# Dynamics of Narrativity: A Study of Select Novels and Film Adaptations of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan

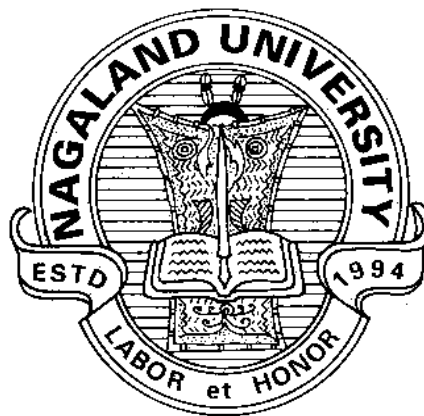**(Thesis Submitted to Nagaland University in Partial Fulfilment of Requirements for the Award of Ph.D. in English)**

**By**

**DEBOLINA MUKHERJEE**

**PhD/ENG/00136**

**Under the supervision of**

**Prof. Jano S. Liegise**

**Department of English**

**School of Humanities and Education**

**Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema**

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I, Ms. Debolina Mukherjee, do hereby declare that the subject matter of my thesis entitled *Dynamics of Narrativity: A Study of the Select Novels and Film Adaptations of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan* is a bona fide record of work done by me under the supervision of Prof. Jano S. Liegise and that the content of the thesis did not form the basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any other research degree, fellowship, associateship, etc. in any other university or institute. This is being submitted to Nagaland University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

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Kohima                                               **SUPERVISOR**

                                            Prof. Jano S. Liegise
                                            Department of English
                                            Nagaland University,
                                            Kohima Campus, Mereima
                                            Kohima – 797004, Nagaland,
                                            Contact: 9856775073
                                            Email: janosekho@gmail.com

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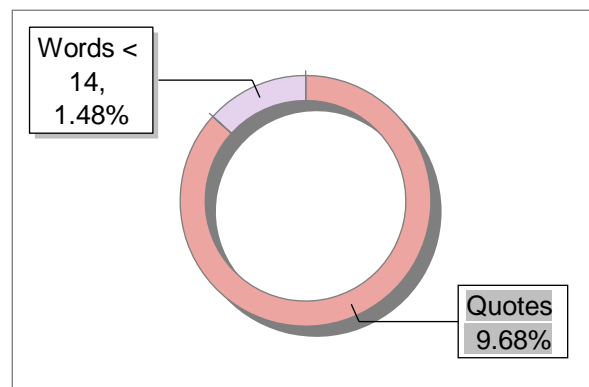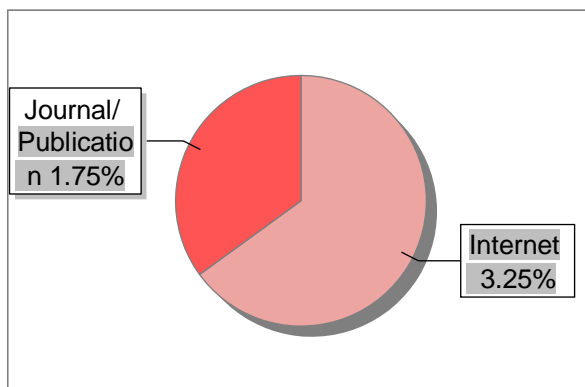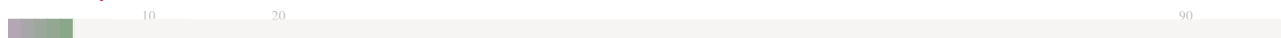






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**Ms. Debolina Mukherjee**
**Regn. No PhD/ENG/00136**
**Department of English**

# CONTENTS

**Abstract**

The universality of the mimetic instinct which is innate and inherent in humankind is attested by the myriad forms of art that has developed through the ages, all with the purpose to communicate, to express, to tell, and above all to imitate just about everything. Humankind has adapted and metamorphosed in the way they tell stories. This is primarily due to the incessant technological and digital advancements in modern times. Films are one of the most popular entrant into the fraternity of creative arts and storytelling in modern times. Narrativity in films are a combination of visual storytelling with the ability to entertain as well as educate global audience; influence popular culture and have immense impact on the audiences as stories are made to appear more real and credible as a result of the advances in cinematographic technologies like the use of Computer-Generated Imageries (CGI) and Visual Effects (VFX). Ever since the first motion pictures were premiered by the Lumière brothers in 1895, a significant transformation began to take place in the manner in which stories could be told and before long, films became a novelty and a cultural phenomenon worldwide. Filmmakers, from the outset recognized that classic literary works were best suited materials for adaptation purposes and began borrowing liberally and unabashedly from literary sources. Apart from classic literary sources, the fantasy genre became a favourite amongst filmmakers and audiences. One of the major changes that are incorporated into any screenplay of an adaptation is the narrativity. The study focuses on the dynamics of narrativity in the select works of modern fantasy writers and the film adaptations of their works. C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan are modern fantasy writers who have significantly impacted and redefined the literary and filmic fantasy genre. Contestation over the acceptance of modern fantasy as a serious genre

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persists even to this day, although most critics and scholars have arrived at a common consensus wherein Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* series and George Lucas's *Star Wars* is said to have changed the trajectory of modern literary and filmic fantasy. This study is a probe into the narrativity into the two mediums of storytelling and its reception by readers and audiences as the story gets transported from print to screen. C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* series and Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series and their film adaptations have been taken up for the study to examine the dynamics of narrativity in the source text and film adaptations mainly through the theoretical approaches of Vladimir Propp, Gerard Genette, Marie-Laure Ryan, Joseph Campbell, Linda Hutcheon and Robert Stam to narrativity, fantasy and film adaptations. Overall, this study attempts to seek answers to questions about stories and storytelling, narrativity and film adaptations, literary and filmic fantasies: Why is the fantasy genre a popular and a favourite genre even today? What is the scope of this genre? How do changing narratives impact the manner in which a story is told and received? Will filmic fantasy adaptations become the future course of entertainment in this tech-driven world? What is the future of the literary and the filmic fantasy genre in a world that is quickly giving control to tech giants and the Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

"Even though television is arguably the dominant communications medium of the twentieth century, we still attach more importance to teaching our children to read fictional narratives in print than we do to teaching them to read visual and aural images (a central task of Media Studies)" (Lacey 90).

It is almost impossible to decide when humankind developed speech and how that evolved into language/languages. As much as the development of human speech and language remains untraceable, the origin of the use of language for story telling remains equally indiscernible. Story telling has remained an intricate and an inseparable part of the human civilization. In *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, Yuval Noah Harari posits that "Legends, myths, gods and religions appeared for the first time with the Cognitive Revolution" and that Cognitive Revolution is bound by a sense of shared imagination and of common beliefs in the unseen and the unknown (27). Ever since Cognitive Revolution humankind have been living in a dual reality, where on the one hand there is the objective reality of rivers, trees and lions; and on the other hand, the imagined reality of gods, nations and corporations (36). There is the objective truth, on the one hand and the subjective belief in the paranormal, phantasm, supernatural presence whose control is extended to various natural disasters, diseases, plagues and the like. Myths and legends, gods and religions, tales and lore, superstitions and beliefs thus began to coexist through human civilizations and out of its wombs, were born the modern day fantasy genre.

Paul Cobley in his book which he simply titled *Narrative* asserts that, "Human beings, especially after the development of the verbal faculty, have constantly told

stories, presented stories and squeezed aspects of the world into narrative form" (2). One of humankind's unique features lies in its ability to express and communicate logically and rationally, but what renders this feature more fascinating is the ability to imagine and fabricate stories; the ability to speak in fictions. In this regard, Allardyce Nicoll observed that the "mimetic instinct is confined to no single nation; it is universal in its appeal and reveals itself as one of the most primitive of human emotions" (3). The basic human instinct of expressing and telling stories have evolved through sounds and body gestures to developed speech and languages that has translated itself into creative modes of expressions like folklores and fairy tales, myths and legends, drama, paintings and poetry, sculptures and carvings on rocks and woods to using the lights, camera and action cue, to tell stories. The universality of the mimetic instinct which is innate and inherent in humankind is attested by the myriad forms of art that has developed through the ages, all with the purpose to communicate, to express, to tell, and above all to imitate just about everything.

