Intertextual Patterns in J.R.R.Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*

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Abstract
The thesis that every text is a 'mosaic of quotations' from other texts becomes particularly obvious when examining literary fantasy, which refers to the implied readers' previous reading rather than to real life. An analysis of Tolkien's work shows that differences of style and narrative technique can be described as due to the choice of different pre-texts. In *The Hobbit*, fairy-tale and epic discourses are juxtaposed with everyday speech pattern through irony and parody. In *The Lord of the Rings*, elements of the nineteenth-century novel like circumstantial realism and pathetic fallacy are supplemented by archaic rhetorical patterns. The concept of intertextuality also enables us to examine the relationship between text and reader.

The aim of my paper is to validate the concepts of discourse and intertextuality as tools of cultural and literary analysis. As Julia Kristeva noted, every text is a 'mosaic of quotations' (Kristeva 66) from other texts, and as Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault contended, themes and attitudes are bound up with linguistic and stylistic conventions to make up 'discourses', i.e. conventional ways of speaking which inform a given text (cf. Belsey 5f.). Unlike these theoreticians (who coined the terms 'intertextuality' and 'discourse' in the context of the ideological battles of the 1960s), however, I should like to argue that there may be various and conflicting 'discourses' (in the sense of sets of cultural, linguistic and literary practices) at work at the same time and in the same cultural environment, allowing educated speakers and writers to make conscious decisions as to which of them to use, combine and recombine to create 'new' texts. Compared to more traditional terms and approaches, the concepts in question have the advantage of providing a composite view of aspects of texts usually examined separately: *signifiants* and *signifiés*, linguistic and thematic aspects, argumentative structure as well as stylistic and rhetorical analyis. Looking for pre-texts and locating a text within a set of discourses allow us to examine thematic issues on the level of words and phrases. The process of 'quoting' pre-texts can, of course, be both conscious and unconscious, and it certainly depends on education, communicative experience and perhaps even academic

training to which degree producers and recipients of texts are aware of the pre-texts involved.

To study the processes of creating texts out of quotations, I propose to focus on texts whose pre-texts are particularly obvious. Literary fantasies certainly belong to this category. Fantastic fiction regularly draws upon other fantastic narratives, and appeals to the implied readers' previous reading experiences rather than real-life experiences. Michael Riffaterre's contention that literary texts are not referential and that 'the text refers not to objects outside of itself, but to an inter-text' (quoted from Allen 115) seems to be particularly applicable to fantasy fiction. Reading about dragons reminds the reader of other dragon stories heard or read, maybe of dragon pictures, but not of real-life experiences with dragons or even dragon-like creatures.

If fantasy stories are intertextual rather than referential, we may wonder if this means that they bear no connection to 'real life'. If so, their cultural function would just be that of a game which allows readers to escape from the real world while reading and dreaming about the texts read. In contrast to this widespread assumption I should like to suggest that fantastic stories are not further removed from the lives of the readers than 'realistic' ones.

As convenient examples, I propose to analyse and compare J.R.R. Tolkien's two bestselling fantasies, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings,* as to the pre-texts 'quoted'. My aim is twofold: first of all, I wish to suggest that differences of style and narrative technique can be described as due to the choice of different pre-texts, i.e., that intertextuality can serve as an analytical tool to describe the particularities of a given text. Secondly, I would like to show that intertextual analysis can be conducive to interpretation in the sense of establishing the meaning or message a text may contain for its readers.

Many readers, including most of those who belong to the huge Tolkien fan community, look at *The Lord of the Rings* as a narrative sequel to *The Hobbit*. *The Hobbit* tells a story of the hobbit Bilbo, who accompanies a group of dwarfs to recover treasure from a dragon hoard and in the course of this adventure comes by a ring which has the property of rendering him invisible. In *The Lord of the Rings*, this ring is found to have additional powers, including that of rendering its bearer all-powerful. Frodo, Bilbo's nephew and heir, is given the task to take

this ring to a fire inside a mountain, to destroy it and thereby remove the danger inherent in such a powerful instrument.

Unlike the Tolkien fans mentioned I should like to argue that the narrative modes used in the two works are distinctly different from one another. In *The Hobbit*, the narration focuses on the plot in a straightforward way: the story, as indicated by the subtitle "There and Back Again" is about a journey, or quest. The dragon slain, the treasure restored to its original owners, the party returns to its place of departure. The intertextual quality of the quest structure is immediately obvious. From Homer's *Odyssey* onwards, countless epics and romances have featured heroes who go on a difficult journey to achieve a certain goal, be it treasure, home, some magical or religious object or a reunion with friends.

