving on, and the bucolic world of the Hobbits is under threat – and, at the end of *The Return of the King*, the Shire is severely damaged by industrialization*”⁴⁷ According to Tolkien’s view, the good old days of the Middle-earth are long gone, and the future is unpleasant, just as unpleasant as Britain’s future after the industrialization. Even though Tolkien’s works are greatly popular among readers, some of them dislike these stories because of the lack of passion and emotions, which are so typical of real people. Instead, everything seems to be controlled by ancient legends, songs and prophecies. On the other hand, “*The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings celebrate the success of the little person*”⁴⁸, which is also a powerful motif.

Tolkien significantly contributed to the genre with his fantasy stories, especially with the novel *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* and its much-admired sequel, the three-volume novel *The Lord of The Rings*. For their originality and thrill, Tolkien influenced many later fantasists and their works. In fact, the genre “*‘heroic fantasy’ remains one of the most commercially successful literary genres and has had a*

⁴⁵ George MacDonald together with Andrew Lang

⁴⁶ MICHELSON, Paul E. *George MacDonald and J.R.R. Tolkien on Faërie and Fairy Stories*. 2004, p. 7

⁴⁷ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*, 2003. p. 32

⁴⁸ HUNT, Peter a Millicent LENZ. *Alternative worlds in fantasy fiction*. 2003. p. 34

*significant impact upon the entertainment industry, from electronic games to movies.*⁴⁹ For instance, the movies based on the Tolkien's fantasies *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* and *The Lord of the Rings*, which were directed by Peter Jackson are among the most popular movies of all time.

7.2.1. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*

The Hobbit, or There and Back Again (1937) says a story about the thrilling journey through Tolkien's secondary world called the Middle-earth and about numerous adventures of Bilbo Baggins. Bilbo, the respectable and rather unadventurous hobbit, accompanies a group of dwarves and the wizard Gandalf to help them regain their lost wealth, which was stolen from them by the gruesome dragon Smaug. In spite of being often underestimated, Bilbo proves himself indispensable member of the company.

The Hobbit, or There and Back Again was supposed to be only entertainment for Tolkien's children at first. However, the typescript was shown to the publisher by Tolkien's former pupil. Even though Tolkien wrote the story without intention of sharing it with public, once the book was published, it became very popular. Its success made the publisher push Tolkien to write a sequel. Eventually, *The Lord of the Rings* came into being and its three volumes earned even more success.

Hobbits as a race are Tolkien's own invention. These little, home-loving beings are often compared to the typical Englishman.

7.2.2. *The Lord of the Rings*

The Lord of the Rings consists of three volumes, the first *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), the second *The Two Towers* (1954) and the third *The Return of the King* (1955) It is a sequel to *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. The sequel focuses on the ring, which Bilbo found in the cavern. The ring makes its wearer invisible. From the fairy story for children about a heroic hobbit, the story gradually changes its genre and thus its readers: "*This tale grew in the telling, [...] both in length and in the age of its*

⁴⁹ SHIPPEY, T. A. J. R. R. Tolkien, writer and philologist. *Oxford DNB*. 2007. p. 4

*intended audience*⁵⁰ Therefore, *The Lord of the Rings*, where evil, darkness and numerous battles play a bigger part, finds its readers rather among adults.

When published, the stories were appraised inversely. From the point of view of several critics, the stories were not of a decent quality. Many of the reviews were very critical and unpleasant. However, to theirs and Tolkien's surprise, the stories became widely popular among readers. As a proof, there were millions of sold copies. Moreover, thanks to the extraordinary popularity of the novel, *The Hobbit* gained its well-deserved glory as well. Due to the considerable interest, both novels were translated into major European languages.

Furthermore, this sequel gives a complete picture of Tolkien's imagined world, the Middle-earth. The story consists of chronicles and maps. The reader can learn about the inhabitants of the Middle-earth, as well as their languages. The reader can simply enter the fascinating imaginative world and become a part of it.

7.3. *On Fairy Stories*

On Fairy Stories is an essay published by Tolkien in 1947, originally written for the presentation on the lecture on University of St Andrews in 1939. The essay discusses the fairy stories, its definition, origin, imagination and connection of the fairy stories with children. The last chapter studies escape, consolation and recovery. Those concepts are defined by Tolkien as qualities of fairy stories. This chapter is important for understanding to Tolkien's approach to fairy tales, which is quite different from general opinion. In this chapter, I would like to introduce his view from each chapter of his original essay.

7.3.1. Fairy story

In this chapter, Tolkien tries to define a fairy story which is, in fact, not easy. There are quite a few definitions of the fairy story, however, according to Tolkien, none

⁵⁰ SHIPPEY, T. A. J. R. R. *Tolkien, writer and philologist*. Oxford DNB. 2007. p. 3

of them can capture the true essence of the fairy story. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines the fairy tale as “(a) a tale about fairies, or generally a fairy legend; with developed senses, (b) an unreal or incredible story, and (c) a falsehood.”⁵¹ Tolkien disagrees with these definitions, though. The last two definitions are too broad, and it would take much more extensive study than he planned to do, on the other hand, the first one is too narrow. The presence of ‘fairies’⁵² in the fairy tale is not sufficient. The fairies might be a part of the fairy tale; however, the nature of the Faerie⁵³ plays the most important role. Thus, the definition might be: “a “fairy-story” is one which touches on or uses Faerie, whatever its own main purpose may be [...] Faerie itself may perhaps most nearly be translated by Magic”⁵⁴

The main aim of this chapter is the definition of the fairy tale. Based on that definition, Tolkien defines categories of supposed fairy tales, which, in fact, do not belong to the genre. Among these categories are the tales of Gulliver, which are rather traveller’s tales than the fairy tales. People usually mistaken this tales for the fairy tales because of the occurrence of Lilliputians. However, these small human beings are not at all magic, they are only characterized by their smallness, which is a possible feature in our world.

Another seeming fairy stories are those which use the mechanism of a dream. Anything is possible while we are dreaming, which explains all the marvels. After we wake up, we know it was not reality. The ‘dream tale’ does not satisfy the primal condition of the fairy story – the realization. The story is supposed to be presented to the reader as a reality otherwise it cannot be regarded as a fairy tale. As an example, Tolkien uses Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*. The story is often considered to be a fairy tale, however, it is based on shifting from a dream to reality.

Finally, Tolkien excluded the ‘beast-fable’ from the fairy tale genre. The beast fables resemble the real fairy tales in some attributes. The beasts, such as dogs, cats or monkeys talk like human beings. It satisfies the desire of people to understand other living things. However, in the beast-fables, the animals figure as the main characters and no human appears there to understand them.

⁵¹ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 2

⁵² *Small supernatural beings with magical powers*

⁵³ *The magical fairy tale realm*

⁵⁴ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 4

7.3.2. Origin

Tolkien also focuses on the origin of fairy stories and fairy elements. Fairy tales are unquestionably an ancient genre. Tolkien even alleged that the history of fairy tales is perhaps more complicated than the history of the human race. “*To ask what is the origin of stories (however qualified) is to ask what is the origin of language and of the mind.*”⁵⁵ All the stories, including fairy tales, originated simultaneously with language. Since Tolkien dedicated the most of his life to the study of philology and mythology, it is understandable that he connected the origin of fairy tales with the origin of language.

Tolkien then defines three fundamental factors that are involved in the development of fairy tales: independent invention, inheritance, and diffusion. The most important and the most mysterious is the one who invented the fairy tale, the author and his original idea. This is the initial and fundamental step. Afterward, by diffusion, the story is expanded into space and by inheritance fairy tale is expanded over time. All this allows the ancient fairy tale to become the one people read their kids before bedtime.

7.3.3. Children

In this chapter, Tolkien again refuses general opinion on fairy stories, specifically the connection of fairy stories and children. Generally, children are considered to be the most appropriate and natural fairy tale listener, but in fact, there is no valid connection between children and fairy tales. Connecting fairy tales and children is rather an affliction of our family history. In the modern world, fairy tales have been cast-off to children's rooms as well as old and battered furniture, and just like furniture or a nice picture, fairy tales are perishable here. But it is not children who make the decision. Children tend to enjoy everything that is given to them. Hence, children do not like and do not understand fairy tales more than adults. Tolkien himself admits that he was not interested in fairy tales during his childhood, he used to be much more attracted, for example, by astronomy, botany or history.

⁵⁵ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 6

Fairy tales are now often adapted to children's minds. Old stories are softened and reduced. Nowadays, fairy tales are often stupid, according to Tolkien. A good fairy tale should be written for adults and it should be read by them as well. Adults are able to insert more into the fairy tales than children, besides they can also profit from them more.

Fairy tales are supposed to awake the desire to discover another world. They offer imagination, recovery, consolidation and escape which are values that children usually need less than adults.

7.3.4. Fantasy

The next chapter of the essay *On Fairy Stories* is a treatise on human fantasy. Fantasy is essential to the fairy tale. It rises from a combination of art and imagination, or else, the ability to create mental images of things that are not present at that point in time. Moreover, fantasy also allows us to picture phenomena that are not present in our world at all.

Some people identify fantasy with dreams or even mental disorders and hallucinations. Some people find it childish. Tolkien disagrees with both opinions. From his point of view, imagination is the greatest form of art. In the form of art, fantasy materializes best in literature. As Tolkien wrote, "*In human art Fantasy is a thing best left to words, to true literature.*"⁵⁶ Fantasy is, in fact, a natural activity for people. It certainly does not harm reason at all. On the contrary, "*The keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make.*"⁵⁷

7.3.5. Recovery, Escape, Consolation

Tolkien sees recovery (meaning in his own words "*regaining of a clear view*"⁵⁸) as one of the important functions of fairy tales. Fondness in them can return us to a

⁵⁶ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 16

⁵⁷ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 18

⁵⁸ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 19

child age, or they let us not leave that age at all. The world in which we live involves many things that we see every day around us. Such things can quickly become ordinary. Tolkien perceives fairy tales as a source of recovery, because through the fairy tales, we can see the same things in a different way. For example, ordinary things like a tree, a stone, grass or fire can become magical by putting them into a fairy tale realm.

In terms of escape, fairy tales can be considered escapist literature. Even though escape in literature used to be largely criticized phenomenon, Tolkien perceives it rather positively, and he tries to defend it: "*Why should we not escape from or condemn the "grim Assyrian" absurdity of top-hats, or the Morlockian horror of factories?"*"⁵⁹ Tolkien believes that people should be able to escape from the ugliness of the modern time. He saw the modern period as what he needed to escape from. Factories and new technical inventions of modern times were perceived negatively by Tolkien. He preferred nature, and, thanks to fairy tales, he could escape from the modern times to the past or to the different world. But it is also possible to escape from worse things than the noise and smell of the modern world: from hunger, poverty, pain or sadness. Fairy tales can help to overcome these difficulties and offer satisfaction by fulfilling long craved desires. Such wishes can include, for instance, flying, talking to living creatures, etc.

Consolation of fairy tales also has an important role for Tolkien. The consolation in fairy tales provides the reader with the happy ending. According to Tolkien, every fairy tale must have such function. However, fulfilment of the consolation in the fairy story does not deny the existence of sadness or failure, it denies overall defeat. Anything could happen in the course of the fairy tale: deceptions, injustice or misfortune, but in the end of the story, the resolution and the happy end must occur there. Without consolation, it cannot be called a fairy story. Fairy tales create hope, and "*when the sudden "turn" comes we get a piercing glimpse of joy, and heart's desire*"⁶⁰ The consolation is involved in every Tolkien's fairy tale. For instance, *The Hobbit*, or *There and Back Again* ends well, with the return of Bilbo to his home land, even though the group came through many difficulties and struggles.

⁵⁹ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 21

⁶⁰ TOLKIEN, John Ronald Reuel. *On Fairy stories*. 1947. p. 23

These three Tolkien's concepts of fairy stories are also mentioned in the comparative analysis of the three fairy stories: *The Princess and the Goblin*, *The Enchanted Castle* and, of course, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*.

8. Vladimir Propp and his approach to fairy tales

Before I start with the interpretation of the fairy tales, I find it necessary to briefly define Vladimir Propp's literary theory, as it is a part of the interpretation. In his work, *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), he tries to prove that all folk tales have a similar structure. That is why he defines thirty-one general functions of dramatis personae. Despite many differences, the stories are supposed to present similar actions in chronological order. For example, "An old man gives Súčenko a horse. The horse carries Súčenko away to another kingdom"⁶¹ and "A sorcerer gives Ivan a little boat. The boat takes Ivan to another kingdom"⁶² are different stories, however, the actions and the function of the actions are the same.

Characters in fairy tales often varies in names and attributes but their actions stay the same. The stories do not have to contain all thirty-one functions, though. "The list of functions is a bit like a cupboard full of ingredients with which you can make an individual dish."⁶³ Moreover, the functions may recur in one story.

Propp also identifies the character types. There are seven of them: the hero (either the seeker or the victim hero), the helper, the donor, the villain, the princess (or a sought-for person) and her father, the dispatcher and the false hero. The functions are distributed among the characters differently. One character may have one function, or one function may be distributed among several characters. One character can be involved in several functions as well.

To conduct this study, Propp worked with many Russian folktales.

⁶¹ PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 19

⁶² PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 20

⁶³ KAAS, Yara. *Literary Theory: "Morphology of the Folktale" (1928) by Vladimir Propp*. 2014

9. Comparison of *The Princess the Goblin, The Enchanted Castle* and *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*

9.1. Fairy-tale characters

9.1.1. *The Princess and the Goblin*

In the fairy tale *The Princess and the Goblin*, there are only a few characters. The story takes place in the magical fairy-tale world, however, most of the characters are ordinary people with no magical power at all. The main characters are little children – the princess Irene and the miner’s son Curdie. They represent the good side. There are also goblins, standing on the opposite side, literally and figuratively, as they live under the ground in the darkness of their underground caverns.