The primitive mimetic instincts of humankind have clearly metamorphosed to adapt to media and technological advancements. Film is a later entrant into the fraternity of creative arts, and the aesthetics of films may be summarised in two words: realistic and modern. This modern form of art brings dimensions of realism as it is able to capture moving actions from numerous points of view to project onto the big screen. The origins of films can be traced back to the many photographic experiments that were conducted prior to the 1890s that created the illusion of movements like "Phenakistoscopes, Thaumatropes, Zoetropes, and Praxinoscopes (all versions of spinning motion toys)" competing "with magic lantern projections and panoramas to entertain audiences with dizzying perspectives and steaming locomotives, acrobatic feats and elaborate stories" and Eadweard Muybridge's famous horse race experiment

that transformed "possibilities for thinking about time and motion that led to cinema's creation" (Villarejo 2). Further, photographic experiments led to inventions like kinetograph and kinetoscope by Thomas Edison which captured moving pictures using the principles and techniques developed by Muybridge (4). But Edison's invention was limited to solitary viewing as it was a peepshow and not a screen projection. It was, therefore, the invention of the cinematograph by the Lumière brothers in France - Auguste and Louis, which was built on Edison's invention to capture motion pictures that enabled projection on screen to a larger audience.

If, according to Harari, Cognitive Revolution was the first and most significant step of humankind towards civilization, then the Industrial Revolution of the mid-eighteenth and nineteenth century is its equivalent in modern civilization as humankind transitioned into an age of technology. The Industrial Revolution witnessed an increasing urban population that migrated from little towns and villages looking for employment opportunities in the growing industrial hubs of the cities which led to a shift in the lifestyle of the people. The rural lives were dictated by dogmatic rituals and practises, folktales and folksongs but with technological advancement and urbanisation, spread of education and establishment of print industries, development in transportation and improvement in health care facilities, there was a dramatic change in the lifestyle of the people. They had now more wealth and leisure time at their disposal which was spent on new forms of commercialized entertainment that emerged as a result:

> Several cultural events, such as the opera, the theatre and classical music performances were organised for an elite group of 300-400 families in the late eighteenth century. Meanwhile, working classes met in pubs to have a drink, exchange news and sometimes also to organise for political action. Many new types of large-scale entertainment for the common

people came into being, some made possible with money from the state. Libraries, art galleries and museums were established in the nineteenth century…Gradually there was the emergence of radios and nickelodeons, which quickly went on to be replaced by cinema halls and television sets at home… Music halls were popular among the lower classes, and, by the early twentieth century, cinema became the great mass entertainment for mixed audiences. (Work, Life and Leisure)

After December 28, 1895 when Lumière brothers premiered their first motion picture before a paying audience at Grand Café in Paris, theatres began to appear across Europe and the United States and soon, in the years that followed, films began to take root as an art and an industry the branches of which soon extended across many countries. Speaking about the shift in social and cultural life of the people, commercialization of films and its establishment as an entertainment industry after 1895, Corrigan notes that while films before 1903 were very brief lasting ten to fifteen minutes and audiences were charged "a nickel to gather in a store-front nickelodeon", Griffith's 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, as a cinematic epic, would run for over three hours, charged two dollars for admission, and that with its "elaborate orchestral presentations led the way to movie-palace exhibitions"(Corrigan 35). Films were becoming economically viable and it was reaching to a larger audience base comprising of both the upper class and the middle class.

The history of films is more than a hundred years old. From its initial stages when film making began as experiments to project motion pictures to adapting stories on screen, films have reinvented and introduced new styles and technologies of film making. Films have adapted to the changing political, socio-cultural and economic climates and have become the pulse of entertainment, education, art and commerce.

Films received mixed critical appreciation from its initial years. Some wondered about its futuristic possibilities, while others feared the end of creativity and imagination. One of the first notable modernist writers to comment on the new artistic medium was Virginia Woolf. She expressed her fear and fascination about this new method of technology driven story telling technique in her 1926 essay "The Cinema" calling it "a simple and even a stupid art" where literature had become its "prey" because films fed on literary sources like a "parasite" (348, 349). Like Woolf, George Bluestone, a film critic also remarked on the (inter)relationship between film and literature as "overtly compatible, secretly hostile" (qtd. in Mandal 47).Given the fact that Woolf's observations were based on her experience of watching the early films, her apprehensions about the new medium of art which had yet to reach its full potential may be justified, but the apprehensions especially pertaining to film adaptations continued even decades later, as is evident from Bluestone's remark in his book *Novels into Film* (1957) as mentioned above. Even so, Woolf seemed hopeful about the future of cinema but observed that the cinema was born the wrong end first. In the sense that the "mechanical skill is far in advance of the art to be expressed" (352). Walter Benjamin too, in his seminal essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" published in 1935, echoes the apprehensions of Woolf as he argues that the age of mechanical reproduction has witnessed a withering in the aura of the work of art (4). He further examines how Industrial Revolution has brought revolutionary changes in "taverns and our metropolitan streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories" but, he points out these developments had locked up people hopelessly (15). Benjamin continues by commenting on the beginnings of films and writes that when films were introduced it burst this prison-world but expresses his fear that films will distract and hypnotise audiences as films become readily available for

mass consumption because it will be "consummated by a collectivity in a state of distraction" (18). Amidst the angst and reservations about early cinema, Vladimir Lenin saw in films the possibilities of educating and disseminating Russian political propagandas. About films, Lenin famously remarked that of all the arts, films were the most important and "nationalised" the Russian film industry in 1919 (Garrif 2). In spite of the early mixed responses toward films, it soon established a new dynamics of narrativity, a first of its kind that would soon usher in the age of electronic media and complex narrativity.

Very early on, filmmakers realised that audience would soon become weary of the film exhibitions that captured only kinetic motions so that the impulse to tell stories using this new technology began to take ground. Soon, films found itself becoming a huge market and in order to gratify the growing demand for watching stories played out on screens, filmmakers reached out to literary storehouses. The early film exhibitions were short lived as narratives in films took dominance. Filmmakers, from the outset recognised that classic literary works were best suited materials for adaptation purposes and began borrowing liberally and unabashedly from literary sources. Despite the fact that both literature and films aim to tell stories that involve certain situations which are developed through plots and actions, using characters, settings and environments to propel the narrative forward, the medium, style and form adapted by literature and film are entirely different from each other. Clichéd as it is, the primary distinguishing factor between literature and films is its dynamics in narrativity: print narrative and screen narrative. Words, symbols, metaphors and imageries translate into mise-en-scènes, diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, dialogues, expressions, body languages and various camera angles, shots and movements. Long passages are shown converted to seconds frame or short passages converted to minute long scenes, thoughts in prints are heard on

screen. What authors evoked by weaving sentences after sentences together into a narrative pattern provoking the reader's imagination and moving their emotions, today, arrest the imagination and emotions of the audiences through the moving images that appear on screen. Irrespective of the conflicting dissimilarities between the two art forms, there is no contesting the fact that, ever since the inception of films, filmmakers have resorted to literature, especially novels as source materials. In this regard, the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries have become literary depositories for film adaptations as films can now bring to life what had resided in imaginations.

Apart from classic literary sources, the fantasy genre was a favourite amongst the early filmmakers as well as the audience. A notable feature of the early film adaptations was the fascination with the use of special effects in films which is credited to be introduced into films by the magician and optical illusionist, Georges Méliès, who happened to be present during the Lumière premier. Known as the "godfather of special effects" in cinema, his earliest work that used special effects was *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) an adaptation based on Jules Vernes novel *From the Earth to the Moon*, a sci-fi futuristic film about a journey to the moon made almost seventy years before scientific technology made man landing on moon a reality (Dixon 11).  In order to achieve his vision of bringing the fantastic on screen, Méliès used static cameras and "created a basic library of special effects that would dominate the cinema until the advent of the digital era in the late twentieth century" (13). As a matter of fact, because filmic fantasy, albeit a fascination and an amusement for the early audience, lacked the required technology to bring the fantastic to the screen, relied more on costumes and make-ups to accentuate the elements of fantasy. Most of the fantasy films made during the period following Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon* were mostly adaptations. Fairy tales, myths, children books and fantasy literatures were popularly adapted into filmic fantasy like

*Gulliver's Travels, Alice in Wonderland, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast,* etc each adapted several times over the years. However, when in 2001 Chris Columbus released the adaptation of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and Peter Jackson's adaptation of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, filmic fantasy, as had been known, underwent radical shifts. It ushered in an age of modern filmic fantasy. The advancement in camera and editing technology propelled the popularity of this genre amongst the audience. As a matter of fact, as per Box Office Mojo by IMDpPro updated on 23 January 2023, the highest grossing movies of all time worldwide is dominated by films like *Avatar*, *Avengers*, *Star Wars*, *Spider Man*, *The Lion King*, *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings*, all of which are fantastical in nature (Box Office Mojo).