The very first paragraph of the book, however, may remind us of a rather different set of pre-texts:

> In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.
>   It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. (29)

If we read *rabbit* rather than 'hobbit', the first sentence would be perfectly conventional. Holes in the ground certainly collocate with rabbits, and the phrase 'there lived' might make us expect a conventional tale, in this case an animal story. While this narrative convention is echoed or 'quoted', the narrator departs from it by exchanging the first two letters of *rabbit* (on the origin of the word 'hobbit' cf. Anderson, 9; for an ingenious account of the connection of *rabbit* and *hobbit*, see Shippey 1982: 53f.). This departure has a certain parodic quality: it renders us conscious of the conventional phrasing and thus implies a metalingual (or self-referential) comment.

The following lines may put us in mind of a specific pre-text: Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* begins with an animal in the process of spring-cleaning just such a comfortable dwelling underground: like Tolkien's hobbit, Grahame's Mole lives in a tidy bachelor's flat which is furnished according to old-fashioned English middle-class standards, simply but sufficiently. While Mole, however, ultimately remains an animal, we gather from the next paragraphs of *The*

Hobbit that hobbits have obviously more in common with humans than animals: the hobbit in question has a name, Bilbo Baggins, he is 'well-to-do' and 'respectable' (29f.), i.e. characterized by phrases which are common in everyday middle-class oral discourse.

Another set of pre-texts is furnished by Gandalf the wizard, whom Bilbo knows as 'the fellow who used to tell such wonderful tales at parties, about dragons and goblins and giants and the rescue of princesses and the unexpected luck of widow's sons' (33-35). Gandalf's appearance corresponds to the traditional shape of wizards in book illustrations: 'He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a silver scarf over which his long white beard hung down below his waist, and immense black boots' (32). While he used to tell fairy tales to the hobbits before he now introduces Bilbo to the fairy tale world itself: it is through his agency that a party of fairy-tale dwarves gathers at Bilbo's place:

> 'I am sorry to keep you waiting!' he was going to say, when he saw that it was not Gandalf at all. It was a dwarf with a blue beard tucked into a golden belt, and very bright eyes under his dark-green hood. As soon as the door was opened, he pushed inside, just as if he had been expected.
>
> He hung his hooded cloak on the nearest peg, and 'Dwalin at your service!' he said with a low bow.
>
> 'Bilbo Baggins at yours!' said the hobbit, too surprised to ask any questions for the moment. (36f.)

Fairy-tale motifs (blue beard, green hood, golden belt) are set next to everyday discourse: 'he hung his hooded cloak at the nearest peg' as to an old-fashioned formula of politeness: 'Dwalin at your service'. This juxtaposition again creates a metalingual and metafictional awareness of language and motifs. Fairy-tale discourse is being parodied, as is old-fashioned politeness: as the reader will soon realize, Dwalin and his dwarf friends have no intention whatsoever of 'serving' Bilbo; they rather require his services.

When Gandalf and the dwarves discuss the various options for recovering the treasure, we encounter the same kind of parodic self-referentiality:

> '[. . .] But we none of us liked the idea of the Front Gate. The river runs right out of it through the great cliff at the South of the Mountain, and out of it comes the dragon too—far too often, unless he has changed his habits.'
>
> 'That would be no good,' said the wizard, 'not without a mighty Warrior, even a Hero. I tried to find one; but warriors are busy fighting one another in distant lands,

and in this neighbourhood heroes are scarce, or simply not to be found. Swords in these parts are mostly blunt, and axes are used for trees, and shields as cradles and dish-covers; and dragons are comfortably far-off (and therefore legendary). That is why I settled on *burglary* - especially when I remembered the existence of a Side-door. And here is our little Bilbo Baggins, *the* burglar, the chosen and selected burglar. So now let's get on and make some plans.' (53f.)

Warriors and heroes are added to the inventory of motifs from fairy-tales and legends. Gandalf's regrets at not being able to get hold of a warrior or hero implies an auctorial comment on a certain narrative tradition considered obsolete or inappropriate. When Bilbo turns out a hero in the end, his heroism will be manifested quite unexpectedly—as with many heroes in literary tradition, e.g. Perceval.

The technique of juxtaposing discourses or pre-text can perhaps best be illustrated by the letter left by Thorin on Bilbo's table:

'Thorin and Company to Burglar Bilbo greeting! For your hospitality our sincerest thanks, and for your offer of professional assistance our grateful acceptance. Terms: cash on delivery, up to and not exceeding one fourteenth of total profits (if any); all travelling expenses guaranteed in any event; funeral expenses to be defrayed by us or our representatives, if occasion arises and the matter is not otherwise arranged for.