The main character of the story is **Irene** – an eight-year old princess who lives in a big house with her servants and a nursemaid, whom she calls Lootie. “*Her face was fair and pretty, with eyes like two bits of night sky, each with a star dissolved in the blue.*”⁶⁴ Irene has no magical power; however, she lives in the fairy-tale world, different from ours, therefore now and then, the magic occurs around her. Despite being a princess, Irene is often not a typical noble girl she ought to be. She is kind and caring but she is not perfect. For several times, she is rather naughty. Irene got herself to problems due to her lack of responsibility. She does not obey orders nor tell the truth all the time. She is not conceited or pretentious, though. On the other hand, she behaves as a child, who she is. Being a princess mainly affects her manners, for she is aware of the fact that princesses cannot be impolite, let alone rude. Essentially, Irene has a good heart. She is relatively brave as well. She gets frightened easily, nevertheless, with the help of her great-great-grandmother and her magical objects, Irene does not feel scared, because she truly believes her grandmother is looking after her.

When meeting Curdie, the miner’s son, Irene does not behave in a haughty manner, on the contrary, she treats him as equal. She even wants to kiss Curdie when he saves her and Lootie from the goblins, which is not an appropriate behaviour for a

⁶⁴ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 9

princess. However, in the end, her father, the king, lets her kiss Curdie, for he deserves it more than anyone.

Curdie is another main character of the story. He is also a child, only he is twelve years old. Curdie is a miner's son plus he is a miner himself. "*He was a very nice-looking boy, with eyes as dark as the mines in which he worked and as sparkling as the crystals in their rocks. [...] His face was almost too pale for beauty, which came of his being so little in the open air and the sunlight – for even vegetables grown in the dark are white.*"⁶⁵ Curdie is a merry boy. When Irene first met him, he was whistling and singing about goblins to deter them from harming the princess. Unlike the princess, he was not afraid of them at all. Working in mines made him accustomed to them. He even laughs at them. Curdie likes princess from the beginning and throughout the story they become good friends. Curdie cares about Irene a lot, hence he tries to protect her. Eventually, his bravery along with his brightness allows him to spoil goblin's plan to take over the castle and kidnap the princess. Curdie is a likeable character for he has got a nature of a great hero even though he is 'just' a poor miner. A proper hero cannot lack a good heart as well. Curdie often works over time to help his family, and he cares about others more than about himself, which proves he is a proper hero after all.

According to Propp's definition of character types, Irene and Curdie are both heroes. Irene is also a helper as she rescued Curdie from the goblins.

Irene's great-great-grandmother is another important figure in the story. She is discovered by Irene one night after she is lost upstairs. Irene's great-great-grandmother, who is also called Irene, is obviously a very old woman. In spite of this, she is described as very beautiful, her skin is smooth, and her pose is upright. Her white, long hair and wise eyes are the only signs revealing her real age. The grandmother is the only person with the magical power. She uses the magic power mainly to protect the princess from any danger. However, not only is she helping princess Irene, she also guards other people of the kingdom from the goblins' mischiefs. One could say she is a guardian angel of the kingdom threatened by the evil goblins. She is the one who gave Irene the magic ring with the thread that leads her to imprisoned Curdie. She also saved Curdie's mother from goblins. Irene's grandmother could be described as a very kind

⁶⁵ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 32

yet mysterious woman. No one except Irene can see her. She speaks mysteriously and her answers to Irene's questions raise even more questions.

Irene's great-great-grandmother represents a helper, for she helps Irene, Curdie and others when they are in danger. She is a donor too, because she gave Irene a magic ring with a thread fastened to it.

Goblins are the creatures that live underneath the ground in subterranean caverns. Goblins, or as others may call them gnomes, kobolds or cobs, used to be almost the same as people above. Many years ago, the goblins lived on the ground with people, however, one day, the king "*had laid what they thought too severe taxes upon them, or had required observances of them they did not like, or had begun to treat them with more severity [...], and impose stricter laws.*"⁶⁶ Consequently, the goblins left the kingdom. They might have gone to a different kingdom, however, they decided to build their own under the ground, right underneath their former kingdom. Since then, they have never come out unless it has been a dark night outside. Living in the dark, damp and cold places greatly influenced their appearance. "*They were now not ordinarily ugly but either absolutely hideous or ludicrously grotesque both in face and form.*"⁶⁷ Moreover, life underneath affected their personalities. Goblins are described as evil creatures, excelling in slyness and mischief. They enjoy aiming this mischief towards people above them, for they still have not forgotten the grievance from the past. The goblins were especially angry with the royalty, and their contemporary descendants are not spared of their grudge as well. Furthermore, the goblins have established a special institution for devising a variety of difficulties, which can be caused to people, chiefly to the king and his family. They also have their own royal family – the king, the queen and the young prince called Harelip.

Their weak spot is the fact that they cannot sing, therefore they hate when someone sings. Moreover, their feet are very vulnerable, which makes them defenceless against stomping. Knowing these facts helps Curdie keep them away from him and eventually save all the people in the castle, including the princess Irene.

Goblins, like people, fancy having **animal companions**. Their companions are rather different from those people usually keep. These horrible creatures are as ugly and

⁶⁶ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 10

⁶⁷ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 10

grotesque as their owners. They once came through the same change as goblins. A long time without sunlight alters their bodies and minds in the same manner.

Goblins together with their pets represent the typical villains, as they often pursue and fight with heroes.

The goblins' kingdom is eventually destroyed by their own evil plan. The most of goblins die, including the royal family. Those who have survived mostly disappear from the country. However, some goblins stayed, and the environment made them "*milder in character, and indeed became very much like the Scotch brownies. Their skulls became softer as well as their hearts, and their feet grew harder [...]*."⁶⁸ These goblins get along with people, even with the miners.

Lootie, as she is called by princess Irene, is a nursemaid hired by king to take care of his daughter. Lootie is very devoted to her job, but she also really loves Irene. Unlike Irene, Lootie is aware of the situation with goblins from the beginning, therefore she is overprotective of Irene. The princess's naughtiness causes her a lot of troubles. When told about the great-great-grandmother in the upper floor, Lootie does not believe Irene a word, saying that it must have been just a dream.

King appears in the story just a few times and he is not so important for the story. We only know that he is a widower and he deeply loves his only daughter, that is why he keeps her hidden in a separate castle. He visits her only occasionally because he is very busy; "*It was his care of the people that kept him from seeing his princess so often as he would have liked.*"⁶⁹ As well as Lootie, the king does not believe Irene's story about the great-great-grandmother, thinking it is only a make-believe story.

9.1.2. *The Enchanted Castle*

Several characters are involved in the story, the main characters, however, are three children, Kathleen, James and Gerald. They are ordinary children; none of them possess a magical power. Kathleen is the youngest child, Gerald is the oldest. They are siblings; however, each of them is different. They all share the desire for adventure,

⁶⁸ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 166

⁶⁹ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 93

though. While obliged to spend the summer holiday away from home, the children are looking for an excitement. Subsequently, they fall into the make-believe about the enchanted castle with a princess in it. Little did they know that there really is some magic around them. During the story, a young girl Mabel joins the group, and, from that moment, strange things begin to happen. All the children are responsible and loyal to each other. When the problems come, they try to solve them together, keep them as secrets from adults, and eventually, they sort things out. They know adults would not believe them as they generally do not believe in magic.

Kathleen is an ordinary little girl. She likes fairy tales and fantasies, especially about princesses. Dealing with the problems created by the magical ring, Kathleen often uses her knowledge of fairy tales she has read. She believed Mabel is a Sleeping Beauty more easily than her brothers, which shows that she thinks fairy tales could be real. Kathy is sensitive, weepy, yet quite courageous. With others, she is very open-hearted but decent. **Mabel** has, in my opinion, a similar personality. Mabel is also open-hearted yet decent. She is more courageous than Kathleen, though. Mabel likes fairy tales about princesses as well. The moment Mabel appears in the story, she pretends to be a sleeping princess to play along with Gerald, Jimmy and Kathy. She is, however, not a princess, but a niece of the enchanted castle's housekeeper. She is so convincing though, that the kids eventually believe her. "*They were all quite sure that they had walked right into the middle of the fairy tale, and they were the more ready to believe it [...].*"⁷⁰ Even though it is just a game at first, Mabel unintentionally leads the children to adventures full of magic. Mabel and the children become friends immediately and together they soon find out that magic is not all fun and games as one might think.

James, or, as the other children call him, Jimmy, is rather realistic most of the story. He is sceptical and often contemptuous to his brother's or sister's ideas and fantasies. Of all the children, Jimmy is the least adventurous. He is frequently concerned more about tea and food rather than adventure. He seems to represent an adult element in the group, and indeed, Jimmy is transformed into an adult in the story for a while.

Gerald is the oldest member of the group; he is also the most courageous. That is perhaps the reason, he acts as a natural leader. He even refers to himself as "our

⁷⁰ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 29

hero”, describing children’s adventures as the narrator of a book. He plays an important role in every situation they get in, and he is the one who is able to solve any problem. At the beginning of the story, the reader can see Gerald is also quite sleek as he knows how to behave in the presence of adults just to get what he wants to.

Lord Yalding is a young gentleman, who is most of the story regarded to be a bailiff of the ‘Enchanted castle’, better known as Yalding Towers. His typical feature is scepticism towards magic. Although he encounters magic several times, he always finds a reasonable explanation. Even when his wish comes true due to the ring, he explains it as a coincidence. He is sceptical towards magic like most adults, though. The moment Lord Yalding meets the living statues, he declares himself mad, rather than admitting the reality of magic. He is impecunious and lonely at first, but eventually he is happy, marrying Mademoiselle.

Mademoiselle is a young lady who is supposed to look after the children during summer but eventually turns out to be quite an important person in the story line. Mademoiselle is a French governess, who works in Kathleen’s school. Her job during the holiday is to take care of Gerald, Jimmy and Kathleen as they cannot return home due to the occurrence of measles in their family. Although Cathy sees her as strict at the beginning, Mademoiselle is rather decent, kind and warm-hearted. She understands children’s need to play outside in the woods, therefore she is sympathetic with the children. At the end of the story, Mademoiselle turns out to be Lord Yalding’s long-time love. The moment she sees him, she immediately brightens up with happiness. In the past, they cannot be together because of wealth differences but they never forget each other. At the end, it is her who breaks the magic of the ring, thereby returns everything back to the normal and not magical. Subsequently, Mademoiselle and Lord Yalding get married.

Living statues represent another aspect of magic in the story. The white marble statues in the Yalding Towers, which consist mostly of ancient gods, goddesses and animals, come alive every night during the moonlight. All the statues in the Yalding Towers are controlled by the magic of the ring, therefore they function according to its principles. No one knows they come alive except the one who wears the ring and the statues themselves. All the children, and later Lord Yalding are once invited to their feast on the island, which is possible only because they all become statues.

Ugly-Wuglies, as the children call them, are creatures, they made from the household stuff to be their fake audience during their theatre performance for Mademoiselle and Eliza. They were neatly made by children to look alike real people. *“Their bodies were bolsters and rolled-up blankets, their spines were broom-handles, and their arm and leg bones were hockey sticks and umbrellas. Their shoulders were the wooden crosspieces that Mademoiselle used for keeping her jackets in shape; their hands were gloves stuffed out with handkerchiefs; and their faces were the paper masks painted [...], tied on to the round heads made of the ends of stuffed bolster-cases.”*⁷¹ This decent-looking, yet horrid creatures, eventually become alive after Mabel’s impetuously outspoken wish. The minute they become alive, the Ugly-Wuglies behave as well-respected gentlemen and ladies, always polite and sophisticated. The charm is supposed to break in several hours, and indeed it did, however, the eldest Ugly-Wugly, *“the respectable one”*⁷² does not disappear. While the other Ugly-Wuglies fall to pieces, the respectable one, to everyone’s surprise, changes to a real human being. His face is no longer made of paper and his limbs are not sticks anymore. Moreover, he is now a well-known businessman in London, where he runs a very successful business. Mr. U. W. Ugli’s⁷³ ‘upgrade’ is caused by his presence in the Hall of Granted Wishes, where he arrived unlike the other Ugly-Wuglies. Eventually, he disappears as the magic of the ring is broken.

According to Propp’s definition of character types, all four children are considered to be heroes as they determine the course of the story. The other characters, however, do not really fit into the definitions. There is no real villain. The ring is found by accident, so there is neither the donor. There is a helper, though, but it cannot be found in the character list; it is the magic ring, which is described later in this thesis.

9.1.3. The Hobbit, or There and Back Again

Bilbo Baggins is the main character of this fantasy story. He lives in a place called Bag End as a wealthy, well-mannered and respectable bachelor. Bilbo is the

⁷¹ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 118, 119

⁷² NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 148

⁷³ The respectable Ugly-Wugly

representative of a unique fantasy species, the hobbit. The hobbits are a kind of small people, about a half of human's height. Thick fur on their feet and curly hair are also their distinct feature. There is nothing magical about hobbits, in contrast to other beings in the Middle-earth. They are typically not adventurous, on the contrary, they usually enjoy comfort of their homes, good food and peaceful smoking from the pipe. Bilbo Baggins is a typical hobbit at first, yet he cannot deny his genes. His mother came from the Took family and “[...] *there was still something not entirely hobbitlike about them, and once in a while member of the Took-clan would go and have adventures.*”⁷⁴ Bilbo is hired by Thorin and his group of dwarves to be a burglar on their expedition to reclaim the Lonely Mountain with all its treasure. Even though Bilbo is reluctant to the adventure at first, the Took genes eventually won, and Bilbo experiences the most unexpected, yet most wonderful adventure of his life. During the expedition, Bilbo proves unprecedented inner strength, courage and intelligence as he solves many dwarves' difficulties. Despite the initial doubts, Bilbo becomes an important member of the group. As Thorin himself once said “[...] *Mr. Baggins, who has proved himself a good companion on our long road, and a hobbit full of courage and resource far exceeding his size, and if I may say so possessed of good luck far exceeding the usual allowance [...].*”⁷⁵ Bilbo eventually changes from a common person to the real hero. According to Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, Bilbo is a hero of the story, more specifically a victim-hero, because he sets off to the journey without searching for something.