The history of film adaptation is almost as old as the history of films itself. Denis Gifford lists 861 authors whose works were adapted into films in the early decades of the twentieth century in his book *Books and Plays in Film, 1896 – 1915*, thus attesting the popularity of film adaptations even in the pioneering stages of the film industry (Cartmell 21). Today, film adaptations have touched almost every array of literary genre and continue to gain greater and greater prominence amongst the audience each passing year. It is however, not only film adaptations that have seeped into every possible direction of art and culture. Adaptations have become embedded into video games, musicals and stage plays, in the internet, in novels, comics, songs, music and in social media, albeit, the most common and the most popular kind of adaptations today are still film adaptations. Statistically speaking, according to a web article released on 23 February 2023, film adaptations today make up 70 % of the top 20 grossing films worldwide and generate 53% more revenue than original screenplays globally (Talbot).

Adaptation critics associated terms like ""infidelity," "betrayal," "deformation," "violation," "bastardization," "vulgarization," and "desecration"" to define film adaptations for a relatively long time (Stam 3). George Bluestone's *Novels into Films* (1957) was an influential book that analyzed screenwriter's adaptation processes. It privileges the source text over adaptation and had led many scholars and students to take a prejudiced stand on film adaptations. When adaptation scholars and critics began analyzing film adaptations it was measured against the superiority of the source text to the adapted text. In 1996, Brian McFarlane wrote *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* wherein he discussed the influence of popular culture and social environment in the making and adaptation of films. In *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), Linda Hutcheon propounds the judging and viewing of adaptations both as an independent and an interdependent text. Over the years contemporary scholars have begun to see the fidelity criterion as peripheral to the study of film adaptations and taken a more holistic approach.

Film adaptations in recent decades have been taken more seriously with more and more filmmakers venturing into adapting any kind of literary texts. Hutcheon defines adaptation as an "overt relationship to another work or works" (6). When a work gets transferred from one medium to another, certain changes are inevitably bound to occur. A filmmaker may remain strictly loyal to the text but the very fact that film adaptations are a radical transposition from page to screen calls for certain changes and modifications. This could simply include a shift in the medium such as a novel or a play getting adapted into a film or a shift in genre like Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise's *West Side Story* which is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's romance tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* into a musical romance. Adaptations can also mean a change in context. Robbins and Wise's *West Side Story* can again serve as an example because

the story shifts from the 14$^{th}$ century Verona to 20$^{th}$ century Manhattan where the conflict is not between "Two households, both alike in dignity" but between the Sharks who were Puerto Rican immigrants and the Jets, the White Americans (Shakespeare 3). Adaptations can also bring a change of the point of view, i.e., the perspective from which a story is told; or it may be an adaptation from the real and the historical like Bryan Singer's *Bohemian Rhapsody* which is based on the life of Freddie Mercury, the lead singer of Queen though the adaptation is said to have taken "some liberties with the story, simplifying many aspects to keep the story moving and to make it a bit more flashy" (Bloom). Given the complex process of transferring from one medium to another, contemporary debate on fidelity does not discuss how each letter is transferred into visuals but how the essence and spirit of the source text is embedded in the adapted text. For any text to be considered good adaptation, it must be faithful not to every microscopic detail but to the essential traits of the source text. An adaptation must, as Dick mentions, "preserve the essence of the original, even when it alters plot details, adds or eliminates characters, or changes the conclusion so that it is the opposite of what it was in the original" (261).

One of the concerns that need to be persistently persuaded in adaptation is the question of fidelity. Robert Stam asks "If "fidelity" is an inadequate trope, what tropes might be appropriate?" (24). He answers this question by suggesting films to be examined as "translation" (62). Translation in films can be both literal and figurative, with the possibility of losing as much as gaining in the process of translation. In the process of adapting the written to the visual and the aural, verbal descriptions of landscapes running across pages in novels may be translated into few seconds scenes in films. Thoughts of a character in a film adaptation can be translated into dialogues; emotions and sentiments may be implied to the audiences using close up shots of the

character, diegetic and non - diegetic sounds, songs and music; symbols and metaphors can be conveyed through images and mise - en - scènes. Film adaptation, therefore, Stam argues should not be examined from the point of fidelity alone but as translation of one medium into another as "The source text forms a dense informational network, a series of verbal cues that the adapting film text can take up, amplify, ignore, subvert, or transform" (68).

In spite of the growing popularity of film adaptations, the process of converting a source text into a screenplay remains complex. One of the major changes that are incorporated into any screenplay of an adaptation is the narrativity. Over the course of research, several books, articles and journals will be referred to, compared with, scrutinised and analysed to attempt a comprehensive and a contextual investigation into the transition of the dynamics of narrativity as it is transported from literary texts to filmic adaptations. Modern fantasy with reference to the works of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan and the filmic adaptation of their works in the present century will be studied to probe into the narrativity in the two mediums of storytelling, the relevance of fantasy with contemporary audience; the future and scope of the fantasy genre as a means of entertainment and education in a world that is torn asunder by conflicting global ideologies marred by moral ambiguities.

**Literature Review**

**Preview**

Given the myriad of books that have been written by scholars and academicians on narratives beginning with Plato down to contemporary narratologists, literary narratives have acquired a complex identity. Literary narratives are not only conceptual but interpretative, divergent, complementary and ever-evolving. Literary narratives

attempt to understand structure, plot, narrative techniques and the types of narrators in any given literary text. For the purpose of this research, efforts have been made to select existing works on narratives and narrativity to examine the nature of storytelling in fantasy genre - literary as well as filmic. Further, since the research focuses on the adaptation of literary fantasy into filmic fantasy, books on the evolution and development of films, existing theories on film adaptation and books and articles contributed by film critics have been consulted to arrive at an understanding of this new art form – its scope, relevance and future in contemporary research and society.

For a more comprehensive and systematic interrogation into the research, this introductory section has been divided into three broad categories: On Narratives and Narrativity, On Folktales and Fantasy and On Film Adaptations. Each of these sections will discuss the catalogue of academic works that has been consulted and referred to for the purpose of this research.

**On Narratives and Narrativity**

Narrative is an obscure and an ambiguous term in the sense that it does not bring within its purview a ubiquitous definition or a general consensus of what narratives should encompass. It is a broad concept whose birth is as obscure as its definition. Any kind of narrative attempts at relaying information or telling stories and it may be done through verbal narration like speech and dialogues, through visuals as in paintings and photographs, by using aural mediums like songs and music, through the use of bodily movements as in dance and mime. Drama as an art form incorporates within its realm the verbal, visual and the aural but it has its limitations as they are performances made before a live audience. A character's thoughts and expressions, a change of time and place, scenes pertaining to wars and excavations, for instance, cannot be executed realistically as action is limited to the temporal and spatial realms of the theatre. The

invention and development of camera and sound technology, therefore, has made it possible to record the verbal, visual and aural mediums simultaneously, thus adding a new dimension to the existing plethora of definitions on narratives.

A plenitude of narratologists and scholars have attempted to reach an exhaustive and all encompassing understanding of narratives. The earliest discussions on literary narratives can be traced back to the two prominent thinker and philosopher of ancient Greece - Plato and Aristotle. Plato had a more sceptical approach to literary narratives as can be explicated by his famous view on "mimesis" which he described as "narrative conveyed by imitation" (Russell and Winterbottom 29). Literary narratives, according to Plato corrupt the human soul. He was of the opinion that "everything that fable-tellers or poets say is a narrative of past or present or future" which were narrated to the audience either through simple narrative (diegesis) or through imitation (mimesis) or through a combination of both (29).