 'Thinking it unnecessary to disturb your esteemed repose, we have proceeded in advance to make requisite preparations, and shall await your respected person at the Green Dragon Inn, Bywater, at 11 a.m. sharp. Trusting that you will be *punctual,*

 '*We have the honour to remain*

<div align="center">

'*Yours deeply*
'*Thorin & Co.*' (61)

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This letter combines formulas from antiquity and the Middle Ages ('Thorin [. . .] to Burglar Bilbo greeting!') with phrases used in twentieth-century business contracts ('cash on delivery', 'total profits (if any)' etc.). The greeting formula 'yours deeply' obviously replaces 'yours faithfully' as depth is one of the main preoccupations of the miner dwarfs.

As in the present example most of the 'quotations' from pre-texts transform them by juxtapositions apparently incongruous, with parody as a result (on the 'clash of styles' in *The Hobbit*, cf. Shippey 1982: 39-45). The narrator is playing around with elements of previous texts, and shares his fun with the reader. One of the characteristics of this use of pre-texts is that the reader is put in a position to recognize them and to analyse the process of recombination. Sometimes, however, the reader is

led onto the wrong track, as when Bilbo encounters the dragon. His endeavour to enter the dragon's lair and pass by the sleeping monster unnoticed is unsuccesful: 'He had forgotten or he had never heard about dragons' sense of smell' (278). The reader has probably not heard of it either: While the shape and character of the dragon obviously go back to a variety of sources or pre-texts, including the saints' legends of St. George and Michael the Archangel, *Beowulf* and medieval romance (cf. Evans), smelling does not belong to the inventory of motifs traditionally associated with dragons. Obviously, the motif rather derives from the fairy-tale of "Jack the Giant-Killer" where the giant cries out: 'Fee, fi, fo, fum!/ I smell the blood of an Englishman!' (Jacobs 49-60; 58). Other narrative traditions are broached when the dragon talks to Bilbo in a polite and witty way:

> 'Well, thief! I smell you and I feel your air. I hear your breath. Come along! Help yourself again, there is plenty and to spare!'
> But Bilbo was not quite so unlearned in dragon-lore as all that, and if Smaug hoped to get him to come nearer so easily he was disappointed. 'No thank you, O Smaug the Tremendous!' he replied. 'I did not come for presents. I only wished to have a look at you and see if you were truly as great as tales say. I did not believe them.' [. . .]
> 'You have nice manners for a thief and a liar,' said the dragon. 'You seem familiar with my name, but I don't seem to remember smelling you before. Who are you and where do you come from, may I ask?'
> '[. . .] I am the friend of bears and the guest of eagles. I am Ringwinner and Luckwearer; and I am Barrel-rider,' went on Bilbo beginning to be pleased with his riddling.
> 'That's better!' said Smaug. 'But don't let your imagination run away with you!'
> This of course is the way to talk to dragons, if you don't want to reveal your proper name (which is wise), and don't want to infuriate them by a flat refusal (which is also very wise). No dragon can resist the fascination of riddling talk and of wasting time trying to understand it. (278f.)

The motif of the hero concealing his name comes from Odysseus's adventure with the Cyclops (there are also some resemblances with the poem "Fáfnismál" in the elder Edda, see Shippey 1982: 63, 69-71)—as does the motif of 'barrel-riding' as a means of escape: in Odysseus' case it was the cyclops' sheep to whom the hero bound his companions to get out of the monster's cave, while Bilbo hid his dwarf friends in empty barrels to enable them to escape from the wood-elves. The series of riddling antonomasies or periphrases ('ringwinner', 'luckwearer', 'barrel-rider') makes jocular use of a figure of speech common to ancient

epical language (cf. e. g. Lausberg 71f.). The dragon's words, however, obviously parody polite language—again, various discourses are juxtaposed. According to Tom Shippey, the dragon speaks 'with the characteristic aggressive politeness of the British upper class, in which irritation and authority are in direct proportion to apparent deference or uncertainty' (1982: 70, cf. also Shippey 2001: 37-39).