After the journey, Bilbo gains not only wealth but also more confidence and wisdom. Throughout the story, Bilbo finds a magic ring, which allows him to be invisible. Together with Bilbo's intelligence and courage, the ring fundamentally helps the group to overcome all the difficulties. Even though Bilbo is glad to gain this experience, after all, he cannot wait to be home again.

Gandalf is another very important member of the group. In fact, Gandalf is the one who organizes the expedition. He also suggests Bilbo to be a member of the group, because he sees what Bilbo is capable of even before his transformation. Gandalf is a remarkable wizard, who, as the only one from the company, possesses a magical power.

⁷⁴ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 22

⁷⁵ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 340

Even though Gandalf looks as an old man having a long, white beard and a grey cloak, he proves himself to be an indispensable member of the group. As Tolkien states at the beginning of the story, “*tales and adventures sprouted up all over the place wherever he went, in the most extraordinary fashion.*”⁷⁶ Gandalf has experienced many adventures, while defending the good, which brought him a considerable respect and renown among the most of the races in the Middle-earth. He is well-known among dwarves, elves, people and other inhabitants of the land. Moreover, his experience makes him a great guide throughout the realms, as he knows them backwards and forwards. Overall, Gandalf seems to be a very knowledgeable person in many areas, including magical objects, maps or legends. He is very good at solving problems, which he proves many times during the expedition. Gandalf is an excellent wizard and the combination of his nobility, morality and wisdom makes Gandalf even better person. According to Propp, Gandalf is a helper, as he helps the group to solve difficult tasks and rescues them several times. He is also a dispatcher, because Gandalf is the one who dispatches Bilbo to the adventurous journey.

The Dwarves are another Middle-earth race. They are typically smaller than people, however, taller than hobbits. Another typical sign of dwarves is a long beard. There is nothing magical about them as well. Dwarves, however, usually abound with adventures. Dwarves form the basis of the expedition. There are thirteen of them: Fili, Kili, Dwalin, Balin, Oin, Gloin, Ori, Dori, Nori, Bifur, Bofur, Bombur, and Thorin who is their leader and future king. Throughout the story, none of them is really developed as an individual (except Thorin, who is described below). Being great warriors excelling in fighting, the dwarves are typically very fierce and tough. They are, however, loyal to each other; they would not leave their fellow dwarf in a trouble. They tend to be greedy by nature, gold and wealth are very important to them. As Tolkien once wrote: “*dwarves are not heroes but calculating folk with a great idea of the value of money; some are tricky and treacherous and pretty bad lots; some are not, but are decent enough people like Thorin and Company, if you don’t expect too much.*”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 24

⁷⁷ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 342

Thorin Oakenshield is “*an enormously important dwarf*”⁷⁸ which makes him quite proud and arrogant. Thorin is a grandson of Thrór, the former great king under the Mountain, therefore he is a rightful heir to the throne. Thorin, together with Gandalf, leads his fellow dwarves to the Lonely Mountain to get the land back with all its treasure. Thorin is a great warrior, he is very tough and fierce but also sullen. He seems to be a great leader at first, but he fails several times. Thorin is the one who doubts Bilbo the most at first. However, without Bilbo, Thorin, with the rest of the Dwarves, would not be able to reach the Mountain alive. Moreover, at the end of the expedition, Thorin’s greed and stubbornness would bring him and his friends nothing but death. Once he is overwhelmed by his greed, Thorin is willing to sacrifice the lives of his friends, including Bilbo, for gold and jewels. After the final war, being mortally wounded, Thorin eventually reconciles with Bilbo: “*There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure. If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world.*”⁷⁹

Smaug is an old but renowned, wicked and greedy dragon. In case of Propp’s definition of character types, Smaug is one of the villains that appears in the story. Such as all dragons, Smaug has a great sense of smell, which protects him from unwelcomed visitors. Moreover, being immensely strong and well armoured, Smaug seems to be almost invincible. A long time ago, Smaug was attracted by all the gold the dwarves gathered, so he assaulted the Mountain. He killed all the dwarves inside the Mountain and all the people in surrounding areas, having set all on fire. Once there was no one left, Smaug laid on the treasure and has not left it ever since. Smaug has been sleeping for a long time, however, he still constitutes the biggest obstacle for the dwarves on their journey to regain the Lonely Mountain.

Smaug is aware of his strength; “*I am armoured above and below with iron scales and hard gems. No blade can pierce me.*”⁸⁰ However, even Smaug has a weak spot; a hollow spot on his breasts. Piercing this spot seems to be the only way of killing

⁷⁸ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 34

⁷⁹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 465

⁸⁰ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 361

him. Eventually, a human from the near lake town manages to hit Smaug right into this spot and kill him.

This heroic human who killed the dragon is called **Bard**. He lives in Esgaroth, which is a lake town situated near the Lonely Mountain. People of Esgaroth were all very thrilled when the dwarves came to reclaim the Mountain, seeing all the future wealth which the return of the king would bring. Everybody but Bard seems to forget about the horrifying dragon, who has resided the Mountain up till now. Bard was very sceptical about the legends and songs everyone kept repeating; the songs and legends that celebrated the return of the King under the Mountain. He was the first to warn every one of the fast approach of furious Smaug. I would say he represents a typical hero. From his short but important occurrence in the story, it is obvious that Bard is a very decent and honourable man with a great war skill. Bard is also skilled in leadership. His abilities are confirmed during Smaug's raid. After Smaug is killed, people of the lake town turn their backs to the contemporary leader and glorify Bard instead, even though they despised him before. Bard do not want to become a mayor of Esgaroth, however, he gains so much respect that it makes people follow him anyway.

Gollum is another interesting creature inhabiting the Middle-earth. He is described by Tolkien as "*a small slimy creature. I don't know where he came from, nor who or what he was. He was Gollum—as dark as darkness, except for two big round pale eyes in his thin face.*"⁸¹ Gollum lives in darkness deep down the Misty Mountains in the middle of the lake, hiding from goblins. Being there all alone, Gollum developed a habit: talking to himself as a separate person and calling himself 'my precious'. Gollum got his name from "*a horrible swallowing noise in his throat*"⁸² that he keeps making. He is presumably one of a kind and his appearance and behaviour seems to be the consequence of his life in the darkness and loneliness. Gollum is the first owner of the ring that the reader learns about. The ring became very precious to him, it is the only thing he ever cared for, he calls it his birthday present. Gollum used the ring's power of invisibility to sneak around the goblin tunnels to catch a goblin for a meal. When he finds out Bilbo has got his ring, Gollum becomes enraged and later miserable.

⁸¹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 127

⁸² TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 128

Gollum plays only a minor role in the *Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, he will be, however, important for its sequel *The Lord of the Rings*.

His role according to Propp is a donor. Thanks to Gollum, Bilbo gets the ring, even though Gollum did not give up the ring voluntarily. Gollum can be classified as a helper too, for he showed Bilbo the way out of the cave, however, involuntarily again.

Goblins represent the evil side of the Middle-earth. Goblins could be described in several words, from terrifying, wicked and ugly to evil and cruel. They are usually average height, however, their leader, called the Great Goblin, is especially huge.

*“They make no beautiful things, but they make many clever ones.”*⁸³ Goblins are skilled in making mines or tunnels almost as well as dwarves (although not so beautifully). They are skilled in making all kinds of weapons too. Goblins are also well-known for invention of torturing and killing machines. The second type of these machines is designed to kill many people at once.

Goblins tend to hate everyone and everything. For that reason, they enjoy all kinds of torturing and killing. Imprisonment and enslavement of other races are characteristic for the goblins as well. *“Goblins don’t care who they catch, as long as it is done smart and secret, and the prisoners are not able to defend themselves.”*⁸⁴ At best, goblins then make their prisoners work for them till they die on the lack of food, air or light, if they do not kill them right away. Goblins eat all kinds of meat; they will not deny any race or animal.

As I have mentioned earlier, goblins hate everyone, but they especially hate Thorin and his people. For the first time, Thorin’s group encounters goblins during their travelling through the Misty Mountains. Finally, goblins appear in the final Battle of Five Armies, which forced people, elves and dwarves to get together to defeat themselves.

Goblins are often accompanied by the **Wargs**, who are evil wolves. They enjoy cruel and wicked things like goblins.

Goblins and Wargs are the main villains, as they keep assaulting Bilbo and the dwarves on their journey, trying to kill them.

⁸³ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 112

⁸⁴ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 122

Beorn is a great man, who can turn into a huge bear. He is so-called skin-changer. *“He lives in an oak-wood and has a great wooden house; and as a man he keeps cattle and horses which are nearly as marvellous as himself.”*⁸⁵ Beorn can talk to them and they can talk to him. As Gandalf noted, he gets easily annoyed and irritated. He would be a very dangerous enemy. Beorn helps Bilbo and the dwarves twice, once during their journey to the Lonely Mountain and then during the battle against goblins. Beorn represents a helper as well.

Necromancer is mentioned in the story only marginally. He is, however, described by Gandalf as an immensely strong sorcerer, stronger than any army. Necromancer, unlike Gandalf, represents the dark side of magic.

Elves are an ancient race whose origin goes even *“before the beginning of History, the wars of the evil goblins and the elves and the first men in the North.”*⁸⁶ First, Bilbo encounters the elves of the Last Homely House in the valley of Rivendell. Elves are naturally merry folks; thus, they like to sing and joke around. In addition, however, they are considered to be great warriors. The master of the House is **Elrond**, an ancestor of ancient elves and heroes of the North. Elrond is described as *“noble and as fair in face as an elf-lord, as strong as a warrior, as wise as a wizard, as venerable as a king of dwarves, and as kind as summer”*⁸⁷ He has great knowledge of all kinds of writings or maps, therefore he can help Gandalf and the rest of the group read the map to the secret door, as well as find the right path leading to the Lonely Mountain.

Dwarves are not on good terms with elves though. *“Even decent enough dwarves like Thorin and his friends think them foolish (which is a very foolish thing to think), or get annoyed with them”*⁸⁸ for the elves often laugh at them, mostly because of their long beards.

Two kinfolks appear in the story. Not only are there the elves of the valley of Rivendell, but on their way through Mirkwood, Bilbo and the Dwarves encounter the **wood-elves** as well. The encounter is not pleasant for Bilbo and the Dwarves at all. Wood-elves are not evil or wicked, they are rather very suspicious towards strangers; *“Though their magic was strong, even in those days they were*

⁸⁵ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 195

⁸⁶ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 94

⁸⁷ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 94

⁸⁸ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 91

wary.”⁸⁹ Tolkien describes the wood-elves as “*more dangerous and less wise*”⁹⁰ than the other elves, however, they are still well-behaved and good.

Elves are not well described in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, however, Tolkien’s other works such as *Sirringlithorn* describe them as taller, more handsome, more skilful and wiser than men. Elves are also typically connected with nature. Unlike men, elves never die, unless they are killed or sorrowful, which, however, almost never happens. They are also more resilient, which prevents them from all kinds of diseases. Elves are great craftsmen, too. They are known for making magical and marvellous things. The swords found in the trolls’ cave can be the proof. The blades of the swords are the finest elvish work. There is some magic in them as well, for the blades shine when the goblins are near.

Trolls are huge human flesh-eating creatures. They represent villains as well. They are typically foolish, rude and slow and their language is indecent. Trolls can be found near caves where they hide, for they would petrify with the arrival of dawn. Three trolls appear at the story in the beginning of the journey, causing one of many inconveniences the company comes across during the expedition. The trolls play only a minor role in the story; however, they represent another race that inhabits the Middle-earth.

Eagles are other noteworthy inhabitants of the Middle-earth. Even though their name sounds common in our world, there are several significant differences. The Middle-earth eagles are large and very intelligent, they can speak as well. Furthermore, “*they were proud and strong and noble-hearted.*”⁹¹ Eagles play a minor role in the story; however, their role is always crucial. Their arrival solves seemingly unsolvable situations. “*They did not love goblins, or fear them*”⁹², therefore eagles do not hesitate to save the group during their scuffle with goblins near the Misty Mountains. Finally, at the last minute, they save the day during the final Battle of Five Armies, when the situation is not going well for people, dwarves and elves. Eagles are also helpers, as they rescue the group twice from great danger.

⁸⁹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 271

⁹⁰ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 271

⁹¹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 175

⁹² TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 175

9.1.4. Comparison of the stories

In case of fairy tale characters, there are a lot of differences, however, several vital resemblances can be found as well. First, I would like to mention some differences. All three fairy tales are based on different work with the fairy-tale space. In the first place, the magical space, on which I focus later in this work, is conceived differently in each of these fairy stories. Different concepts of the setting naturally impact the characters acting in it. The variation is based on whether the characters come initially from the magical fairy-tale world or whether they come from the real world, where magic unexpectedly appears. To be more precise, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* is an example of the first case. The characters appearing in it live in the fairy-tale space, they were born there, and they will most likely die there as well. The magical space is the only world they know, and it is completely natural for these beings. Almost anything is possible there. Bilbo Baggins has no magical power himself, however, when he encounters someone who has, he is not surprised. Even though not every being in this space is magical, there is always something special about them, something the readers cannot find in our real world.

On the other hand, the fairy tale *The Enchanted Castle* is largely based on the real world. The children would be presumably awfully surprised if meeting either a goblin or a hobbit. An old yet powerful wizard is not one of their neighbours either. After the discovery of the ring and its power, these children are, as one would expect, shocked at first. However, in some time, they learn how to deal with the power, but still they must hide the magic in front of the rest of the world, for the adults would never believe it anyway. No magical characters occur there, the magic is essentially mediated through a magical object. As for Ugly-Wuglies, they are created by the magic of the enchanted ring. The invisibility of the children is originated in the ring as well.