Aristotle, on the other hand, unlike Plato whose views on literary narratives were deductive in nature, offers a more practical and empirical approach to literary narratives. Aristotle's views on the narrative structure having a beginning, a middle and end which correlates to Freytag's pyramid comprising of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution/ denouement, continue to be relevant not only in the study of classical texts but in writing screenplays for television and films. Plato and Aristotle were also among the first critics to contrast the concept of mimesis with diegesis. In Book III of *Republic,* Plato distinguishes two styles of writing: narration and imitation. Imitation is mimesis, which shows or dramatizes actions to be projected on stage. Diegesis is the mode of telling and relating or reporting what has happened. Plato gave diegesis the greater credit in literature but at the crux of narration, writers and filmmakers employ both mimesis and diegesis as they are the fundamental building

blocks of narratives. In this regard, Gerard Genette can be quoted who in his book titled *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* states that the "mimesis in words can only be mimesis in words. Other than that, all we have and can have is degrees of diegesis" (Genette 164).

With reference to narrative, Lacey writes that the word "narrative" finds its derivation from the Latin "narre*"* which translates as "to make known" (Lacey 13). Manfred Jahn in his article "Narratology 2.3: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative" describes narrative as that which tells or presents a story, either orally or in print, or through pictures and performances, or a combination of these. In brief, narratives, according to Jahn are embedded in "conversation, jokes, novels, plays, films, comic strips, etc" (18). According to Paul Cobley, "even the most 'simple' of stories is embedded in a network of relations that are sometimes astounding in their complexity" (2). In the most rudimentary stage, narratives, therefore, whether oral narratives, written text or media narratives, including film narratives, and any formal conversations and speeches made, are structured and follow a pattern whose functionality may be attuned to a particular genre, category, group or type of story they tell. But in casual conversations, random jokes and everyday household tattles, there are no ordered structures per se. It is spontaneous, it is unrehearsed, unplanned and follows no narrative route in particular. Many narratologists refer to this type of narratives as "natural narratives" as this kind of narratives define everyday conversations which Jahn says are the "most elemental and prototypical instance of storytelling" (18).

Humankind, by nature, has an innate desire to tell stories, share incidents and to keep each other informed. Yuval Noah Harari while speaking about Cognitive Evolution of the humankind pointed out that "The ability to speak about fictions is the

most unique feature of Sapiens language" (27). The concept of narrative has changed and evolved with time and technology. James Monaco discusses the nature of art in his book *How to Read Films*. He lists seven general art forms recognised in the early days of civilization: History, Poetry, Comedy, Tragedy, Music, Dance and Astronomy (24). Each of these art forms use a method of narration to express and relate accounts of past events and phenomenon, stories, emotions, incidents, information and of astronomical observations. Monaco further explains:

> Originally, the only way to produce art was in "real time": the singer sang the song, the storyteller told the tale, the actors acted the drama. The development in prehistory of drawing and (through pictographs) of writing represented a quantum jump in the systems of communication. Images could be stored, stories could be preserved, later to be recalled exactly. For seven thousand years the history of the arts was, essentially, the history of these two representative media: the pictorial and the literary. (29)

Modern technological advancement has ushered in new tools of narratives. From print media to sound recordings, film technology to social media, narratives in art has embarked new dimensions of reiteration. M. H. Abrams defines narrative thus:

> a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the story say and do. Some literary forms such as the novel and short story in prose, and the epic and romance in verse, are explicit narratives that are told by a *narrator*. In drama, the narrative is not told, but evolves by means of the direct presentation on stage of the actions and speeches of the characters. (173)

For Jakob Lothe, "narrative presents a chain of events which is situated in time and space. There are narratives not only in literature but also in other cultural utterances that surround us" (3). Narratives, therefore, in conclusion and in a manner of summarising all that has been gathered from the readings and references on narratives, can be said to be the act of telling, sharing, communicating through using any of the visual, verbal and aural mediums; or through a combination of all three. Narratives are not limited to literature alone but it also encompasses the socio-cultural and political climate of a particular place and time. Narratives are spread across every genre, employing innumerable techniques to tell its stories. From elemental expressions of using hand gestures and onomatopoeia to measuring up to the use of sophisticated digital tools to tell one's stories, narratives as technique, art and as system continue to evolve and be dynamic in the face of constant changing styles of narratives.

On grounds of the fact that narratives are integral to human existence and civilization, the past five decades have witnessed a substantial growth in the academic study of narrative theory. Narrative theory, or narratology in literary studies, simply put, is the study of narratives as a genre. The term "narratology" was first used by Tzvetan Todorov in his book *Grammaire du Décaméron* (1969). Though the study of narratives and narrative structures can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle, a systematic development of narratology as a line of study developed much later and is usually credited to theorists like Vladimir Propp, Gerard Genette, Mikhail Bakhtin, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Marie-Laure Ryan, to name a few. Peter Barry defines narratology as "the study of how narratives make meaning, and what the basic mechanisms and procedures are which are common to all acts of story-telling. Narratology, then, is not the reading and interpretation of *individual* stories, but the attempt to study the nature of 'story' itself, as a concept and as a cultural practise"

(223,224). According to Paul Cobley, narratology examines the constituents of narratives as it "draws attention to the building blocks of narrative, exploring the various combinations that can appear in narrative texts and the devices that readers come to learn and accept" (237). Narratology can therefore be understood as the formal study of narratives and the narrative structures that appear on texts or occur as speech and dialogues. It is the formal enquiry into the universality of storytelling as a system; it is a theoretical examination of narrative structures but it is also an empirical analysis based on the dynamics of socio - cultural patterns found across the globe through different ages. Narratologists do not concern itself with the study of individual texts per se but with the nature, elements and characteristics of narratives in general.

Having enquired and gained substantial insight into the fundamental concepts on narratives and narratology, the research will now shift its course towards an examination of books on narrativity in literature and film adaptations. Narrativity, broadly speaking, comprises of all the elements that make a narrative, viz., mimesis and diegesis, plot, character and settings. Any story will have a certain plot and a certain narrative but the sequence of narration inadvertently changes when it is retold, rewritten and adapted. According to Abbot Porter although "the specific term narrativity did not develop until the 20th century, closely related concepts have been deployed from the start" ("The Living Handbook of Narratology"). Most modern and postmodern storytellers choose to tell their story in a manner that is altered, chaotic, having multiple voices, whose fluidity does not follow the same course of traditional narrativity. In the course of adaptation, several alterations take place and very rarely an exact replication of the text narrative is made. How a story is told, who told them, when they are told, where they are told, why they are told, what is the duration of the

story, what is omitted and what is added into the story are dependent on the structure of the text/film and its narrativity.

Marie - Laure Ryan, in her essay "Toward a Definition of Narrative" refrains from defining narrativity because, in her view, "definition becomes an open series of concentric circles which spell increasingly narrow conditions and which presuppose previously stated items, as we move from the outer to the inner circles, and from the marginal cases to the prototypes" (28). Instead she proposes spatial, temporal, mental, formal and pragmatic dimensions to encompass the complete meaning of narrativity. The spatial, temporal and mental dimensions adhere to the space, time, emotions and mental life in the narrative, whereas the formal and pragmatic dimensions add meaning to the story; leads to closure where the events must be relatable for the readers/audience (29). Narrativity is thus the sum total of all that makes up the narration itself. It is the integration of components like plot, character, point of view, focalization, repetition, order, duration, space, frequency, etc.

In this regard, Gerard Genette in *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* lists order, duration, frequency, mood and voice as the dynamics of narrativity. Genette's narrative "order" refers to the temporal space, the sequencing of events and its narration in a story (33). Genette discusses anachronies which refer to chronologically incorrect narrations in a given story (35). Anachronies are of two types, viz., analepsis and prolepsis. The first narrative order type is a rhetorical device wherein the narrator references to past events and stories to fill in information or details that relate to the narrative situation in a given text and the second type of narrative order, which, is a lesser common form of narrative as compared to analepsis, refers to a narrative that hints at a future, almost with gusto of anticipation or predestination.