The most characteristic feature of the use of pre-texts made in this passage is, however, the hero's knowledge of traditional motifs, a knowledge which helps him to survive. The use of motifs taken from legend and fairy-tale (and other discourses) is shown to be derivative. In this technique of imitating, adapting and parodying well-known motifs, *The Hobbit* follows a tradition of children's narratives which includes F. E. Paget, *The Hope of the Katzekopfs* (1844), W. M. Thackeray, *The Rose and the Ring* (1855), Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), J.M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911) and many other children's classics (it may ultimately go back to early nineteenth-century pantomimes, cf. Mayer III). The way intertextuality appears (and is rendered conspicuous) in *The Hobbit* turns out to be just another intertextual element. Other formal or stylistic features characteristic of the children's literature tradition are the preponderance of dialogue and the virtual absence of description (cf. my introduction to English children's literature: Kullmann 53-55), and the structure of the adventurous quest: when Bilbo finds himself—more or less involuntarily—on his adventure he encounters a lot of outlandish creatures, like Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The way pre-texts are quoted and transformed in *The Hobbit* can itself be traced back to a textual basis: a certain Victorian tradition of children's books.

By contrast, irony and and parody are conspicuously absent from *The Lord of the Rings*. The trilogy rather abounds in descriptions of the characters' outward appearance, their habitations and cities and the landscapes the characters pass through during their quest. In spite of its fantasy plot, this work of fiction is heavily indebted to the nineteenth-century realist novel (cf. Rosebury 11-14). Other pre-texts comprise ethnographic, cartographic (see Shippey 2001: 73-79) and historiographic discourse, chronicles, medieval romances, the Gothic Novel and early twentieth-century nature mysticism.

The discourse of nineteenth century realism can be found in sentences like the first one of the entire narrative: 'When Mr. Bilbo Baggins of Bag End announced that he would shortly be celebrating his eleventy-first birthday with a party of special magnificence, there was much talk and excitement in Hobbiton' (21). The narrator introduces a character, his place of abode and the provincial environment where a birthday party can cause considerable excitement. The exception is, of course, the ordinal number 'eleventy-first'. Through one of the trilogy's very few language jokes, the unreal world of the hobbits is somehow smuggled into the discourse of the realist novel.

Other 'realist' features include 'circumstantial realism', i.e. the attention accorded to rooms and landscapes, as well as to clothes worn and objects carried by the protagonists. When Bilbo returns home from his birthday party in order to prepare for his final departure, his actions are described as follows:

> He walked briskly back to his hole, and stood for a moment listening with a smile to the din in the pavilion and to the sounds of merrymaking in other parts of the field. Then he went in. He took off his party clothes, folded up and wrapped in tissue-paper his embroidered silk waistcoat, and put it away. Then he put on quickly some old untidy garments, and fastened round his waist a worn leather belt. On it he hung a short sword in a battered black-leather scabbard. From a locked drawer, smelling of moth-balls, he took out an old cloak and hood. They had been locked up as if they were very precious, but they were so patched and weatherstained that their original colour could hardly be guessed: it might have been dark green. They were rather too large for him. (31)

Many of the details may remind the readers of their daily life: tissue-paper, locked drawer, moth-balls. Other objects, the sword and the hood, belong to the fantasy world with its purely textual, rather than real-life, basis. These objects, however, are integrated into the discourse of real-life experience by means of various details, such as the 'battered black-leather scabbard' and the 'patched and weatherstained' condition of the cloak and hood. In *The Hobbit*, by contrast, this kind of circumstantial realism is absent.

In *The Lord of the Rings,* as in realist novels, we always know what the environment of the heroes looks like. As has often been observed the landscape features of 'the Shire' resemble those of rural England or, more specifically, Warwickshire. Later on, the reader will encounter mountainous landscapes which are clearly 'invented' but may still

remind the readers of real mountains and mountain-trips; these descriptions might be compared to those of the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Apennines in English 'Gothic Novels' such as those of Ann Radcliffe. Tolkien also makes use of the well-known technique of making landscape and weather mirror the plot development on the characters' level and the feelings of the protagonists. This technique, which originated in the Gothic Novel and was elaborated by nineteenth-century 'realist' novelists such as the Brontë Sisters and Thomas Hardy, involves associating landscape and weather phenomena with human attributes, thereby producing what Ruskin called 'pathetic fallacy' (201ff). On their way to the Cracks of Doom Frodo and his companions repeatedly pass through landscapes which illustrate their mental condition. Sometimes, however, it is unclear if the pathetic fallacy is really fallacious, as when the 'Fellowship of the Ring' ascends the mountain of Caradhras:

> While they were halted, the wind died down, and the snow slackened until it almost ceased. They tramped on again. But they had not gone more than a furlong when the storm returned with fresh fury. The wind whistled and the snow became a blinding blizzard. Soon even Boromir found it hard to keep going. The hobbits, bent nearly double, toiled along behind the taller folk, but it was plain that they could not go much further, if the snow continued. Frodo's feet felt like lead. Pippin was dragging behind. Even Gimli, as stout as any dwarf could be, was grumbling as he trudged.
>
> The Company halted suddenly, as if they had come to an agreement without any words being spoken. They heard eerie noises in the darkness round them. It may have been only a trick of the wind in the cracks and gullies of the rocky wall, but the sounds were those of shrill cries, and the wild howls of laughter. Stones began to fall from the mountain-side, whistling over their heads, or crashing on the path beside them. Every now and again they heard a dull rumble, as a great boulder rolled down from hidden heights above.
>
> 'We cannot go further tonight,' said Boromir. 'Let those call it the wind who will; there are fell voices on the air; and these stones are aimed at us.'
>
> 'I do call it the wind,' said Aragorn. 'But that does not make what you say untrue. There are many evil and unfriendly things in the world that have little love for those that go on two legs, and yet are not in league with Sauron, but have purposes of their own. Some have been in this world longer than he.'
>
> 'Caradhras was called the Cruel, and had an ill name,' said Gimli, 'long years ago, when rumour of Sauron had not been heard in these lands.' (281f.)

The first paragraph contains pathetic fallacy as conventional to the nineteenth-century novel: the wind's fury depicts the travellers' toil on their arduous journey, with the physical inconveniences representing a

mental state. The second paragraph features 'eerie noises', 'shrill cries' and 'wild howls of laughter'. In a realist novel these phrases would denote imaginative personifications of natural phenomena. In the passage quoted, however, Boromir seriously asks the question if an individual is responsible for nature's fury, such as Sauron, the arch-villain. Aragorn's interpretation is more sophisticated: he connects a natural explanation with the concept of nature as endowed with a soul. Objects such as mountains can be friendly or unfriendly towards humans, hobbits, elves or dwarves. This corresponds to the memory of the mountain's 'cruelty' adduced by Gimli the dwarf, which certainly constitutes a magical and primitive concept of nature.

As in the previous examples there is a mingling of discourses. Typical motifs of discourses of legend and fantasy are attached to stylistic features of the nineteenth-century novel. As distinct from *The Hobbit*, however, this mingling does not seem to imply a parodistic intent. The novel's 'pathetic fallacy' discourse rather assumes a mediating function: fantasy motifs are made more palatable by embedding them into a discourse familiar to many of Tolkien's readers.

There are other 'discourses' or styles, though. The "Prologue" (1-15) obviously imitates the non-fictional prose of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnography:

> Hobbits are an unobtrusive but very ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth: a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt. They do not and did not understand or like machines more complicated than a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom, though they were skilful with tools. Even in ancient days they were, as a rule, shy of 'the Big Folk', as they call us, and now they avoid us with dismay and are becoming hard to find. (1)

Apart from the last sentence (which might remind us of folklore accounts of elves or fairies), this paragraph could refer to an area and people living in Eastern or Southern Europe, or possibly in Asia. Familiar phrases are applied to an unreal world which, however, closely resembles parts of the known world. Throughout the Prologue, a scholarly/scientific discourse is sustained: Hobbits are divided into 'three somewhat different breeds' (3), they are given a history based on a timeline and historic documents (4-6), and there is a section entitled "Notes on Shire Records" (13-15), a documentation of sources in a smaller type, imitating the documentation of sources in works of historiography. A similar sort

of pre-text is imitated in the various maps and appendices containing tables of historic data and linguistic notes (1009-1112).

One of the most conspicuous features of *The Lord of the Rings* is certainly the variety of styles and discourses it contains (cf. Shippey 1982: 160f., and Rosebury 65-76). It is in the characters' language that this variety is most apparent. Frodo's and Gandalf's register certainly corresponds to that of Tolkien's educated readers. The grammar follows the rules of Standard English; the sentence structure is complex without being idiosyncratic:

> 'Last night you began to tell me strange things about my ring, Gandalf,' he said. 'And then you stopped, because you said that such matters were best left until daylight. Don't you think you had better finish now? You say the ring is dangerous, far more dangerous than I guess. In what way?'
>
> 'In many ways,' answered the wizard. 'It is far more powerful than I ever dared to think at first, so powerful that in the end it would utterly overcome anyone of mortal race who possessed it. It would possess him. [. . .]' (45)

By contrast, the speech of Sam Gamgee, Frodo's companion, is more colloquial and indicates his lower-class origin. It also contains archaisms indicative of dialect, as given literary representation by Thomas Hardy, D.H. Lawrence and other 'regional' writers:

> 'There are some, even in these parts, as know the Fair Folk and get news of them,' he [Sam Gamgee] said. 'There's Mr. Baggins now, that I work for. He told me that they were sailing and he knows a bit about Elves. And old Mr. Bilbo knew more: many's the talk I had with him when I was a little lad.'
>
> 'Oh, they're both cracked,' said Ted. 'Leastways old Bilbo was cracked, and Frodo's cracking. If that's where you get your news from, you'll never want for moonshine. Well, friends, I'm off home. Your good health!' He drained his mug and went out noisily. (44)