The Princess and the Goblin is somewhere in between these two concepts. In this fairy-tale world, goblins lived among the ordinary people. Currently, they live in a seclusion, however, they are constant inhabitants of the world. Then, there is the mysterious grandmother, who can do stuff Irene has never seen before, and Irene is most likely not the only one who has not. Adults would not believe her, and at one point, even Irene thinks she only dreamt about the grandmother. Magic is not natural for

this world as well and there are no magical characters but the grandmother. On the one hand, there are the mysterious goblins, but, on the other hand, magic is perceived the same way as in our real world.

The main characters of each book are rather different. The main disparity is in the age of the main characters. There is one middle aged hobbit versus an eight-year-old princess and other four school-age children. George MacDonald, as well as Edith Nesbit, work with children as the main characters, whereas Tolkien works with adults. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* is also more ‘adult’, for it is gloomier and darker in some parts of the story. There are more fights and wars; many dangerous and frightening areas appear there. A lot of characters die during the course of the story. From my point of view, the dark side of the story corresponds with Tolkien’s view that I mentioned earlier – he does not consider fairy stories to be a genre exclusively for children. On the contrary, in his opinion that he describes in the essay *On Fairy Stories*, adults are more suitable readers of the fairy stories. Thus, Tolkien did not adjust the story particularly to children.

Each book has got a different amount of characters. For example, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* contains many different characters. Bilbo Baggins meets a lot of different creatures, each of them belonging to one of many different races. In contrast, *The Enchanted Castle* and *The Princess and the Goblin* contain less than a half of the characters than the *Hobbit*. Nevertheless, it is most likely due to the fact that *The Hobbit* takes place on a much larger area than the other two stories.

Despite the differences, there are also some similarities. The first, and the most visible similarity is in the function of goblins in the two fairy stories: *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* and *The Princess and the Goblin*. Both authors used these creatures as the representatives of the evil side, against which the good side somehow fights. Goblins in both works are described as hideous, which also corresponds with their personalities, as they are evil, cruel and also incredibly cunning in case of causing troubles. Moreover, both goblin representatives can be found hidden in the system of caverns, where they all live together. Goblins of each story have their own hierarchy as there are the institutions of a leader. The goblins might be one of MacDonald’s ideas, Tolkien was inspired by.

The other similarity can be found inside each main character. Neither of them is a typical hero, yet in the course of the story, each of them shows a great amount of bravery. A small, home oriented hobbit is not the typical member of a dragon-killing expedition. Young children are normally not supposed to spoil plans of evil goblins or sort out the things affected by failed magic. They all are connected also by adventurousness, which, in combination with bravery, makes the characters extraordinary, and therefore perfect for the adventure after all. And, in the end, because of all the experience, they all change for the better.

Characters of these three stories also might be the source of recovery for the reader, which is based on Tolkien's concept of fairy stories. Most of the unusual characters originate from the real world's basis. For example, *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* is full of these individuals. There are giant spiders, giant eagles. Besides, all these creatures' minds are very similar to ours. The wargs are actually evil wolfs with advanced minds and language. Even an ordinary thrust is not so ordinary after all. Beorn is a big, strong human who can change into a great bear. Furthermore, there is an old-looking man, who can do extraordinary magic. There are living statues of animals, gods and goddess in *The Enchanted Castle*. Finally, the reader is familiar with the fact that the goblins used to be almost alike people in *The Princess and the Goblin*. However, life underneath the ground changed them a lot. Moreover, Irene's grandmother gives the reader a chance that his or her great-great-grandmother might be magical as well, and if danger comes, she is going to intervenes. With a little of fantasy, all these beings can refresh our view of the real world. The reader needs to believe that it could be real.

9.2. A journey to the unknown

9.2.1. *The Princess and the Goblin*

A journey to the unknown in *The Princess and the Goblin* is connected with curiosity and great bravery. Both Irene and Curdie happen to live in the country full of evil creatures. Once in a while, they are forced to set out to a journey without knowing where it exactly goes. This fairy-tale world naturally offers many of those opportunities.

Whether voluntarily or unwillingly, the children must explore the unknown and save either each other, or the country from the evil goblins and their wicked plans. Fortunately, Irene's magical great-great-grandmother is here to help them.

Irene's way upstairs might be her first journey to the unknown. "*Then she tumbles off her chair and runs out of the door, not the same door the nurse went out of but one which opened at the foot of a curious old stair of worm-eaten oak, which looked as if never anyone had set foot upon it. She had once before been up six steps, and that was sufficient reason, in such day, for trying to find out what was at the top of it.*"⁹³ Irene does not know what to expect. She is led by her childlike curiosity. However, being at the top, the princess gets frightened. The place is full of doors with nothing behind them. Moreover, the rain starts to tap on the roof, and Irene finds herself completely lost. "*Her little heart beat as fast as her little feet ran, and a lump of tears was growing in her throat. But she was too eager and perhaps too frightened to cry for some time. At last her hope failed her.*"⁹⁴ Nevertheless, this unpleasant situation turns out to be one of the greatest things that ever happened to Irene. Irene's curiosity is stronger than her fear, therefore she continues exploring the place. She eventually finds there her magical great-great-grandmother, which turns the tide. This situation corresponds to the following Propp's category of the functions of dramatis personae: "*The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper.*"⁹⁵ Irene must surpass the frightening situation of losing herself, and keep searching. She is rewarded by finding the mysterious and magic grandmother, who becomes the magical helper⁹⁶ as well as the donor⁹⁷.

Irene once gets lost again when she thinks the goblin's beast is chasing her. This is another situation, by which Irene is tested before she gets to her grandmother again. She runs out of the house without direction, only to run away from the terrible creature. She finds herself in the middle of the night on an unknown place, alone and terrified. She cannot say which direction her home is. Luckily, she notices a big moon-shaped lamp, hanging in the air. Irene does not know what it is, however, she follows its light

⁹³ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 13

⁹⁴ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 14

⁹⁵ PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 39

⁹⁶ Helper is a person who uses his or her magical power to help the hero.

⁹⁷ Donor is a person who gives a magical object to the hero.

without hesitation. Suddenly, she is not afraid. Clearly, it is her grandmother's lamp, leading her home. "*Her heart grew strong. Speedily, yet softly, she walked down the hill, hoping to pass the watching creature unseen. Dark as it was, there was a little danger now of choosing the wrong road.*"⁹⁸ Thanks to the help of the grandmother, Irene reaches the house safely. Irene went to the unknown, however, she did so well because of her grandmother's help.

Curdie's journey through the goblin's system of caverns is another example of a journey to the unknown. Curdie once stays in the mine after the working hour. He incidentally digs through the stone to the goblin's dwelling. Thanks to this coincidence, he finds out the goblins are planning another mischief. He does not hesitate and keeps investigating the situation. This journey corresponds to the important functions described by Vladimir Propp. When Curdie finds out the goblins are planning an attack, he himself decides to leave home to investigate the situation. The function is called "*misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched.*"⁹⁹ In case of the dispatch, Curdie's parents allow him to depart from home to further investigate the situation.

Owing to his courage and curiosity, the goblin's plan is revealed. Curdie is not afraid of goblins the same way many people are. Still he must be as quiet as possible, otherwise the goblins would detect his presence and Curdie would not be able to thoroughly discover their plan. Curdie sets out to the goblin's part of the mountain, following the family he overheard. He does not know where they are going to lead him, and whether he would be able to return, but that does not stop him. Once Curdie begins to go back he realizes, "*there was not much danger of meeting any goblins, [...] but there was considerable danger of his taking in a wrong turning, for he had now no light, and had therefore to depend upon his memory and his hands.*"¹⁰⁰ Thankfully, Curdie is clever enough to find his way out. Despite the difficulty, every now and then, Curdie willingly goes back to examine their plan more thoroughly, only now he takes a string with him to make his return easier. The string is, however, not as reliable as Curdie expects. He finds himself lost one more time, now getting even to the royal family's apartment. Another function of dramatis persona appears: "*the villain causes*

⁹⁸ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 80

⁹⁹ PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 37

¹⁰⁰ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 56

harm or injury to a member of a family.”¹⁰¹ The villains represented by the goblin royal family imprison Curdie in their cave and they plan to kill him. Fortunately, Curdie is later saved by Irene.

Thus, another journey to the unknown waits for Irene. One day, she grabs the magical thread the grandmother gave her, in order to get to a safe place. However, the thread leads her the opposite direction – right inside the mountain to the goblin’s caverns. Irene does not know where the thread leads her but that does not stop her. She is not afraid, because she knows her grandmother is on the other end of the thread, and she would never lead her to any danger. With such support, Irene would go anywhere, for she believes her grandmother unconditionally. According to Propp, “*the hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search.*”¹⁰² Initially, Irene looks for a safe place, but she is led by the thread into the goblin caverns, where she finds Curdie. Thanks to this trip, Irene finds Curdie, who is imprisoned, and saves him.

A journey to the unknown is typically a good thing in this story, even though it might seem frightful at first. The hero usually goes through a certain danger. The danger strengthens his or her personality, and the hero leaves the journey braver and more confident. The journey is often accompanied with some magic, for instance, when Irene is lost after running from the beast, she is saved only by the magic. Curdie is saved from the goblin’s cavern thanks to magic as well. Without Irene’s magic thread, he would probably die here, and the whole country would be seriously endangered.

9.2.2. *The Enchanted Castle*

A journey to the unknown in *The Enchanted Castle* begins with the moment when the children discover the hidden cave on their first adventurous expedition. They immediately enter the cave with curiosity in their eyes. There is no fear, only desire to explore the mysterious place. The unknown is perceived as an instrument for the adventure. The children are very adventurous, therefore any opportunity to adventure is received positively. They are not afraid of what could wait inside, especially Gerald,

¹⁰¹ PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 30

¹⁰² PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 50

who is the bravest of the trio. When they discover the beautiful garden at the end of the cave, another adventure waits for them. Discovering the Yalding Towers is a game to them. The children see it as an enchanted castle, for they still believe in magic. In fact, believing in magic makes the journey more unknown and unpredictable, therefore more adventurous.

Another situation that might be considered as a journey to the unknown happens when Gerald leads the group of Ugly-Wuglies to the secret passage in the Yalding Towers. Not only he does not know what to do with them, but he does not know what they are capable of. He is not afraid of them, though. However, that is mainly because he wears the ring at that moment. The other kids are terrified. Gerald, together with frightened Mabel, must lead the creatures all the way through the city. The journey is quite an adventure itself. The children must be careful. Gerald, Mabel and the procession of Ugly-wuglies must pass the town unseen, for the kids would not be able to explain it. Moreover, there is no certainty that the spell will be broken in some time. Everything goes more or less according to the plan and Gerald and Mabel have another amazing story to tell.

Gerald experiences another journey to the unknown when he sets off on a way to find his brother Jimmy. According to Propp's morphology, "*the hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search.*"¹⁰³ Jimmy wishes to be rich while having the ring on his finger. The result is unexpected; Jimmy transforms to a middle-aged respectable businessman. However, he does not know his brother and sister any more. His business is situated in London, therefore he catches a train to go there. Gerald, being the oldest and the bravest, sets off to find and bring his brother back home. Is he going to be successful? No one knows. Gerald said to the girls: "*Tell Mademoiselle Jimmy and I will be back to tea. If we don't happen to be, I can't help it. I can't help anything, except perhaps Jimmy.*"¹⁰⁴ Gerald is surely brave, but he is not sure how it will end. The ring is still a great mystery. On the other hand, the ring eventually helps Gerald return back to Yalding Towers together with young Jimmy.

Another adventure comes with Kathleen's wish to be a marble statue. During the moonlight, she is invited to the island where all the statues goes every night. She knows

¹⁰³ PROPP, Vladimir, J. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 50

¹⁰⁴ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 157

something great and wonderful waits there. She wishes Mabel and the boys to be there with her. They are much surprised by the gorgeousness of the place and event. The island is quite far from the Yalding Towers, and it can be reached only by swimming. The journey back is therefore a great mystery for kids at first. However, there is a solution, as always. There is a hidden underwater passage that goes to the garden at the Yalding Towers. The passage is very dark, and there is a chance of coming across snakes. Gerald is the only one who is determined, though. The children realize, there is no certainty the passage has an exit at the end, though. “*It’s no good, you know’ said Jimmy weakly; ‘you know jolly well you can’t get out of that Temple of Flora door, even if you get to it’*”¹⁰⁵ They eventually set off, and by overcoming their fear, they witness magnificent images in the Hall of Granted Wishes. Also, the ring once again solves their problem, and thanks to a wish, they are in their beds in a second.

That gives me the idea that the ring itself represents the unknown and using the ring and discovering its rules is a sort of journey to the unknown. The ring is greatly mysterious at first. Anything can happen. Indeed, many unexpected incidents happened. However, in the course of the story, the kids discover bit by bit how it works and consequently they are able to put everything back to normal. The journey is successfully ended when the magic of the ring is broken.

In case of the Propp’s functions of *dramatis personae*, *The Enchanted Castle* is rather an unusual fairy story. The typical functions do not appear in the story. There is no real villain and the children deal with situations that are not entirely typical for a fairy tale. Usually the magical object significantly helps the hero, in this case, the magical object causes more problems than good.

Overall, all the journeys to the unknown in this story represent another way of adventures for the kids. The children (especially Gerald), in fact, seek for the journey to the unknown. Everything is better than to be bored. The unknown is usually perceived as a positive thing here. These journeys to the unknown often might seem frightful at first, however, each of these adventures ended perfectly fine. Eventually, the children get great experience and friends. In other words, every cloud has a silver lining.