The narrative duration, on the other hand refers to the speed of any concerned text or film. Speed in narrative duration being, to quote Genette, "the relationship between a temporal dimension and a spatial dimension" (87). An hour's event may be related in a thousand pages while a lifelong experience may be summarised in a sentence. Similarly, in films a day's event may be covered in a few seconds frame and actions that take milliseconds in real life may be magnified several minutes to make emphasis. Either way, the author holds the key to the narrative length of the story. Duration in narrativity depends on the narrative movement, which according to Genette are pause, scene, summary and ellipsis, where pause refers to an interruption in the narrative flow to accommodate a diversion or to perform the analeptic or proleptic function while scene is when the narrative time and the story time correspond to each other (94). Genette cites dialogues as example. In summary, long events are summarised to the readers and are shorter in length to the narrative time. Ellipses, as is evident from Genette's choice of word, refers to that part in narratives where the narrator has jumped a period of time and nothing is mentioned of what occurred in between (95 – 112).

Narratives are built out of several incidents and events. While some incidents are recurrent and repetitive, it may find only a single mention in due course of the narration. Events that occur a single time on the other hand, may be repeated several times throughout its narration. Genette terms such recurrences narrative frequency. According to him, there are four possible kinds of narrative frequency which can be summarised as:

     i) Relating once an event that has occurred only once.

     ii) Relating several times an event that had occurred only once.

     iii) Relating once events that have occurred several times.

iv) Relating several times events that have occurred several times. (114 - 116)

The fourth dynamics of narrativity that Genette discusses is narrative mood. According to Genette, every story is made up of elements of diegesis. He contends for varying degrees of diegesis unlike traditional distinctions between diegesis and mimesis as propounded by Plato and Aristotle. Genette makes his point by discussing two important factors under this head – Distance and Perspective. Distance in narrative mood establishes the relationship between the narrator and the narrated which can be understood by distinguishing the narrative distance into narrative of events and narrative of words. Narrative of events is simply diegesis and is "always narrative" (165). It only seeks to describe events but narrative of words is mimesis as it imitates and tells the readers and the audience what a character thinks, feels or says. Perspective, on the other hand is the narrative point of view which he calls focalizations. Genette distinguishes three types of focalizations – zero, internal and external (189). Genette's zero focalization refers to the traditional omniscient narrator, internal focalization is when the character's thoughts, emotions and motives are made known to the readers or the audience. On the contrary, when a story is revealed only through external agents like settings, character's action and behaviour etc, it is, what Genette calls external focalization.

Narrative voice is the last dynamic of narrativity that Genette discusses in his seminal book. This section of the book discusses "who" and "where" the narrator is in the story. Genette mentions extradiegetic narration where the narration is from outside the text and intradiegetic narration where narration is from within the text. Further, he distinguishes between the homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrators. In homodiegetic narrators, the narrator is a character in the story whereas a heterodiegetic narrator is not a character in the story. Overall, Gerard Genette's *Narrative Discourse* offers a

systematic and fundamental understanding of the structural and methodological
principle underlying a narrative text.

      As a matter of fact, Genette's *Narrative Discourse* was first published in 1980
when narratology had already become a formal branch of literary study but in the
1920s, decades before narrative structures became a serious academic pursuit, the
Soviet Union witnessed a group of intellectuals and critics who were "preoccupied
with formal or structuring principles of aesthetic production, including the workings
of narrative" (Dix 103). While the Russian formalists were engaged in the study of the
formal structuring of modern artistic work, Vladimir Propp immersed himself in the
study of a more archaic and ancient art, viz., the Russian folklore. *Morphology of the
Russian Folktale* (1928) is Propp's seminal work on folkloristic and morphology
which had remained buried in the literary storehouse of Russia until its translation into
English in 1958. The translation generated a lot of interest amongst literary critics and
theorists in the west. It is applied to studying the application of narratives in various
mediums of literature, films and media today, though Propp's work basically focuses
on the analytic understanding of Russian folk tales. Propp begins his foreword to
*Morphology of the Russian Folktale* thus:

> The word "morphology" means the study of forms. In botany, the term
> "morphology" means the study of the components of a plant; their
> mutual relationship, and the relationship of the parts to the whole – in
> other words, the study of a plant's structure. But what about a
> morphology of the folktale? Scarcely anyone has thought about the
> possibility of such a concept. Nevertheless, it is possible to make an
> examination of the form of the folktale which will be as exact as the
> morphology of organic formations. (1)

In his work, Propp observes that there are thirty-one functions that determine the narrative path in a folktale. These functions need not follow the given order, nor all thirty-one functions need be present in the narrative but they do propel the movement of the folktale. He further suggests seven spheres of actions which represent character types as found in most Russian folktales. Though Propp's analysis is limited strictly to the Russian folktale, the universality of the narrative functions and spheres of action has aided many theorists in analyzing and delving into the narrative framework of the various forms of art including fiction and its adaptations into films, whose influence has reached almost every nook and cranny of media world.

With reference to Proppian analysis, Andrew Dix in *Beginning Film Studies* credits Propp's thirty-one functions and the seven spheres of action for its applicability in film studies especially in the deconstruction of sequence of events and identifying character types. In his stand on the Proppian analysis, he points out the easy identification of recurrent scenes, events and narrativity in various texts and films. He writes, "*Pretty Woman* (1990), *Bridget Jones Diary* (2001) and *Begin Again* (2014), differ markedly in setting and tone; application of a Proppian analysis to these three romcoms, however, is likely to find them having a set of characters in common, with most 'spheres of action' occupied"(112). The commonality in the narratives are identifiable and though they may not occur in a said order, there is a recognition of recurrence in theme and character in the greater schema of narrativity. This is apparent in several films sprawling across different film genres like *Goodfellas* (1990) and *The Godfather Trilogy* (1972, 1974 and 1990), *Zootropolis* (2016) and *Madagascar* (2005, 2008, 2012, 2014), *The Lord of the Ring* series (2001, 2002, 2003), *The Chronicles of Narnia* series (2005,2008 ,2010), *Wednesday* ( 2022), *The Sandman* (2022), etc to name a few.

Apart from Vladimir Propp's detailed attempt at studying the sequence of events and character types in narratives, Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* is another influential book that proposed the theory of the monomyth. It seeks to analyse the universality of shared patterns in narrative structures and character archetypes in myths found across continents, passed down several ages. It is impossible to decide whether Campbell had been influenced by Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* as his book had not yet been translated when Campbell's work appeared in 1949 but the two texts share complimentary views and ideas in many ways though their theoretical methods differ from each other.

Campbell through his erudite reading of many myths and stories from around the world found that there were shared fundamental narrative structures and character archetypes in the hero quests. He called this common pattern in hero quests the monomyth and presented a formula comprising of three stages "separation – initiation – departure" that every hero must undergo in order to bring the monomyth to a full circle (23). Each of the three stages have been neatly divided into subsections by Campbell attesting to certain events/situations and/or certain challenges/ obstacles that a hero must overcome to reach his/her ultimate goal or to fulfil the task given to him/her. The subsections under each head are enumerated below:

Separation: In this stage the hero is generally given a call for adventure which he initially declines. It symbolises the separation of the hero from the normal world.

1. The Call to Adventure

2. Refusal of the Call

3. Supernatural Aid

4. The Crossing of the First Threshold

5. The Belly of the Whale

Initiation: This stage initiates the hero into his true stature through the various trial and obstacles that he encounters along the quest.

1. The Road of Trials

2. The Meeting with the Goddess

3. Woman as the Temptress

4. Atonement with the Father

5. Apotheosis

6. The Ultimate Boon

Departure: This is the final stage where the hero returns in triumph and is recognised in his society. The hero in this stage may or may not face further trials and tribulations and is shown to have acquired wisdom and maturity.

1. Refusal of the Return

2. The Magic Flight

3. Rescue from Without

4. The Crossing of the Return Threshold

5. Master of the Two Worlds

6. Freedom to Live (28, 29).

*The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and the monomyth structure propounded therein influenced great filmmakers like John Boorman, George Miller, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and Francis Ford Coppola and their style of filmmaking (Vogler 3). Among the list of famous filmmakers is also Christopher Vogler, a screenwriter best known for *The Lion King* and his book *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. This book is a direct outcome of the influence of Campbell's monomyth on Vogler. He discusses how the monomyth structure can be used for screenwriting and he summed up its applicability in screenwriting in the given words, "I'm retelling the hero myth in my

own way, and you should feel free to do the same. Every storyteller bends the mythic pattern to his or her own purpose or the needs of a particular culture. That's why the hero has a thousand faces" (7). Vogler admits that he has replicated Campbell's monomyth structure remodelled it into a narrative structure with three acts comprising of twelve stages for screenwriters where each act corresponds to Campbell's three stages, viz., separation, initiation and departure respectively.