When the ring is finally destroyed, Frodo's and Sam's discourses mirror two opposing assessments of what happened:

> '[. . .] But for him [Gollum], Sam, I could not have destroyed the Ring. The Quest would have been in vain, even at the bitter end. So let us forgive him! For the Quest is achieved, and now all is over. I am glad you are here with me. Here at the end of all things, Sam.' (926)

'Yes, I am with you, Master,' said Sam, laying Frodo's wounded hand gently to his breast. 'And you're with me. And the journey's finished. But after coming all that way I don't want to give up yet. It's not like me, somehow, you understand.'

'Maybe not, Sam,' said Frodo; 'but it's like things are in the world. Hopes fail. And end comes. We have only a little time to wait now. We are lost in ruin and downfall, and there is no escape.'

'Well, Master, we could at least go further from this dangerous place here, from this Crack of Doom, if that's its name. Now couldn't we? Come, Mr. Frodo, let's go down the path at any rate!' (929)

Compared to the first chapters of the book, Frodo's language has assumed a more literary quality, corresponding to his attitude of heroic fatalism. There is old-fashioned, literary grammar ('But for him [. . .]', 'For the Quest is achieved'), gnomic sentences ('Hopes fail. And end comes'). Sam, however, has retained his colloquial discourse, just as he has retained his humanity, which, on the level of the plot, will save him and Frodo.

Two characters marked out by their archaic and stilted language are Elrond and Aragorn. Both characters do not just take part in conversations and debates but make proper speeches when occasion arises, as when Elrond explains to Boromir why he is not prepared to take and use the ring himself:

'Alas, no,' said Elrond. 'We cannot use the Ruling Ring. That we now know too well. It belongs to Sauron and was made by him alone, and is altogether evil. Its strength, Boromir, is too great for anyone to wield at will, save only those who have already a great power of their own. But for them it holds an even deadlier peril. The very desire of it corrupts the heart. Consider Saruman. If any of the Wise should wield this Ring to overthrow the Lord of Mordor, using his own arts, he would set himself on Sauron's throne, and yet another Dark Lord would appear. And that is another reason why the Ring should be destroyed: as long as it is in the world it will be a danger even to the Wise. For nothing is evil in the beginning. Even Sauron was not so. I fear to take the Ring to hide it. I will not take the Ring to wield it.' (261)

Elrond's speech has the tripartite structure common in rhetoric: proposition, argumentation and conclusion. Its level is certainly *genus humile*: Elrond's sentences are simple and short, laying stress on each particular utterance. The usual order of noun and direct object is inverted in an archaic and literary manner ('That we now no too well'); Elrond uses literary conjunctions (like 'save' and 'for') and phrases ('to wield at will', 'the very desire') (on Elrond's way of speaking, cf. Shippey 2001: 68-70).

Like Elrond's, Aragorn's speeches appear stilted and literary; the register, i.e. the pre-texts, however, are quite different:

> Slowly Aragorn unbuckled his belt and himself set his sword upright against the wall. 'Here I set it,' he said; 'but I command you not to touch it, nor to permit any other to lay hand on it. In this elvish sheath dwells the Blade that was Broken and has been made again. Telchar first wrought it in the deeps of time. Death shall come to any man that draws Elendil's sword save Elendil's heir.'
>   The guard stepped back and looked with amazement on Aragorn. 'It seems that you are come on the wings of song out of the forgotten days,' he said. 'It shall be, lord, as you command.' (500)

Aragorn's speech is characterized by features of old epic language, such as inversion ('in this elvish sheath dwells [. . .]) metaphor ('deeps of time') and personification ('dwells the Blade', 'Death shall come'). The reference to Telchar may remind us of mythological texts. Paronomasia ('Elendil's heir') is common to outstanding epic heroes, and obviously appropriate to the warrior who will be revealed as King of Gondor. The rhetorical register is certainly *genus sublime* (Lausberg 154). The guard's answer, however, rather contains the discourse of romanticism, when old myths were studied and quoted. The metaphors indicating the closeness or remoteness of the past also appear Romantic: 'deeps of time', 'wings of song'.