¹⁰⁵ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 203

9.2.3. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*

Almost the whole fairy story *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* is, in fact, a narrative about a journey to the unknown, especially for its main character, Bilbo Baggins. This is the root of an adventure, though. The journey to the unknown could be seen both literally and figuratively. As I mentioned earlier in this work, Bilbo is rather home oriented, on-first-sight-unadventurous hobbit, who loves feasts and a comfortable chair more than anything. One of his hobbies is also reading books and studying all sorts of maps. He enjoys adventurous stories and old legends, as a result he knows quite a few facts about elves, goblins or dragons. Nonetheless, none of this tales could have prepared him for what he eventually experienced. The journey to the unknown therefore applies to events as well as to locations. Besides, the journey to the unknown could be seen as the journey of Bilbo Baggins to so far unknown aspects of his personality. Surprisingly, even a little hobbit can be a great hero.

Bilbo's journey starts unexpectedly. No one including himself would expect the hobbit to go on an adventure. Yet something inside him does not let him stay at home. It was an impulse and Bilbo often regrets that decision. He knows nothing about fighting dragons or goblins. The journey is unknown for the dwarves as well. No one except Gandalf knows the route sufficiently. On the other hand, the dwarves are far more cosmopolitan than Bilbo. They are used to fights, goblins and all kinds of adventures. Bilbo could not even imagine what awaits him on this journey.

The journey starts with the function Propp defined as *mediation, the connective incident*, it means that “*misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched.*”¹⁰⁶ Bilbo is offered to be a burglar during the journey to regain the dwarves' treasure. The presence of the dragon represents the misfortune. Bilbo decides to join the dwarves, thereby another function is fulfilled: “*the seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction.*”¹⁰⁷ Bilbo, as a hero, leaves home, therefore a function of the *departure* is fulfilled.

The journey is long and dangerous. It leads through the treacherous areas of the Middle-earth. Every member of the group is aware of the possibility of death. None of

¹⁰⁶ PROPP, Vladimir, *J. Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 36

¹⁰⁷ PROPP, Vladimir, *J. Morphology of the Folktale*. 2009. p. 38

them knows whether the journey will be successful. After all, the journey to the Lonely Mountain is surely dangerous itself and if they reach the destination, would they be able to get in? There are the mysterious map and the key to the secret entrance to the Mountain, but there is no certainty, they would be able to find the entrance. Finally, there is a huge, strong dragon at the end of their expedition, and no one really knows how to kill the beast.

The beginning of the journey is rather peaceful. The dwarves are full of courage, they have got a lot of supplies and some ponies to ride on. However, the situation changes quickly. They have to pass through the Misty Mountains, which is a dangerous and uncertain journey. One cannot know, what hides in these places. The presence of evil is undeniable. It all has an impact on their moods. The difficulty of the journey, its dangerousness and cold make the group feel gloomy and hopeless. Running through the goblin tunnels also does not lift the mood. The journey through the Misty Mountains is vastly dangerous, and without a stroke of luck (and Gandalf) the dwarves would certainly die. Bilbo, who fell down to the dark tunnels would not be able to leave the darkness without great luck as well. In fact, luck becomes quite an important companion of the group through this mysterious expedition. The Misty Mountains are also the first place where Bilbo begins to discover his own abilities. He finds out he is able to do great things. His transformation to hero begins.

In the Misty Mountains, a function defined as *the first function of the donor* is fulfilled when the hostile creature represented by Gollum loses its magic ring and then attempts to kill Bilbo, who finds it. The function *the hero's reaction* follows. Bilbo uses the ring to save himself from the creature. In the Propp's morphology, the function *provision of receipt of a magical agent* follows, however, in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, it precedes the three above mentioned functions, as Bilbo finds the ring by chance even before he meets Gollum. Also, the function defined by Propp as *spatial transference between two kingdoms* is fulfilled, as Bilbo leaves Bag End, going through the Misty Mountains and Mirkwood.

The journey through Mirkwood is very difficult for Bilbo and the dwarves as well. None of them is familiar with the forest, except Gandalf, but he leaves them right in front of the forest with only a little advice. Wandering through the forest for a while, they all start to feel hopeless. They do not know where the end is, the journey seems to

be endless. They feel miserable; they are hungry and thirsty, moreover bad-tempered. This makes them leave the path, which is clearly a mistake. On their way through the wood, a few obstacles appear, and the first obstacle is a huge one. Gigantic spiders cross their path and almost kill and eat the dwarves. The function defined as a *struggle* and a *victory* is fulfilled. The journey through the wood is a great test for Bilbo. He manages to kill some spiders and save the dwarves. After that, he feels a sudden change inside him. He is different, more confident and courageous. Finally, he finds out he is capable of great things.

Another *spatial transference between two kingdoms* appears as they reach Esgaroth and later the Lonely Mountain. Seeing the top of the Lonely Mountain at the end of their expedition does not give them courage as one might expect. Conversely, being closer to their goal makes them feel rather miserable and less courageous. The journey through this landscape is cold, sad and silent. There is neither merriment nor hope in their hearts. “*It was a weary journey, and a quiet and stealthy one. There was no laughter or song or sound of harps, and the pride and hopes which had stirred in their hearts at the singing of old songs by the lake died away to a plodding gloom. They knew that they were drawing near to the end of their journey, and that it might be a very horrible end.*”¹⁰⁸ Nobody knows what to do with the dragon. They have no plan prepared. Besides, the whole journey to this place was so challenging, no one had time to thought it through. Not knowing whether they find the way inside at all, whether they die there, or became immensely rich and powerful, they go closer and closer to the Mountain.

After the group enters the Mountain, Bilbo has the most *difficult task* (as the function is called): to prove his fortitude and approach the dragon. Bilbo comes through a great change during the journey, he also owns the magical ring, however, the huge beast still instils fear. Going through the tunnel that leads to the huge dragon, while feeling the rising temperature is the most courageous thing he ever did. “*The tremendous things that happened afterwards were as nothing compared to it. He fought the real battle in the tunnel alone, before he ever saw the vast danger that lay in wait.*”¹⁰⁹ He could easily die, and he realizes it. But he is a different hobbit now and that

¹⁰⁸ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 327

¹⁰⁹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 344

thought could not stop him. Bilbo eventually resolves the task, the function called *solution* is fulfilled.

At the end of their journey, all the villains are punished, the dragon is killed, and the goblins are defeated and pursued until killed. The function *punishment* is fulfilled. After that, only *return* home waits for Bilbo.

The whole journey to the unknown was a great challenge for Bilbo. He changes a lot throughout the journey. His journey from the hobbit that worries about leaving without a handkerchief to the one who can fight giant spiders or save his friends from danger is the journey from an ordinary hobbit to a hero. The things he encounters during the expedition gave him a great lesson. There are things more important than two lunches. It is a friendship, loyalty and a fight against evil. At first, not only the dwarves doubted his abilities, but also Bilbo would not expect himself to become a real hero. Everyone was proved wrong, though, everyone except Gandalf, who always knew. The journey changes Bilbo's perspective on life and on himself.

9.2.4. Comparison of the stories

The concept of a journey to the unknown is alike in these three stories. The main hero or heroes have different motivation to set out to the journey, however, the journey itself has many similarities. First, the journey to the unknown is usually dangerous and the main hero must pass a test or overcome an obstacle. For instance, Bilbo's journey to the Lonely Mountain is very dangerous, there are many obstacles he must overcome: the goblins, Gollum, the giant spiders, the dragon or simply his own fear and self-doubt. Irene must overcome her fear as well to get back home from her involuntary night trip. Curdie fears almost nothing, different obstacles occur on his journey, though. He must find his way back from goblin's cavern, yet the dark tunnels and the ubiquitous goblins make it really complicated. Finally, Gerald, Kathleen, Jimmy and Mabel do not come across any serious danger as the heroes in the two above mentioned stories; however, there are many obstacles they must surmount as well. For instance, when Gerald and Mabel wanted to get rid of the Ugly-wuglies by imprisoning them in a cave, they must have deceived the creatures and led them through the town unseen. Then, they had to struggle with the Ugly-wuglies, because the creatures found out it was a trap.

The fact, that all the heroes use magical objects to facilitate their journey to the unknown is another similarity. The journey is often difficult and dangerous, fortunately, each hero has a magical object at his or her disposal. This object significantly facilitates the journey, whether it is a magic ring or a magic thread. Bilbo in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* begins the journey without any magical object and he still overcomes the hostile trolls and the goblins, however, when he finds the ring, the journey becomes much safer. Moreover, thanks to the ring of invisibility, the dwarves' journey is much easier too. The children in *The Enchanted Castle* own a wishing ring. Although the ring mostly causes the problems, thanks to which they often have to set off on the journey in the first place, it also helps them several times. Owing to the ring, the children are able to get out of the closed passage. George and Jimmy can return safely home from London. Also, the one who is wearing the ring is afraid of nothing, which makes the journey easier as well. Princess Irene's journeys are eased by her grandmother's magic. Irene may use the magic ring when she is in danger. The magic thread coming from the ring leads her (and Curdie) back to safety. Besides, using these magical objects, Irene is not afraid at all.

Furthermore, at the end of the journey, there is something good. Not only that the journey ends well, but the hero or heroes usually learn a lesson or gain either an attribute, wealth or 'just' safety. For instance, Curdie and Irene manage to save the country from the evil goblin's plan. Irene gets more courageous as well. Curdie gets respect and a reward from the king. Children in *The Enchanted Castle* learn a valuable lesson, realizing the magic is not always good. Thanks to these journeys, the children mainly solve the problems that the ring caused. Moreover, they make new friends. Bilbo Baggins, on the other hand, gains unforgettable experience, immense wealth, but mainly courage and confidence. He gets to keep the magic ring as well, of course. During the journey, Bilbo often thinks about his comfortable home. However, at the end, he is glad he sets off to the journey.

9.3. A fight against evil

9.3.1. *The Princess and the Goblin*

A fight against evil in *The Princess and the Goblin* is mainly a fight against goblins. It is the central theme of the story. The goblins, as the main villains, who represent evil in this story are the creatures that excel in slyness and mischief. The goblins are typical evil characters. They are hideous, they live in the dark of the caverns and they are hostile. Not only the goblins attack individuals, but they also plan to dispose of all the people who live above them. Their plan needs to be stopped.

Curdie is the main goblin fighter in this story. He is the one, who finds out that the goblins are designing a plan to get rid of people in the kingdom. Curdie is not afraid of the goblins, which is a great advantage for him. At first, he does not fight them directly. Curdie is a bright boy, therefore he tries to find more information by secretly following the goblins inside their own system of caverns. For several days, Curdie is monitoring the goblins till he finds enough information about their wicked plan. Fortunately, he finds out even more: the goblin's weak spot. First, he arranges that the mine is protected against flood. Then he wants to save the castle as well, however, there are a few obstacles. When Curdie reveals the plan to the guards, who are supposed to defend the castle, they do not believe him and instead they imprison him. Eventually, with the help of Irene's grandmother, he saves the whole castle after it is attacked by the goblins. He is the only one, who knows their weak spots. He tells the guards what to do with the goblins and together they are able to drive them away from the castle. “*'Stamp on their feet' he cried as each man rose, and in a few minutes the hall was nearly empty, the goblins running from it as fast as they could, howling and shrieking and limping [...].*”¹¹⁰ Thanks to Curdie's expeditions to the goblin caverns and his courage, the whole country is saved. Without Curdie, no one in the castle would be spared.

Another person, who is fighting the goblin's mischief is Irene's great-great-grandmother. She does not fight the goblins directly, though. Through her magic power, she baffles their evil plans and protects people who are attacked by them, especially her granddaughter Irene. For instance, the grandmother saves Curdie from the goblin's

¹¹⁰ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 148

caverns through Irene. She uses the magic thread to lead Irene inside the mountain, where Curdie is trapped, and then safely back home. Then, while Curdie is imprisoned in the castle, injured and ill, she comes to heal him and liberate him from the cell, because she knows he is the only one who could save Irene and the servants from the goblins. Once Curdie is set free, he is ready to save the castle.

Earlier, when the goblins attacked Curdie's mother, the grandmother dazzled them with her lamp and they immediately ran away. She does not fight the goblins directly, however, she is a great helper for Curdie, who does.

9.3.2. *The Enchanted Castle*

There is no particular evil against which the children must fight. The only evil they encounter might be the ring and its wayward power. The ring could be partly considered as evil because the consequences of using it are often not good. Mostly, the magic that comes from the ring causes more difficulties than benefits. On the other hand, the ring itself is not evil at all; its problematic consequences are caused mainly by the wearer of the ring and his or her unawareness of the principles of the ring. For instance, when Mabel first puts the ring on and becomes invisible, it is only because she knows nothing about the ring and its magical power. When Mabel wishes the figures made of household stuff were real, she does not realize she wears the wishing ring. The story has a clear message; magic is not always good, even in hands of good people. That is one of the reasons, why Mademoiselle intentionally broke the magic by wishing "*that all the magic this ring has wrought may be undone, and that the ring itself may be no more and no less than a charm to bind thee and me together for evermore.*"¹¹¹

An adult who would use the ring has only one free wish, the others exacts a payment. Lord Yalding's ancestor wished to have a beautiful palace with stunning garden for his lady, however she died soon after, and that was the cost of the magic. On the other hand, the ring helps the kids several times. Therefore, in my opinion, it is neither purely evil nor good.

¹¹¹ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 239

The robbers are the only actual evil that appears in the story; however, their role is only minor. In fact, Gerald looks for a crime to solve by himself. While being invisible, Gerald manages to catch the robbers in the act, while they are stealing silver from the palace in the Yalding Towers. “*He didn’t like the look of those men. There was an air of thread about them. In their presence even invisibility seemed too thin a disguise.*”¹¹² Gerald was shadowing them to the place where they hid the booty, therefore the next day, he can tell the policeman about it. Gerald heard the thieves arranging the time when they are planning to take the loot away, and at that appointed time the policeman is supposed to catch them. Gerald does not fight the robbers literally, he fought them by the means of law.