Jackob Lothe and Nick Lacey's books on narratology titled *Narrative in Fiction and Film* and *Narrative and Genre: Key Concepts in Media Studies* are both texts that give a comprehensive introduction of narrativity in literature and films alike. Lothe's book is conveniently divided into two parts. The first part introduces narrativity in texts and in films and discusses the aspects of communication, time and characters in narratives. Amongst the many narratologists that Lothe refers to in his work, Gerard Genette's approach to narrativity as established in *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* is discussed in the book to illustrate on the temporal, spatial and characterisation in narrative texts and films. The second part of the book is an analysis of certain texts and its film adaptations using the theories and concepts discussed in the first part of the book. In a much similar manner, Nick Lacey introduces the key concepts of narratives in literary texts and media by referring to the works to several narratologists like Tzvetan Todorov, Vladimir Propp, Levi-Strauss and Barthes. With regards to Vladimir Propp, Lacey analyses the thirty-one functions and the seven spheres of actions and weighs its applicability and also the limitations it suffers when used in film adaptations. It also briefly discusses Vogler's formulaic approach to narratives in films which Vogler developed from Propp's functions. This general comparison and analysis of Propp and Vogler with reference to narratives in literary texts and films offers much useful insights into the applicability and readability of the functions and characters in texts and in films.

**On Fairy Tales and Fantasy**

In spite of being integral to storytelling, fantasy as a genre has continued to remain in the periphery of academia and research for a long time. Fantasy as a genre traces its roots to folktales and fairy tales, bed time stories for children and old wives tales. David L. Russell in his book *Literature for Children: A Short Introduction* discusses the history of the development of children's literature where he points out that all literature began with oral tales that had been passed down from one generation to the other. While this is a relatively known fact, Russell focuses his discussion on the foundations of children's literature. He begins by stating that the oral tales were for adults and children alike and cites examples of tales from ancient Greece like *Iliad, Odyssey* and *Aesop's fables* which were tales that even children in ancient Greece knew well. In due course of time, several books began to be written specifically for children but were mostly didactic in nature. The book traces the development of children's stories from the earliest times and gives an in depth understanding of how fantasy literature is a by product of tales primarily meant for children. He calls Victorian Age the "Golden Age" of literature and the fantasy genre its "glory" (12). Russell cites writers like Lewis Carroll, Charles Kingsley, Beatrix Potter and J. M. Barrie who contributed to the development of the fantasy genre. He also mentions that the periods between the two world wars were important because it witnessed the "emergence of some of the most famous fantasy figures in children's literature" of which C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien's contributions are notable (18).

In a similar manner, Richard Matthews also traces the origin and development of the fantasy genre in his book *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination.* He makes an enquiry into modern fantasy and mentions C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien's contributions to British modern fantasy and attributes Tolkien's *The Hobbit* published in

1937 to have caused a "great resurgence of fantasy [occurred] in England that was to establish the genre as a significant and serious literary mode" (31). Matthews also devotes an entire chapter to Tolkien titled "Shaping Modern Fantasy: Cosmic Light and Dark (J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*)" wherein he refers to Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* and his linguistic and philological inventions, the history and geography, race and the different ages, all of which he meticulously wrote to create Middle-earth and thereby ushering in the age of the modern literary fantasy.

In this connection, J. R. R. Tolkien's essay titled "On Fairy Stories" which was initially written as a lecture which he delivered at the University of St. Andrew's at the Andrew Lang lecture in 1939 becomes a remarkable instance of the growing importance of the genre within the academic realm. Though Tolkien speaks neither in defence or otherwise of the fantasy genre, he does note that fantasy is a genre that should not be limited to children alone. Adults can enjoy and acquire as much pleasure as a child would from reading fairy stories. Tolkien proceeds to discuss certain important concepts in fantasy: the primary world and the secondary world. The primary world being the real and tangible world that we live in and the secondary world being the world of imagination which one must experience by believing the fictional to be as real and true as the primary world because the moment the readers allow disbelief to set in, "the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside" (12). Tolkien also expressed his apprehensions about watching fantasy in theatres stating that "fantastic forms are not to be counterfeited" because they will, in his opinion, only achieve "buffoonery or mimicry" (16). Apart from this, Tolkien also coined the term "eucatastrophe" referring to happy endings in fairy stories which he regarded the highest function of fairy stories (22). Tolkien's essay was delivered at a time when theatre and

film technologies were still in its experimental state and hence given the context, his

fears appear justified. The fact that the adaptation of his finest fantasy work *The Lord of*

*the Rings* released in 2001 is today the epitome of modern film fantasy in itself bears

testimony to the popularity of the fantasy genre even in contemporary times. The

advancement of film technologies over the years exponentially add dimensions of reality

to what otherwise was left only to the imagination which greatly accelerated the growth

and popularity of the fantasy genre in modern times.

Another notable book that discusses modern fantasy with reference to C. S.

Lewis and J. R.R. Tolkien is Martha C. Sammons's *War of the Fantasy Worlds: C. S.*

*Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien an Art and Imagination*. In this book, Sammons explores the

friendship that influenced the writings of Lewis and Tolkien. Though, Lewis and

Tolkien shared a common literary circle called the Inklings where they shared and

discussed ideas and beliefs on religion, myths, languages, history, etc they shared very

different views on fantasy. Sammons points out that "most scholarship about Tolkien

and Lewis describes their shared faith and academic interests or analyzes each other's

fantasy works. However, no books focus solely on their contrasting views about fantasy,

and Tolkien's views about fantasy are rarely discussed in detail"(x).  This book is an

attempt made by the author to examine the differing views that Lewis and Tolkien held

on fantasy, their approach towards it and how that led to the creation of Narnia and

Middle-earth respectively. While Lewis wrote "quickly and effortlessly" publishing *The*

*Chronicles of Narnia* series comprising of seven books in a span of six years (1950 –

1951) , Tolkien "wrote and revised meticulously" taking almost seventeen years

between the publication of *The Hobbit* (1937) and its sequel *The Lord of the Rings*

(1954) (xi). *The War of the Fantasy Worlds*, however, does not offer a critical analysis

of either *The Chronicles of Narnia* or *The Lord of the Ring* series, it rather offers an

approach and an enquiry into the nature of art and imagination of the two writers through their works.

After the release of Peter Jackson's film *The Lord of the Rings* in 2001, Tolkien has become a cultural phenomenon. A renewal of popular interest in the author has been witnessed especially after the successful film adaptation. Brian Rosebury's *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* offers an engaging discussion on the life and works of Tolkien. The first two chapters attempt an analysis of *The Lord of the Rings* with its focus on the creation of Middle-earth and the narrative style. Rosebury also probes into Tolkien's other works like *The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales,* and later narratives of Arda to make a comprehensive reading of the history, geography, race and language that Tolkien so meticulously constructed through years of dedicated labour. The book also makes a comparison between Ralph Bakshi and Peter Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1978 and 2001 respectively and the technological advantage that Jackson had over Bakshi's 1978 animated adaptation.

One of the best known critics on Tolkien is perhaps Tom Shippey whose book *J. R. R Tolkien: The Author of the Century* offers a scholarly study of the works of Tolkien. Given the fact that the author, Shippey, is a medievalist much like Tolkien was and a scholar of Old and Middle English Literature as well as an expert on modern fantasy, his book offers an engaging and an entertaining approach to the works of Tolkien especially *The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. He traces the tradition of storytelling and finds continuum in the fairy tales and stories told in earlier centuries like Grimm's fairytales and *Beowulf.* Apart from the three major works of Tolkien, Shippey also looks into the lesser known works of Tolkien like *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *Leaf by Niggle* which offers a substantial understanding of the style, approach and works of Tolkien as a whole.