The analysis of the texts of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* reveals that these texts are indeed mosaics of quotations, and, moreover, that these mosaics have been assembled by the deliberate artistry of a writer, in Tolkien's case by a writer of exceptional scholarship. While there is certainly the phenomenon Kristeva called 'intertextuality', there is no way of accepting the concept of the death of the author or of discourses interacting without the agency of a human subject. Even the readers of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, I should like to argue, are invited to relate the respective text to previous reading (or listening) experiences. Referring to the dialogues found in *The Lord of the Rings*, Brian Rosebury remarks that 'highly characterised English dialogue styles will always risk seeming derivative from literary or historical models' (Rosebury 71f.). This 'risk', however, should rather be considered a chance to convey meaning through allowing readers to incorporate in their reading experience reminiscences of previous reading.

In addition to characterization, the juxtaposing of styles or discourses obviously has metalingual or metatextual functions, and certainly amounts to an invitation to the reader to reflect upon language and narrative conventions. It could be argued that Tolkien's works of fiction are not so much about elves, dwarfs and warriors as about using words and producing meaning by means of language conventions.

I would also like to contend, however, that the plots of the two books in one way or another relate to the readers' real lives. To examine the nature of this relationship I propose to make use of Roman Jakobson's dichotomy of metaphoric and metonymic text production. According to Jakobson a literary text is characterized by the polar opposites of similarity and contiguity, i.e. by processes of metaphor (as in Romantic poems) or metonymy (as in realist novels). I would like to go one step further and transfer this dichotomy to the relationship between text and reader: the world of realist novels is contiguous to that of their readers; this relationship could be called metonymical. In non-realists texts, such as fairy-tales, the relationship between text and reader can be quite as close, but it is of a different kind. We do not ask a mirror: 'Oh, mirror, mirror on the wall,/ Who is the fairest of us all?' (Grimm, 254), but we are quite familiar with the phenomena of vanity and jealousy. The situation of the queen in "Little Snow White" is not contiguous but may be similar to our own; the relationship is a metaphorical one. In other words: in both realist and non-realist texts, there is *mimesis* or imitation of real life; only it is different aspects of it which are imitated.

My thesis is that the question of whether the metaphorical or metonymical way of text-reader relationship predominates in a given text is intimately related to the choice of pre-texts. Much attention has been given to Tolkien's medieval sources (cf. Shippey 1982: 220-226, and Clark/Timmons), while his debt to more recent literary traditions has largely gone unacknowledged. Tentatively, I would like to group the major pre-texts of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* as follows

The Hobbit	*The Lord of the Rings*
metaphorical pre-texts	
fairy-tales	ancient epic poetry
folklore	medieval romance
Scandinavian heroic legend	pastoral prose fiction

Edda	Gothic Novel
Odyssey	Romantic reception of mythology
animal stories, e.g.	late 19th-century mythical writing
The Wind in the Willows	(Haggard, Morris)
Victorian children's books, e.g.	English nature mysticism (1920s,
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	1930s, e.g. Walter de la Mare, Eleanor Farjeon, Mary Webb) *The Hobbit*

metonymical pre-texts

discourses of politeness	ethnographic discourse
business letter	historian's discourse
	chronicles
	realist novels

Some pretexts, of course, partake of both categories, such as Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies,* which give voice to 'the theme of unchanging Englishness' and may have influenced the description of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* (cf. Shippey 1982: 225f.).

The pretexts listed inform the texts both on the level of the *signifiant* and that of the *signifié.* On the level of the *signifiant* they provide language register, rhetorical technique, words and phrases. On the level of the *signifié* they provide motifs, which relate to real life in a metaphorical or metonymic way. The major motifs in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* taken from pretexts could be grouped as follows:

The Hobbit	*The Lord of the Rings*
metaphorical motifs	
quest motif (treasure hunt)	*quest* motif
wizards, elves, dwarfs, dragons	nature humanized
talking animals	warlike heroism

metalingual/metafictional commentary	dichotomy of good and evil

metonymical motifs

eating and drinking	ethnographic characterization
	landscapes
	rooms
	clothing
	objects of everyday life
	social class

The predominant relationship between text and reader in *The Hobbit* is certainly a metaphorical one: the situation of Bilbo the hobbit who suddenly finds himself on a quest to recover treasure can be similar to the reader's who may wonder about directions taken in his or her own life. On his quest Bilbo encounters quite a few peculiar creatures, e. g. the dwarfs, Elrond, Gollum, Beorn, the dragon, Bard. His success largely depends on his ability to enter into friendly exchanges of communication with each of them; in this he resembles Alice in wonderland and other heroes and heroines of nineteenth-century children's fiction. His stroke of genius is of course his rendering of the Arkenstone to Bard, who can then give it to Thorin in exchange for part of the treasure (331f.). The metaphorical relevance of the story as an exploration of the relationship of avarice, diplomacy and common sense is obvious.