9.3.3. The Hobbit, or There and Back Again

Evil has spread out through the Middle-earth. Travelling through this land is very dangerous. It is especially dangerous for the hobbit, who lives in a peaceful land called Bag End. Bilbo Baggins is used to a comfortable and peaceful life, he knows nothing about fighting. However, he must learn all these things, as he is leaving the home land to travel to the Lonely Mountain. Various danger and evil wait outside the Bag End. Bilbo and the dwarves usually only fight back when they are attacked, but they are attacked many times. In fact, the only evil they are planning to fight directly is the dragon Smaug, who lies on the dwarves’ treasure. Other evil creatures are rather obstacles the group needs to surpass to get to Smaug.

First evil Bilbo and the dwarves encounter appears at the very beginning of their expedition. Three trolls stay at the near cave and Bilbo accidentally gets caught by them. While trying to save him, one by one, the dwarves are caught as well. Eventually Gandalf saves them by distracting the troll’s attention. It makes them forget it is dawn already and they petrify. The trolls would otherwise kill and eat them all. The group finds some great elvish swords in the troll’s cave, one of them, the smallest one, is perfect for Bilbo. This little sword becomes very useful for Bilbo for the fighting against evil.

¹¹² NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 80

Another and more serious evil waits in the Misty Mountains. The place is full of goblins, who are evil by nature. They enjoy torturing and killing others. Unfortunately, Bilbo and the dwarves get caught by these wicked creatures, and they are taken as prisoners to their cave. Once again, thanks to Gandalf and his magic, they are saved. Gandalf even manages to kill the Great Goblin, who is a leader of the goblins from the Misty Mountains. This act infuriates the goblins even more, however, they are not able to catch the group. Fighting the goblins is relatively easy, because Gandalf and Thorin have got the great swords: Orcrist and Glamdring. These swords are very infamous among goblins as many of them were killed by the swords. That is why they are afraid of them.

Inside the Misty Mountains, one more fight must be fought. When Bilbo encounters Gollum, the sleazy creature is ready to kill him. Bilbo must fight for his life in a very unusual way. Gollum, as well as Bilbo, loves puzzles. Therefore, they both try to come up with the most difficult puzzle they know, in order to win over the other. Gollum promises Bilbo that he would show him the way out of the cave. In contrary, Gollum is planning to eat Bilbo as soon as he wins. Although Bilbo eventually wins, Gollum is so mad at him for stealing his birthday present (the ring) that he does not keep the promise and still wants to kill Bilbo. The situation created by the ring is also solved by the ring. Bilbo puts on the ring for the first time and becomes invisible. The invisibility saves his life and helps him get out of the Misty Mountains.

In Mirkwood, evil surrounds them. Deep in the forest, Bilbo and the dwarves must fight against the huge spiders, who are trying to kill them and later eat them. The spiders attack poor and weakened dwarves, Bilbo luckily escapes. This is the first time Bilbo proves he is an important member of the group. With the help of the ring of invisibility, Bilbo manages to kill several of the spiders by his sword. It is uneasy and tiring fight. Unfortunately, there are too much of them, thus Bilbo must lure the spiders away to save the dwarves. The ring of invisibility and the elvish sword greatly help him to fight the spiders. The venture is successful, and Bilbo and the dwarves can continue their way to the Lonely Mountain.

At the end, when the group arrives to the Mountain with the dragon lying inside, the courage is suddenly gone. The dwarves have not prepared any plan how to kill the dragon, but they know they must do it somehow. On the other hand, they are aware of

his immense strength and power. Fighting the dragon seems to be impossible at that moment. Smaug personates great evil. A long time ago, the dragon attacked the Lonely Mountain and the nearby city of Dale only to take all the wealth the dwarves accumulated. A big number of dwarves and people died, the rest must have left immediately their homes. The whole city was destroyed. Smaug had no mercy. The country around the Mountain is still bleak and desolated. Eventually, the dwarves do not have to deal with the dragon. Fortunately, Smaug is not invincible, as it might seem, even he has a weak spot. A brave hero, called Bard, manages to kill the dragon, once he attacks the city of Esgaroth. Therefore, he solves the problem of the dwarves.

Evil is defeated, at least for a while. Once the message about the death of Smaug is spread, everyone wants a part of the wealth. People of the devastated lake city and wood-elves are the first to come to claim their share. Thorin Oakenshield, who, after seeing all the treasure, is suffering from dragon sickness, is not willing to give them any of their gold or jewels. As a result, the war between the dwarves, people and elves is being prepared. Bilbo does not think good fighting good for wealth is a great idea, that is why he decided to solve the plight. Unfortunately, the worst is yet to come. Gandalf made the dwarves from the Iron Hills fight alongside the people and the elves against much worse evil. The goblins, together with the wolves and wargs, are heading to the Mountain. The death of the Great Goblin infuriated them, therefore they started to gather an army. The death of Smaug gave them a great opportunity to attack. Everyone immediately forgets the previous disputes and allies against their common enemy. Even Thorin and the rest of the dwarves join the battle against the goblins and wargs. The battle was called The Battle of Five Armies. The fight was terrible, many elves, people and dwarves died. Nevertheless, when the situation started to look bad, the great eagles and Beorn joined the battle and greatly helped to win. The leader of goblins was killed, and the goblins started to flee. Most of the goblins and wargs were killed, though. Sadly, Thorin was mortally wounded and died soon after the battle. Fili and Kili died as well.

The Battle of Five Armies was a great fight of good against evil. The attack of the goblins, who personate the worst evil in the Middle-earth makes the previous enemies become allies. Even those, who were not involved in the initial dispute, such as the eagles and Beorn joined the battle to defeat the goblins and wargs. The battle was

not only the battle of the dwarves, people and elves against the goblins. It was rather a battle of good against evil of the Middle-earth. Eventually the goblins were defeated, which not only meant a victory in this battle; it also meant that the power of evil in the Middle-earth was greatly weakened. However, the victory cost many lives, including Thorin's.

9.3.4. Comparison of the stories

The fight against evil is a strong motif in these stories, especially in *The Princess and the Goblin* and *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. Evil in these two stories is represented by goblins. As I mentioned earlier, the goblins in these stories are both hideous, horrible creatures, which enjoy harming and abusing of other inhabitants of the country. However, neither people in *The Princess and the Goblin*, nor Bilbo and the dwarves in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* want to fight them. However, they have to, because the goblins attack them at every opportunity. Thus, the fight against evil is not really an option. People need to fight evil otherwise they would be destroyed, as the goblins keep inventing more and more nuisances.

The means of fighting are different in each story. For instance, in *The Enchanted Castle*, no one died. There is no literal fighting at all. On the other hand, in *The Princess and the Goblin* and *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, goblins must be killed and defeated to preserve good. These stories include real fighting with weapons. However, the first story is much milder. In *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, the battle is rather rough. Not only are the goblins dying but many people, elves and dwarves died as well. Good is preserved at a high price.

The form of evil is different as well. Gerald and other children did not encounter any actual evil, except the robbers who played only a minor role in the story. The only evil, more precisely disorder, comes from the magic, and the ring that carries the magic. Curdie fights against the goblins and their wicked plans. The other evil that appears in the story comes from goblin caverns as well; the beasts that the goblins breed. The beasts are, however, harmless in comparison with their owners. No other evil occurs there, though. Conversely, Bilbo and the dwarves encounter many forms of evil through the trolls up to Smaug or the bloodthirsty goblins. In fact, evil accompanies them

through the whole journey, with some exceptions. In my opinion, the goblins represent the worst evil, because they are the most dangerous and wicked inhabitants of the Middle-earth. The world is much better without them. Smaug is equally dangerous, however, he does not embody such danger, because when he has a treasure to lie on, he does not leave it for a very long time.

Besides, all the stories provide readers with the consolation. All the fights against evil are eventually won. After many complications, at the end, the reader can be satisfied, because there is a happy ending. Curdie saves the country from the evil goblins and Irene is saved as well. Children in *The Enchanted Castle* manage to solve the crime, as well as all the problems that the ring caused. Besides, the magic of the ring is broken, so that no other person is tempted by its magic. Bilbo and the dwarves finally get to the treasure in the Lonely Mountain. This story is the most complicated one, though. The dwarves must participate in another terrible fight. Overall the ending is happy; Smaug is dead, the goblins are defeated, and Bilbo can finally return home. There is a little sadness, though. Three members of the group were killed by the goblins. However, the reader knows that they died honourably during the fight against evil.

All the characters must overcome several difficulties during the story. There always occurs a situation that seems to be insolvable. Evil might hold the upper hand for a while but thanks to characters' bravery and determination, everything eventually turns out well and good defeats evil. That is what the reader expects from a fairy story and what Tolkien perceives as essential.

9.4. Magical objects

9.4.1. *The Princes and the Goblin*

Irene receives a present from her grandmother. It is a **magical ring**. She gets the stunning ring with the fire opal to protect her. The ring is attached to a thread. After she receives the ring, both Irene's father and nursemaid claims it belonged to Irene's mother. Moreover, Irene is given a **ball of thread** that her great-great-grandmother has spun her since Irene came to the house. It is a small sparkling ball, "*about the size of a*

pigeon's egg."¹¹³ It is very fine thread hence the ball is so small. The thread is spun from special spiderweb which is brought to her by her pigeons. "*There is only one forest where the spiders live who make this particular kind – the finest and strongest of any.*"¹¹⁴ Moreover, the grandmother spins the thread only during moonlight.

With the thread being so fine, Irene cannot see the thread, she can only feel it with her fingers. One end of this thread is fastened to the ring she received, and the other end with the rest of the ball is stored in the grandmother's drawer. The grandmother gives it to Irene along with these instructions:

*"If ever you find yourself in any danger [...] you must take off your ring and put it under the pillow of your bed. Then you must lay your finger, the same that wore the ring, upon the thread, and follow the thread wherever it leads you [...] you must not doubt the thread. Of one thing you may be sure, that while you hold it, I hold it too."*¹¹⁵

Once, Irene has a chance to try the gift out. She wakes up only to find out she is in danger for she heard snarling of the goblin's horrid beast. Eventually, the thread leads her to Curdie, who is imprisoned by goblins in their caverns, and then back. Thanks to the grandmother's thread, Irene saves Curdie, who would otherwise die in there.

The magical great-great-grandmother also has got **an extraordinary lamp**. This lamp can shine through walls. It helps Irene get back home after she is lost outside in the middle of the night. Not only is the light visible for a long distance but it also brightens the path in front of Irene. At that time, no one except Irene can see it, because only Irene was allegedly born with a special gift as her grandmother once said. However, Curdie's mother was once saved by the grandmother's light too, when goblins attacked her. The light appears again at the end of the story, when all inhabitants of the castle left the place for the flood caused by goblins. Now everyone can see the lamp shining but only a few know what it really is.

Magical burning roses are another example of the great-great-grandmother's magical objects. She has got a big bouquet of roses in her chamber. Naturally, these roses are not ordinary; the roses are, in fact, fire shaped as gorgeous red roses. The grandmother uses one of the roses to clean her dress from stains, she can also heal

¹¹³ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 86

¹¹⁴ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 68

¹¹⁵ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 88 - 89

wounds with them. The grandmother may touch the roses as much as she wants to, on the other hand, Irene cannot touch them otherwise they would burn her.

All the magical objects that Irene receives from her grandmother give her courage. Either following the light or the thread, she is afraid of nothing. She absolutely believes her grandmother, for she would not lead her to any danger. Irene is sure her grandmother is watching and protecting her.

9.4.2. The Enchanted Castle

There is only one magical object in *The Enchanted castle*, it is vital, though. The whole action revolves around the mysterious **magic ring**. The ring is found by the children accidentally, while they are playing the sleeping-princess role play game. The sleeping 'princess', Mabel, takes Kathleen, George and Jimmy to the room with her jewellery. She puts on the ring while saying it is a ring of invisibility. Little does she know it is really a magic ring, in fact, it is a wishing ring. From this point, the children experience a lot of adventures, however, they need to solve many difficulties caused by the ring, because, at first, they do not know how to handle the ring.

The ring is very mysterious at the beginning. At first neither the kids nor the reader can tell what the ring can do. The principles on which the ring works are rather complicated. That is why the ring causes more difficulties than good things. Most of the story, the kids need to solve problems caused by the magical ring. However, thanks to the ring, some good deeds are made as well. Kids can make some money due to the magic performance. Having the advantage of being invisible, Gerald helps to solve a crime. Thanks to the ring Mademoiselle and Lord Yalding, who have been lovers in the past, finally meet again. On the other hand, the ring helps the children to unintentionally create Ugly-wuglies or turn Kathleen into a statue and several more nuisances.

Eventually, the children find out how the ring works, thus they are able to put everything back to normal. There are several consistent rules. The ring works in multiples of seven. First, Mabel was invisible for twenty-one hours, Gerald was then invisible for fourteen hours, and the maid Eliza for only seven hours. Moreover, the children discover that while they are wearing the ring, their relatives or friends do not

like them or even care about them. Also, the wearer of the ring fears nothing he or she would normally freak out of. As great as it might sound, wearing the ring can be upsetting, especially when the children need to hide all the magic from adults. Unfortunately, the wearer cannot take off the ring until it is the right time.

The whole castle is under the enchantment of the ring. The marble statues come alive with the moonlight and all of them gather on an island to feast. However, no one can see them moving from the pedestal except the one who wears the ring. There is also the jewellery which appears only with the presence of the ring. At the end of the story, the origin of the ring is unravelled. Mademoiselle explained the situation to Lord Yalding: the ring “*is the magic ring given to your ancestor by a lady of my house that he might build her a garden and a house like her own palace and garden in her own land. So that this place is built partly by his love and partly by that magic. She never lived to see it; that was the price of the magic.*”¹¹⁶ Apparently, the ring can fulfil only one wish to each person (it does not apply to a child), another wish demands a payment. The first and the last wish made by Mademoiselle is that all the magic is undone. From this moment the magic of the ring is broken, as well as all the charms it caused. Consequently, the considerable part of the castle along with the most of statues disappears. The same fate befell the jewellery and the remaining Ugly-wugly.