Another book that gives a reasonable insight into the life and works of Tolkien is Humphrey Carpenter's collection of Tolkien's letters which was published in 1981 edited by Carpenter along with Tolkien's son Christopher Tolkien. This collection of letters simply titled *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* comprises of 354 letters that Tolkien had exchanged with various people in his life from 1914 until his death in 1973. The collection of letters that has been published ranges from personal letters that he had written to his wife and children, letters that he had written during his tenure as a professor of Anglo Saxon, his letters to his publishers Allen and Unwin, and letters that explained his Middle-earth to various people who had written to him enquiring about it. These collections of letters have been of significant relevance for this research as it gave a firsthand insight into the personal and academic life of the author.

The biopic on Tolkien by the same name released in 2019 is the most recent work on Tolkien's life. This film traces Tolkien's life from his younger days when he and his brother Hilary were orphaned after the death of their mother, his growing up years, his days in Oxford, meeting Edith Bratt and the struggles that followed both as an academician and as a family man. *Tolkien* gives an insight not only into his personal life but his views on religion, his friendships and their influence upon him, his love for language, his erudition and scholarship, all of which played significant roles in the making of Tolkien, the writer.

Several films have been also been made on C. S. Lewis which documents the author's life and his approach to Christianity and its influence on his works. One amongst them, that has been referred to for the purpose of this study is 2005 docudrama *C. S. Lewis: Beyond Narnia*. This docudrama runs between flashbacks and running commentaries by Lewis as he recounts events and days in his life that led to renewed faith in God, his spiritual and intellectual awakening, his works that were influenced by

his religious ideals and principles and his love for Joy Davidman who died of cancer four years after their marriage. This film gives an insight into Lewis as a person who staggered in his faith especially after the death of his wife but it is also offers a more comprehensive understanding of the Christian allegories, themes and symbols that Lewis used extensively in the *Chronicles of Narnia.*

*Into the Wardrobe: C. S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles* by David C. Downing gives a further insight into the life and works of the formidable scholar and critic. The first chapter of this book systematically traces the life of Lewis from his infancy in Belfast in 1898 up until his death in 1963. Downing pens Lewis's important life events and decisions that impacted his life and career. The second chapter "The Genesis of Narnia" discusses each of the seven book of the *Chronicles of Narnia* in the order in which Lewis had written them and the process of creation that varied from book to book. The third and the fourth chapters deal with the spiritual vision and moral psychology of Lewis and its manifestations in his Narnia stories in the form of symbols, allegories, themes and dialogues. The fifth chapter is an exploration of the classical and medieval elements that Lewis had widely read throughout his life and in the last two chapters, Downing discusses Lewis's literary artistry and how he used his knowledge of the classics, medievalism, Greek, Latin, French, Norse, Celtic, Old English and Hebrew to create names of creatures, characters and places. This book is a systematic and a detailed analysis of all the elements that went into the making of Narnia thus, providing, for the purpose of this research, meaningful insights into understanding Narniaverse as a whole and the many nuances associated with it.

If C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien through their stories transport the readers to the magical worlds of Narnia and Middle-earth where every creature and landscape is born out of the imagination of the authors, Rick Riordan weaves magic into the

ordinary and the everyday by intertwining it into our world. Rick Riordan, a contemporary American author is best known for his work *Percy Jackson and the Olympian* series who adapted the Greek myths into contemporary American socio-cultural lifestyle where gods are as fallible as humans and humans as heroic as the gods. While addressing the introduction to *Demigods and Monsters: Your Favourite Authors on Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series*, Riordan explains how he had come to write about the dyslexic hero Percy Jackson who finds out that he is a demigod at the insistence of his son who had asked him to fabricate bedtime stories when he had run out of Greek myths to tell him. Riordan explains that he does not want his stories to be limited to single interpretations and or confined to finding symbolic meanings, rather, he writes:

> The writer's job is to write the book. The careful reader's job is to find meaning in the book. Both jobs are important. The meanings you find can enlighten, fascinate, and surprise. They can even surprise the author. The author, at least *this* author, uses symbols and themes subconsciously. I don't think about it, any more than a native speaker of English consciously thinks about subject verb agreement as he speaks. (Riordan)

*Demigods and Monsters* is a collection of essays contributed by several scholars and writers on the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series that bring fresh and new insights into Riordan's works which have been interpreted differently from what the author himself may have subconsciously implied.

**On Films and Film adaptations**

In Michael Wood's *Film: A Very Short Introduction*, he wrote that, "A film is a roll of such material that can be run through a projector in order to throw moving

images, or images of movement, on a screen. And it is also, of course, a name for what is projected on the screen as well as the art and industry of making such images" (5). Films as an art and an industry is the result of the many different experiments conducted on various pictures and still photographs to create moving images on screen. In the decades that followed after the first motion pictures were screened by the Lumière Brothers in 1895, films quickly emerged as an academic discipline. In this regard, Andrew Dix writes that "Film's earliest students included major figures from other creative fields such as literature and painting, repelled by its mechanical and chemical constituents but also drawn to it for its exhilarating modernity and for the elasticity of its presentation of time and space" (4). Two such essays written in the early decades after the inception of films as an industry that have been referred to for the purpose of this research are Virginia Woolf's 1926 essay "The Cinema" and Walter Benjamin's 1935 essay " The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction".

Notably, one of the first few essays to be written by a modernist writer on the development of this new form of narrative and art, Virgina Woolf's essay "The Cinema" contends about the future possibilities of cinema calling it "a simple and even a stupid art"(348). Woolf , like most critics of her day is both "repelled" as well as "drawn" by this new art (Dix 4). Films, according to her, are parasites that preyed on literary texts. Given the fact that many films had begun to be adapted from novels, Woolf expresses her doubts about the portrayal of emotions and thoughts of characters, representing symbols and imageries in films. Though Woolf is seemingly apprehensive about films throughout the essay, she does regard the possibilities of cinema becoming an art form though she concludes that this technology driven form

of art "has been born the wrong end first. The mechanical skill is far in advance of the art to be expressed" (352).

Almost a decade after Woolf's essay, Walter Benjamin's popular essay on this new technology driven art was published in 1935. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" discusses the significant effects of technology on films and its impact on aesthetic experience. In his fifteen part essay, Benjamin discusses photography and films, and mentions that mechanical reproduction of the work of art is "lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be" (3). Benjamin opines that the mechanical reproduction of art has reduced the "aura" of any art form as mechanical reproductions duplicates art which in turn overrides its originality (4). According to Benjamin, "aura" is the essence and the uniqueness of a work of art as it exists in a specific place at a specific time, much like dramas and paintings but replicating in into several identical copies withers the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction (4).

To better understand the mechanics that led to the invention of motion pictures which eventually led to the setting up of films as an industry, it is necessary to understand the various experiments and inventions that contributed to the making of the first motion picture. Wheeler Winston Dixon and Gwendolyn Audrey Foster provides a systematic and a precise historical account of the history of films in *A Short History of Film*. This book traces the development of films from 1832 when Joseph Plateau in Belgium invented the phenakistoscope, a device that uses the principle of persistence of vision by attaching images to a disc so that it is rotated at a certain speed to create an illusion of continuous movement in the images. This led to several other inventions that developed its models on the same principles like zoetrope, kinetoscope and the cinematograph. Dixon and Foster also discuss certain early

contributors of films and one among them is Georges Méliès. Méliès is known for his use of trick photography and illusion in films and is known for pioneering the science fiction and the fantasy genre. This text traces films from the beginning till contemporary times, specifically till 2007.

*Studying Films* by Nathan Abram, Ian Bell and Jan Udris is a book that attempts a scholarly and an academic enquiry of films. Films are a relatively recent phenomenon and film studies are even more recent than that. This book does not discuss the birth of films as such, or traces its evolution, but acquaints the readers with key concepts and terminologies in film studies and film criticisms with reference mostly to Hollywood. The second part of this book titled "Film as Text" have been found relevant and insightful for the purpose of this study. Divided into four chapters, viz., "Film Technology", "The Language of Film", "Early Cinema" and "Film Form", this section provides a lucid reading of film as technology and how it has impacted the industry and influenced audiences, the use of computer and digital technology especially special effects and CGI on which the filmic fantasy genre are extensively dependent, how mise-en-scène, cinematography and editing works in films. The third chapter of the book also presents a brief account of early cinema and this renders the understanding of the technological developments in films in present day, especially the filmic fantasy genre.