The Lord of the Rings, on the other hand, subtly combines metaphor and metonymy. Frodo's and Gandalf's quest to get rid of the ring of power can well be understood as a metaphor for desperate undertakings of various kinds. The closeness of the world through which the questants travel to the world we know from real life certainly intensifies our sympathetic response to the questants' endeavour. The landscapes Frodo and the 'fellowship' pass through resemble real English and Alpine landscapes and may remind readers of landscape experiences of their own. The social interaction of the travellers may also resemble travelling experiences readers may have had in real life. Perhaps it is this combination of the metaphoric and metonymic mode which has brought about the enormous success of *The Lord of the Rings*.

The examination of the intertextual patterns of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* confirms the impression that the two books could be considered examples of two different kinds of fictional narrative, distinct from one another as to style, implied reader, narrative purpose. In *The Hobbit*, the narrator, who often addresses his readers directly, is playing around with motifs from ancient and modern texts which are known to the readers as texts rather than records from real life. The relationship between story and life is a metaphorical one, and the implied readers are obviously children. The hobbits are rather childlike (cf. Rehberg), and the plot in a way repeats that of nineteenth-century children's quest stories such as, e. g., George Macdonald's *Princess and Curdie* (1883): a child or young adult is unexpectedly given a task which, even more unexpectedly, he or she is able to carry out, thereby discovering exceptional qualities in himself or herself.

While the central element of the plot of *The Lord of the Rings*, the quest to destroy the ring, is obviously metaphorical, the many metonymical elements obviously serve the function to make the fantasy plot more palatable, to facilitate the 'willing suspension of disbelief for the moment,' which according to Coleridge 'constitutes poetic faith' (Coleridge, vol. 7.2: 6), or, as Tolkien himself prefers to call it, 'Secondary Belief' (1983: 132). The implied readers of *The Lord of the Rings* are obviously less tolerant of inconsistency and anachronism, and of supernatural phenomena like talking dragons. On the other hand, they are prepared to go through long and potentially boring descriptions and do not find a 1000-pages work beyond their capacities. They are interested in problems of ethics and character and take these issues highly seriously.

Many Tolkien fans who look at *The Hobbit* from the vantage point of *The Lord of the Rings* consider *The Hobbit* as a highly inconsistent and unsatisfactory piece of writing, failing to judge the book on its own terms (Brian Rosebury, e. g., comments on the book's 'inconsistencies of tone and conception' and calls it an 'uneasy, if likeable, patchwork of accomplishments, blunders, and tantalising promises of the Middle-earth to come', Rosebury 103; on the relationship of the two narratives cf. e. g. Petzold 45-47 and 90f.). This group of critics was to include Tolkien himself, who in 1967 told an interviewer: '*The Hobbit* was written in what I should now regard as bad style, as if one were talking to children' (2003: 76). In spite of the fact that *The Lord of the Rings* is based on the

characters and the plot of *The Hobbit,* the two narratives are indeed hardly compatible; and the quests of the two heroes are very different from one another. The ring which in *The Lord of the Rings* becomes a source and a symbol of ultimate evil, is a simple magical tool in *The Hobbit*. It is useful because it makes you invisible but does not influence its bearer in any other way (cf. Shippey 2001: 112f.). In the first edition of *The Hobbit*, Gollum after having lost the riddle game, is even prepared to part with the ring voluntarily. While Tolkien rewrote chapter 5 for the second edition of *The Hobbit* in 1951 and effected some minor alterations in the third edition of 1966 to harmonise the plot and language of *The Hobbit* with *The Lord of the Rings* (see Tolkien 2003: 128-135), he did not change the structure and message of Bilbo's quest story.

The *Hobbit*, like many other children's books, is about empowerment. Like the child heroes and heroines of, say, Charles Kingsley, *The Water-Babies* (1863), George Macdonald, *The Princess and Curdie* (1882) and L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz* (1900), Bilbo is introduced as a rather insignificant character who is, inadvertently and involuntarily, thrown into a position of significance and responsibility. The child reader is put into a position to imagine and vicariously experience the role of a saviour. Frodo also takes up this role, but he experiences it more as a burden and less as a chance of realising his potential than Bilbo. Neither the hero nor the reader are in a position to dream about their power to do good, since power itself is shown to be evil.

The *Hobbit* can certainly be considered a classic example of the Great Tradition of British children's fiction. *The Lord of the Rings,* by contrast, stands out as an entirely original literary departure (cf. Shippey 2001: 221-225). It is through the analysis of intertextual patterns and of the metaphoric or metonymic quality of themes and motifs that we are put in a position to state why this is so.

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