9.4.3. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*

In the fairy story *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* **the magic ring** appears as well. Bilbo finds the ring inside the Misty Mountains after he comes to himself in the dark tunnel to which he fell. While groping the area around him for there was complete darkness, Bilbo comes across a ring. He puts it thoughtlessly into his pocket not realizing that “*it was a turning point in his career.*”¹¹⁷ The ring grants its wearer invisibility. The one who wears the ring can be revealed only in full sunshine, not because the sunshine completely reveals the wearer, it only exposes his dim shadow.

His first owner we know about is a Gollum, though. For all the reader knows, Gollum possibly used to be a human being, but the life in his hiding place in the

¹¹⁶ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 238

¹¹⁷ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 122

darkness and loneliness made him wretched being worthy of regret. The fate of Gollum might imply the dark side of the ring, which can corrupt the mind after a long time of wearing it.

Finding that ring greatly helps Bilbo and the dwarves with getting to the Lonely Mountain alive. With the combination of Bilbo's courage and luck, the ring becomes a powerful helper. The ring not only grants Bilbo invisibility, it makes him more courageous as well. At first, Bilbo keeps the ring as a secret. Later, to explain his sudden disappearance, he must reveal its magic power to the dwarves. The ring keeps him safe because the Middle-earth outside the Bag End is very dangerous. Thanks to the ring, Bilbo manages to save the dwarves from the giant spiders, set them free from the elvish prison or enter the dragon's hall of treasure unseen. Eventually, the ring keeps Bilbo relatively safe during the Battle of Five Armies. Overall the ring brought many benefits to Bilbo and the dwarves.

9.4.4. Comparison of the stories

All three stories work with magic rings; however, each ring is different. There is a certain similarity in case of Irene's ring and Bilbo's ring. They both use these magic rings when they are in danger. The rings provide them with safety, even though each ring protects them in a different way. In case of Irene, the ring 'only' works as an intermediary between her and her great-great-grandmother. Once she puts the ring on her finger, her grandmother finds a way to get her out of danger. On the other hand, Bilbo's ring makes him invisible, and there is no one who would help him but himself.

Moreover, the magical objects in these two works give their heroes more courage. Wearing the ring, Bilbo does things he would not normally do. Although Irene is under normal circumstances a relatively fearful girl, with the grandmother's magical objects, she manages to overcome the frightening situations easily. In my point of view, these objects help them awake their bravery, which is inside of them from the beginning. The children from the story of *The Enchanted Castle* are not afraid of anything as well, only in this case, it is thanks to one of the attributes of the ring.

In case of *The Enchanted castle* and its magic ring, there is also one similarity with *The Hobbit or There and Back Again*. Both rings are magical, they both can make their wearer invisible – and they really do. However, here come the differences. The children's ring is not an invisibility ring in the first place, it is a wishing ring. The fact that the children wished it to be an invisibility ring is only a coincidence, or rather an accident. Bilbo's ring can only turn him invisible, however, Bilbo has got a big advantage – he can take off the ring whenever he wants to. The kids can take off the ring only after the charm is broken. Even though Bilbo is as much surprised by the power of the ring as the children, he immediately sees it as a useful thing. For the children, the ring is rather a trouble. In *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* the ring is considered to be a positive thing, which helps Bilbo and the dwarves get through danger to the target destination. In *The Enchanted castle*, the ring causes a lot of difficulties, which the children must deal with, thus the ring is seen rather negatively. The magic is not always good there.

Bilbo's ring is also less complicated. It only makes him invisible. The children's ring is rather complicated in case of its rules. The multiples of seven, the payment it demands, or the inability to take the ring off makes the magical ring troublesome.

These three stories provide the reader with recovery as well. The ordinary objects from our real world become extraordinary in the worlds of these stories, and the reader can see these ordinary things from a different point of view. Each story involves the magic ring. These magic rings can do astonishing things like making the wearer invisible or granting wishes. The moon has got a magical power as well in these stories. It enables the magic to happen. For instance, life of the statues of Yalding Towers depends on the moonlight. All the magical object Irene's grandmother owns also originally comes from the real world, however, they are obviously extraordinary in this story as well. The magical thread, the fire that looks and smells like roses, and the big lamp; all these motifs can be source of recovery for the reader.

9.5. Magic space

9.5.1. *The Princess and the Goblin*

The Princess and the Goblin is a story that takes place mostly in the king's castle and under the castle in the mines and in the goblin's subterranean caverns.

The castle, where princess Irene lives seems to be insignificant in case of magic at the first sight. However, after several pages the reader finds out that the magic is, in fact, all around this castle. The magic does not appear itself, it is present thanks to Irene's great-great-grandmother, who lives on the upper floor of the king's house. Irene is not allowed to see all the grandmother's chambers at the beginning. First time she visited her, there is nothing but a spinning-wheel and a chair. No furniture nor a carpet adorned the room. Next visit, Irene's grandmother invites Irene to her bedroom. This room is completely different from the previous one. This room is far more pleasant, full of lovely furniture. "*It was large and lofty, and dome-shaped. From the centre hung a lamp as round as a ball, shining as if with the brightest moonlight [...]. A large oval bed stood in the middle, with a coverlet of rose colour, and velvet curtains all round of a lovely pale blue. The walls were also blue – spangled all over with what looked like stars of silver.*"¹¹⁸ There is also magic fire shaped as burning roses, which fills the room with the smell of roses. However, only Irene can see her grandmother, as well as her chambers filled with lovely furniture and the smell of burning roses. For example, when Irene bring Curdie upstairs to meet her grandmother, he only sees an empty room while Irene sees everything including her grandmother. Seeing the grandmother and her chambers depends on believing.

Everything seems to be all right when Irene is with her grandmother. The place is so lovely, and Irene loves to spend time here with her grandmother, who is very nice and caring. For all the reader knows, the upstairs is a place where all the magic happens and from where Irene's grandmother look after Irene and other good people in the area.

¹¹⁸ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 69

9.5.2. *The Enchanted Castle*

Gerald, Jimmy and Kathleen discover the secret passage heading to the **Yalding Towers**, which they pretend to be an enchanted castle. It was just a game at first, however, soon they find out the castle is really enchanted.

The children have never seen such a splendid place. When coming through the passage, they can see a beautiful garden with many trees. One part of the garden is formed by a dreamy lake with swans surrounded by willows, and with a waterfall that splashes to this lake. The whole garden is adorned with marble statues. There is a beautiful marble terrace in front of the building with marble pillars that form arches. The children also discover the castle in the distance for there are white towers behind the trees. No wonder they believe it is an enchanted castle at first, since it looks like the one from a fairy tale. Entering the castle, they go through a big hall with suits of armour, skins of some beasts and old flags on the walls. The other room they visit is the 'princess' Mabel's treasury chamber. The room is filled with jewellery including the magic ring. The amount and beauty of the treasure, however, depend on the presence of this magic ring. When the ring is inside the room, the shelves are full of fabulous jewellery. On the other hand, when the ring is not near, there are only a few cheap jewels. The treasury room as well as the whole area of the Yalding Towers are affected by the magic of the ring. Lord Yalding's ancestor used the ring to build a beautiful place for his lady. However, at the end, when the magic is gone, the castle is much smaller, and most statues disappear. The beauty of the castle was given by the magic of the ring, otherwise the place is more or less ordinary.

The castle together with the garden is interwoven with several **secret passages**. Those passages are also made by enchantment. One of these passages brought children to the castle in the first place. Another one leads from the magical island, where the statues feast, to the **Great Hall**. This place is described as "*the most beautiful place in the world*"¹¹⁹ and it could not be fully described "*because it does not look the same to any two people [...]*"¹²⁰ The place is perfect for each person. There are arches all around the hall and many different things can be seen through these arches. "*Through one appeared an olive garden, and in it two lovers who held each other's hands, under*

¹¹⁹ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 205

¹²⁰ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 205

an Italian moon; [...] fourth showed a really good hotel, with the respectable Ugly-Wugly sunning himself on the front doorsteps."¹²¹ These images are not only lifeless pictures, though. These things are true. The arches show the best moments in life of certain people. At the end, it turns out, the beautiful hall is the Hall of Granted Wishes and the Ugly-Wugly became alive when he was looking for a good hotel here, thus his wish came true.

In case of the statues, I have already mentioned that they are enchanted by the magic of the ring as well. Each statue comes alive at night during the moonlight. While the moon shines, all the statues gather on a magical **island**. Among the trees on the island, there occurs a pool and around the pool, the feast takes place every night. The gods, goddesses and animals made of marble, they all gather around to celebrate that they are alive. Seven moons reflect on the surface of the water, even though there is only one on the sky. That is because everything is seven times as much as in our ordinary world. All the marble statues are seven times prettier than before in the garden. No ordinary person could get to the garden, though. The one, who wants to visit the island and feast with gods, must be a marble statue as well. Being a marble statue, the person is able to swim a long way to this island. Being a part of the enchantment, most of the statues disappear when the magic is broken. Moreover, those that left here cannot come alive and feast again.

9.5.3. The Hobbit, or There and Back Again

The first fantastic place Bilbo and the rest of the group visit is **Rivendell**, the town in the valley inhabited by friendly elves. The place is described as very pleasant. Bilbo, Gandalf and the dwarves spend several days there, particularly in the Last Homely House. Everyone recovers quickly. Their bodies are on the mend as well as their spirits. When leaving, the group is supplied with food, clothes and some advice from the chief elf, Elrond.

Misty Mountains are another fantastic place that appears in the story. The journey to the Mountains can be characterized as challenging and, for the most part, very

¹²¹ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 205

dangerous. The weather is very cold and unpleasant. The environment of the Mountains functions completely reversely than the environment of Rivendell. Leaving the elvish town, the group was happy and full of hope, however, the atmosphere of the Mountains brought nothing but gloomy thoughts and loss of hope. Evil has grown in these Mountains and Gandalf knows dangerous adventure waits for them. Indeed, he was right. The first night in the Mountains, the group witnesses the thunder-battle, which means that “*two great thunderstorms meet and clash. More terrible still are thunder and lightning in the mountains at night, when storms come up from East and West and make war.*”¹²² To make things worse, the stone-giant are throwing rocks at each other during the dreadful storm. Hiding in a cave does not help though, for the Misty Mountains are inhabited by thousands of evil goblins. The goblins live inside the Mountains in a huge cavern. The place is as filthy as the goblins themselves. Except the goblins, there is another quite important inhabitant of the Misty Mountains – Gollum. Thanks to his presence in the Misty Mountains, Bilbo finds the magic ring; the ring becomes an important helper on the journey to the Lonely Mountain.

Overall, the Misty Mountains are very risky place to pass through. On the other hand, going through this nightmare helps Bilbo’s personality to grow. This is probably the first danger Bilbo encounters during his whole life. After he finds the way out, he is more confident about his own abilities.

After getting alive from the Misty Mountains, another danger awaits them. The journey to the Lonely Mountain leads right through the dark, spacious and magical forest called **Mirkwood**, thus Bilbo and the dwarves must go through. As Beorn told them: “*your way through Mirkwood is dark, dangerous and difficult.*”¹²³ Yet, the way through the forest is still the safest way to their destination. Gandalf, who left the group in front of the forest, did not lift their mood either when he told them: “*Stick to the forest-track, keep your spirits up, hope for the best, and with a tremendous slice of luck you may come out one day and see the Long Marshes lying below you.*”¹²⁴ Apparently, this section of their expedition is the most dangerous one, which might seem preposterous since they barely escaped death in the Misty Mountain. Very important rule, the group needs to follow, seems to be not leaving the path under any

¹²² TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 103

¹²³ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 219

¹²⁴ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 227

circumstances. Moreover, they are warned about the black stream that goes right across the path. This stream is enchanted and the one who drinks its water or bath in it may suffer from “*a great drowsiness and forgetfulness.*”¹²⁵ In spite of being warned, the group gets into trouble with its enchantment. One of the dwarves, Bombur, accidentally falls into the water and the rest of the group must carry him through the wood for he immediately falls asleep and cannot not be awoken.

The wood is very dark, as its name says. Scary noises echo through the wood. Strange eyes keep looking at them. The fauna and flora are enchanted. The animals are black and not edible, therefore Bilbo and the dwarves get hungry soon. Hungry and desperate, they eventually leave the path and lose each other. Going along the path is very dangerous, but leaving the path is a regretful idea. Because of the enchantment and the darkness which is spread all over the forest, once they leave the path, they completely lose orientation in space. Due to this mistake the group gets into the skirmish with huge, killing spiders. More than fifty of these huge spiders live in the wood together, setting up widespread network of spider web prepared for their victims.

Another kin of elves lives in Mirkwood – the wood-elves. The elves are having a feast in the wood. When the dwarves try to join their feast, the whole celebration disappears in the blink of an eye. The place, where the elves are feasting, is protected by enchantment. Even powerful elves must be cautious in this place. After a few of these unsuccessful attempts, the elves capture them and take them to their residence as prisoners.

The wood elves’ residence is, in fact, a large complex of caverns. These caverns serve primarily as home for the wood-elf king. There are king’s palace, treasury and the prison, the dwarves were imprisoned in. The cavern is well-protected by a massive stone gate, which is enchanted as well. The cave tunnels are different from the goblin’s tunnels. These tunnels are better made as one would expect from skilful elves.

The surrounding of the Lonely Mountain is completely deserted. The land used to be green and fruitful, however, with the arrival of the dragon, the ground is now desolate and inhospitable. The landscape is as desolate as spirits of the dwarves after they see their homeland. “*There was little grass, and before long there was neither bush*

¹²⁵ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 219

nor tree, and only broken and blackened stumps to speak of ones long vanished. They were come to the Desolation of the Dragon."¹²⁶ **Desolation of Smaug** is a prototype of abandoned landscape. The surrounding is cold and silent, so are the dwarves when they are going through the land. Neither people, nor animals live there, only dark, ominously looking ravens were flying above their heads.

The Lonely Mountain is flung out in the desolate landscape, surrounded by the ruins of the city of Dale. Dark smoke and steam come from the Mountain, reminding the group of the dragon lying inside. To enter the Mountain, Bilbo and the dwarves need to find a secret old entrance. Dwarves are careful about their treasure, therefore they are skilful in creating secret passages and entrances. This door was once enchanted to appear only in the last moonlight before winter.

The Mountain is steep and dangerous. Its cold rocks make the searching harder. However, Bilbo and the dwarves manage to find the secret entrance and open it. Bilbo enters the tunnel. *"It was far easier going than he expected. This was no goblin entrance, or rough wood-elves' cave. It was a passage made by dwarves, at the height of their wealth and skill: straight as a ruler, smooth-floored and smooth-sided, going with a gentle never-varying slope direct—to some distant end in the blackness below."*¹²⁷ The tunnel leads directly to the base of the Mountain, where the dragon sleeps on the countless amount of treasure. The frightfulness of the dragon dominates the space. His fiery breath fills the air inside the Mountain. His presence is undeniable. First, however, Bilbo could not stop staring at the treasure. All the gold and gems seem to have its own magical power. Fascination and desire for the treasure have seduced many yet; the dwarves, the dragon, wood-elves were enchanted by the splendid treasure and Bilbo was no exception. Thorin Oakenshield was enchanted the most, though. In Thorin's case, it was rather illness that darkened his mind.

Overall, the whole journey leads through the magical space of the Middle-earth. This fantastic secondary world full of enchantment as well as danger is, however, wonderful space for adventures. The threat of death that is present on every step of his way forces Bilbo to become different person, more courageous and confident one. The individual places show that evil pervades the Middle-earth. The appearance of these

¹²⁶ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 327

¹²⁷ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit. or There and Back Again* [online]. 2009. p. 342

places indicates their dangerousness. The dangerous places rich in evil and dark magic are usually cold, dark and hideous. Unfortunately for the dwarves and the hobbit, between Bag End and the Lonely Mountain lies the Misty Mountains and Mirkwood, which are places that abound with evil and danger. The Lonely Mountain itself includes the worst danger of all – the dragon. Not only the places affect their spirits negatively, their ambushes almost kill them several times.

9.5.4. Comparison of the stories

Overall, these three books are rather diverse in terms of the magical space. The magical space in *The Princess and the Goblin* and *The Enchanted castle* is represented in both cases by a castle. However, the magic comes from different sources and is focused on different aims. The first magical space comes along with the presence of magic grandmother, who uses the castle as a residence, because she wants to be close to her granddaughter to protect her. The place is not magical itself. The second place – ‘the enchanted castle’ is magical itself in a certain way. The ring that provides the place with the magic is the only condition. With its existence, the magic is present. The wishing ring was once used to make the castle more beautiful, adorning the garden of the castle with many statues, as well as enlarging and beautify the whole place. The magic of the castle disappears, when the magic of the ring is broken at the end of the book.

These two stories also resemble in case of visibility of the magic places. Seeing Irene’s beautiful great-great-grandmother and her lovely chambers depends on believing in her. Curdie cannot see her, even though he is standing right in front of her. Children in the Yalding Towers can see the beautiful castle as well as the results of their wishes, however, they cannot see the living statues, unless they are wearing the ring or become statues themselves. Clearly, the children could not attend the feast on their magical island without seeing them.

Moreover, there is also something magical about the moon in these books. The moon seems to be a part of the magic of these places and its light allows the magic to happen. Irene’s grandmother can spin the magical thread only during the moonlight. Also, the lamp Irene’s grandmother lights to navigate her pigeons, as well as lost people looks just like the real moon. The Yalding Towers are affected by the magic of the

moonlight as well. During the moonlight, the marble statues come alive. In case of *The Hobbit*, magic of the moon is not mentioned.

The Hobbit, or There and Back Again differs from these two books a lot. The magical space in Tolkien's fairy story is not a castle, as in the two previous books. The reader is taken inside the dangerous mountains at first. The magical forest through which the group walks is even worse. It is clear that the magic space in *The Hobbit* is seen rather negatively. The Misty Mountains are full of magic and fantastic elements, however, these elements function as obstacles on their way to the Lonely Mountain. The same scenario can be seen in case of Mirkwood. The forest abounds with magic, but this magic is often dark and evil. It only forms other obstacles on their journey. Going through all these places almost kills Bilbo and the dwarves.

In *The Enchanted Castle*, the magic is sometimes good, but it mostly causes problems. The story *The Princess and the Goblin* depicts the magical space as a positive one. The magic is very helpful there. One more thing occurs there that all the stories' magical spaces have in common: the connection between the looks of these places and their atmosphere or mood. The beauty of these two above mentioned places is highlighted several times here. In *The Princess and the Goblin*, the grandmother's chamber is described by Irene as "the loveliest room she had ever seen in her life!"¹²⁸ The Yalding Towers in *The Enchanted Castle* is described as "a scene so like a picture out of a book about Italy that everyone's breath was taken away, and they simply walked forward silent and staring."¹²⁹ On the other hand, Tolkien in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* describes Mirkwood as dark with nasty cobwebs and strange noises around them. All these factors suggest that the place is full of evil magic.

Not only the looks of the place affect its mood, it also affects mood of the characters in it. Princess Irene feels safe and more courageous while the magic is present. On the other hand, Bilbo and the dwarves gradually lose courage and hope as they pass the areas full of evil.

In case of Tolkien's concept of fairy tales and magic space, the three stories offer the reader an escape from the difficulties of the real world. All three fairy stories take place in the fairy tale worlds. Although the world in *The Enchanted Castle* seems

¹²⁸ MACDONALD, George. *The Princess and the Goblin*. 2013. p. 69

¹²⁹ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 18

to be completely ordinary at first, the magic appears after all. The magic does not appear everywhere though; there is an exceptional location called the Yalding Tower, which abounds with magic and extraordinariness. The children often escape there, for this place is much more beautiful and interesting than the monotonous town. Besides, the children never get bored in this place, more and more secret passages or halls are here to be discovered. The one who wants to escape must believe in magic, and this applies to all three stories. As Jimmy once pointed out “*I think magic went out when people began to have steam engines [...] and newspapers, and telephones and wireless telegraphing.*”¹³⁰ According to Nesbit, magic disappeared with the arrival of modern technologies, which is quite similar opinion as the Tolkien’s one.

The world in *The Princess and the Goblin* provides the reader with a possibility to escape as well. Princess Irene lives in the world quite different from ours. This world is almost like the one we live in, only a few centuries back in time, and without all the ugliness of the industrial world. The magic appears there, as well as the odd creatures called goblins, therefore the place is full of opportunities for adventure.

In contrary, the world in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* is completely different from our primary world. Tolkien invented the whole new secondary world. The reader who escapes there has lots of opportunities. He or she can stay in a hobbit hole for dinner or visit Rivendell to sing along with elves. The Misty Mountains and Mirkwood offer a good deal of opportunities for adventure. Moreover, this world is based on different values. Traditions and legends are of great importance here, and the magic is ubiquitous. The technology and industrial production are connected only with the evil goblins. Other nations, the good ones, live rather in connection with nature, or according to old traditions. The Middle-earth seems to be a perfect place to escape from the hasty time of our world full of technologies and industry, where old traditions and morality are gradually disappearing. The reader, who is ready to believe the reality of the world and its magic, may find a great place to escape.

¹³⁰ NESBIT, E. *The Enchanted Castle*. 1998. p. 20

10. Conclusion

This diploma thesis entitled *Fantasy and Fairy Tale in J.R.R. Tolkien's Hobbit, Edith Nesbit's Enchanted Castle and George MacDonald's Tale The Princess and the Goblin* focuses on the fantasy and fairy-tale stories written by George MacDonald, Edith Nesbit and John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. The first two authors significantly influenced the work of J. R. R. Tolkien, who is still one of the best authors of fantasy fiction. For this reason, in the second and the main part of the thesis, I focus on the comparison of their well-known stories: *The Princess and the Goblin*, *The Enchanted Castle* and *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. The comparative analysis deals especially with specific fantasy elements: the fairy-tale characters, the fight against evil, the journey to the unknown, magical objects and the magic space. Each of these categories contains a detailed analysis of each story emphasizing the particular elements. Each description is followed by the comparative analysis of all three stories. The analysis proves the stories differ in many ways, however, as they are all fantasy fairy tales, there are several similar features. The essences of the stories are similar. Above all, the stories fulfil the conditions for a fairy story set by Tolkien. These conditions are recovery, consolation and escape. In case of Propp's functions of dramatis personae, the fairy stories are rather different, especially in case of *The Enchanted Castle*, which is rather a unique fairy story.

Tolkien's inspiration by *The Princess and the Goblin* and *The Enchanted castle* is recognisable in some respects, especially in case of the magic ring. Rings appear in all three works as the mediators of magic, they enable the wearer to do incredible things. Especially in the story *The Enchanted Castle* and *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, the rings play important roles in the story line. The goblins in *The Princess and the Goblin* are the chief representatives of evil, the same concept of evil is used in Tolkien's work. Therefore, the fight against evil in these stories is directed mainly against these evil creatures.

For better understanding of the topic, the thesis includes also chapters dealing with the fantasy and fairy-tale genre. The fantasy genre was often criticised and perceived as a lower form of literature, that is why I implied a subchapter concerning the criticism of fantasy. Another chapter deals in detail with the history and

development of children's literature, including the contribution of these three above mentioned authors to the genre. The life and work of these fantasy authors constitutes an important part of the thesis as well.

Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá tématem pohádky a fantasy literatury, a to v konkrétních dílech George MacDonalda, Edith Nesbitové a J. R. R. Tolkiena.

První kapitola této práce se zabývá fantasy literaturou. Je zde obsaženo několik různých definic a pohledů na fantasy literaturu, zároveň, jelikož šlo v minulosti o často kritizovaný literární žánr, uvádím i důvody, proč byla tato literatura kritizována.

V následující kapitole je krátce popsána i pohádka jakožto literární žánr. Tato kapitola pokrývá pouze základní a všeobecné informace, jelikož se tímto žánrem zabývám i později v rámci J. R. R. Tolkiena.

Další kapitola poskytuje poměrně obsáhlou studii historie dětské literatury, s důrazem na fantasy literaturu a její rozvoj od počátku dětského čtení, přes devatenácté a dvacáté století, až po Tolkiena.

Následující tři kapitoly se chronologicky zabývají životem a tvorbou tří výše zmíněných autorů. Nejprve se zde zabývám Georgem MacDonaldem, autorem znamenitých pohádek, ale i fantasy příběhů pro dospělé, který významným způsobem ovlivnil tvorbu J. R. R. Tolkiena. Následuje život a dílo Edith Nesbitové, která psala mimo jiné pohádky pro děti plné čar a kouzel. Její dílo *The Enchanted Castle* je pozoruhodným příběhem dětí, které objevily i stinné stránky magické síly kouzelného prstenu. Edith Nesbit patří opět k autorům, kteří svou tvorbou ovlivnili Tolkiena. Další kapitola se zabývá samotným Tolkienem, jeho životem a tvorbou, přičemž zmiňuje i jeho významnou esej *On Fairy Stories*. V této originální eseji Tolkien rozebírá podstatu i význam pohádkových příběhů, zároveň se jí snaží definovat. Zajímavým způsobem nahlíží i na předpokládané čtenáře pohádek, jimiž jsou obecně děti. Tolkien však tvrdí, a MacDonald by s ním souhlasil, že pohádky v dětských rukou jsou neštěstím. V ideálním případě by pohádky měly být čteny především dospělými, kteří si z jejich obsahu mohou odnést mnohem více než právě děti. Pohádky totiž čtenáři nabízejí obnovu, útěchu a únik, což jsou funkce, které děti většinou nepotřebují. Přítomnost těchto tří funkcí pohádky je sledována i v následující kapitole.

Cílem této práce je především komparativní analýza konkrétních fantastických děl výše zmíněných autorů, a to *The Princess and the Goblin* od George MacDonalda,

The Enchanted Castle od Edith Nesbit, a nakonec i *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* spisovatele J. R. R. Tolkiena. Jednotlivé podkapitoly se zabývají fantastickými prvky jako jsou pohádkové postavy, cesta do neznáma, boj proti zlu, magické předměty a magický prostor. Nejprve jsou jednotlivá díla interpretována z pohledu daného prvku. Nakonec jsou tyto prvky v jednotlivých dílech komparovány. Pro interpretaci a komparaci byla z části využita i odborná literatura, konkrétně *Morfologie pohádky a jiné studie* od Vladimira Proppa, kde autor mimo jiné zmiňuje typy charakterů a funkce jednajících osob, které se v pohádkách zpravidla objevují. Jednotlivé pohádky byly zhodnoceny i z pohledu Tolkienových funkcí pohádky. Zaměřila jsem se tedy na jednotlivá díla i z pohledu obnovy, útěchy a úniku.

Každé z těchto třech děl je velmi originální, a proto je mezi nimi možno nalézt mnoho rozdílností, ať už co se týče pohádkových postav, magického prostoru či ostatních fantasy elementů. Všechna tato díla jsou však fantasy pohádky, takže několik základních prvků je zde shodných. Z pohledu Tolkienových funkcí jsou pohádky velmi dobře zpracovány, jelikož každá z nich obsahuje obnovu, která se projevuje například v neobyčejnosti kouzelných předmětů. Nechybí ani funkce útěchy, čímž je, i přes mnohé těžkosti hrdinů, zajištěn šťastný konec, na který každý čtenář čeká. Díky tomu, že se příběhy odehrávají ve světech plných magie a neobyčejných bytostí, příběhy splňují i třetí Tolkienovu funkci nazvanou únik, a nabízí tak čtenáři prostor pro útek z tíže všedního života.

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