Soon after motion pictures, the pioneers of the film industry began to recognise the suitability of stories in motion pictures. This concept of films having a set narrative structure to set a story in momentum through the use of the camera lens appealed to a lot of early filmmakers, who naturally looked upon literature for the purpose of filmmaking. The history of film adaptation, therefore, is as new and as old as the history of film itself. As discussed earlier, Virginia Woolf, was one amongst many critics who

saw film adaptations as commercialisation and exploitation of art and creativity to gratify the enormous appetite of growing mass audience. Speaking about the reception of film adaptations in the early decades of the twentieth century and with reference to the kind of acceptance it suffered, Deborah Cartmell begins her essay "100+ Years of Adaptations, or, Adaptations as the Art Form of Democracy" by stating that it has "always been the case that new technologies are greeted with suspicion" and continues to point out the conflicting opinions on film adaptations that reside among film critics and academicians even more than a hundred years since its inception  (1). She mentions several film critics who showed abhorrence and had reservations about literary works being adapted into films, key among them being Theodre Dresier, Virginia Woolf, William Hunter and Thomas Leitch. She also mentions George Bluestone as the first to attempt a sincere and serious study of film adaptation which paved the way, thence, for other film scholars to follow suit. André Bazin, a film critic and Aldous Huxley, a writer and a screenwriter also finds mention in Cartmell's essay as people who advocated for film adaptations at a time when film criticisms showed less favour in that direction. Apart from these, Cartmell also discusses the contributions made by more recent film critics, Linda Hutcheon and Robert Stam towards the study of film adaptations.  In her essay, Deborah Cartmell discusses democratization of literature. She believes that "adaptation is the art of democratization, a "freeing" of a text from the confined territory of its author and of its readers" and hence adaptation studies should look beyond the derogatory status awarded to film adaptations and focus on the whole new levels of creation, re-creation and interpretation (8). This essay offers a general overview of film adaptations and its reception since its inception and the varying criticisms it received ever since. She makes references of several film adaptations that

have become phenomenal successes especially those of William Shakespeare and Jane Austen.

Speaking of a new approach to film adaptation studies, Robert Stam in his essay "Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation" explicitly discusses the deprecatory and pejorative approach to film adaptations that has prevailed for the longest time among film critics. In this essay, Stam opines that the pre existing notions on film adaptations as being inferior to the original text because of "superimposed prejudices" about "seniority" which explains the assumption that older arts are the better art, or due to "iconophobia" the assumption that verbal arts are inferior to visual arts and "logophilia", the valorisation of words (58). Stam also speaks about the complexities involved in the transference of narratives from one medium to the other and while the focus has been on fidelity for a long time, Stam explains the impracticalities and impossibilities of adapting a book exactly as it appears. Instead, he suggests newer approaches to film adaptations – "translation, reading, dialogization, cannibalization, transmutation, transfiguration, and signifying" where the critics' mind is emancipated of biases and prejudices, moralistic judgements and petty comparisons and in its stead to read film adaptations as an independent work on art that finds its worth of appreciation and criticism embedded in contextual and intertextual history (62).

Developing further on Robert Stam's work on film adaptation, Linda Hutcheon published her formative book on film adaptations titled *A Theory of Adaptation*. This book discusses adaptations in all its myriad forms – poems, novels, plays, operas, paintings, songs, dances, film, television, radio, theme parks, etc (xi). Hutcheon makes a critical overview of adaptation as a process and a product, and attempts to understand "what, who, why, how, where and when" adaptation happens. The entire book is structured to address each of the questions in reference to the various other elements

involved in any given adaptation. The first chapter gives an overall introduction to adaptation, how adaptation is perceived by different critics and academicians and the overt relationship shared between any source text and its adaptation. The second chapter focuses on what gets adapted and what changes occur as the verbal medium is adapted into the visual medium. The third chapter answers the question who is the adapter and why adaptation happens (80, 85). She also discusses the constraints of adaptation – economic constraints, legal constraints, cultural factors, personal and political motives each of which have significant role in the process of adaptation. The fourth chapter titled "How" focuses on the receivers of the adaptation product, viz., the audience. Hutcheon broadly categorizes audiences into two types: the knowing audience and the unknowing audience. The knowing audience are versed with the source text and hence more critical and sometimes even biased, whereas the unknowing audience watch an adaptation just as they would watch any other movie. Hutcheon weighs the challenges, advantages and disadvantages of making film adaptations for either of the two types of audiences and thus brings the role of audiences in the process of film adaptations. The next chapter "Where? When?" discusses the context of adaptation. She writes, "An adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in a context – a time and a place, a society and a culture; it does not exist in a vacuum" and explicates the process of adaptation to suit certain contexts and how the audience responds and receives it (142). The final chapter is  brief and the primary focus is to answer the question "What Is *Not* an Adaptation?" (170). It is a conclusion of all her discussions in the previous five chapters. *A Theory of Adaptation* continues to be a popular text on adaptation studies that throws light on the various aspects that underlines the process of adaptation as a whole. In fact, it has proved to be insightful

and useful not only for scholars and academicians of film studies but to understand all kinds of visual art, theatre, pedagogy, etc.

In continuance on the discussion on film adaptation and its varied reception over the years, Timothy Corrigan in his essay "Literature on Screen, A History: In the Gap" concludes that "cinematic adaptations have drawn the attention, scorn, and admiration of movie viewers, historians and scholars since 1895"(29). This essay is crucial to the study of film adaptation as he enquires into the changing relationship between literature and films over the years and how it shares dynamics of being an adaptation and a discipline at the same time.

The review of literature on available works on narratives, fantasy, films and film adaptations have shed ample light for the purpose of this research. It is evident from the source materials reviewed that literature and films are bound by one common thread - narratives. The change in style and technique of using narratives in literature and films, particularly fantasy genre and its film adaptations, will vary but each medium regardless, tells (shows) a story. Bearing the purpose and aim of the study, i.e., to study narrative patterns in the fantasy genre as it gets adapted into films, the literatures reviewed will be applied and referred to in the ensuing chapters and will attempt to explore, analyse and study the dynamics of narrativity in the select works of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan and their film adaptations. Discussed below are the methodologies that will be applied in the following chapters.

**Methodology**

In the light of the fact that three authors and their select works with their film adaptations have been undertaken for the purpose of this research, the second chapter will be devoted to J. R. R. Tolkien, his works and their film adaptations, the third and the fourth to C. S. Lewis and Rick Riordan respectively. Since Tolkien, Lewis and

Riordan are categorically fantasy writers and their film adaptations in the twenty first century have evocated the fantastical into the technological, the study will attempt a close reading of select narratologists in each of the chapters, vis-à-vis the select works which will be supplemented by theories on film adaptations. The second chapter will attempt a study of Tolkien's Middle-earth narrativity in *The Lord of the Rings* series and their film adaptations by Peter Jackson by using Gerard Genette's theory of narrativity and Marie-Laure Ryan's dimensions of narrativity. This chapter will also examine how Tolkien's secondary world is translated into films and attempt to deduce what may have been gained and/or lost in the process of transportation from print to screen. The third chapter will use Vladimir Propp's methodological framework as an analytical tool to examine the component parts of narrative structure in C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and their film adaptations. This chapter will also enquire into the nature of language of films and its translation in the process of adaptation and will also probe into the use of various cinematic artefacts like mise-en-scène, computer technologies, visual effects (VFX) and computer-generated imagery (CGI) to reinvent a visual Narnia. The fifth chapter will attempt to explore Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* in the light of Joseph Campbell's seminal work *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* where he introduced the concept of the monomyth. Campbell's theory will also be used to inquire into the close approximation of Riordan's plot with that of Campbell's monomyth structure in the first novel and its deviation in the second. This chapter will focus on the monomyth structure and attempt to study the impact of the text and their film adaptations on readers/audiences in general. The fifth chapter will examine how fantasy as a genre communicates to the readers and the audiences (verbally and

visually) the many supernatural and out-of-the-world creations of the author and its recreation by filmmakers by using cinematic technologies. Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation and Robert Stam's concept of adaptations as translations will be applied to study literary and filmic fantasy genres. The works of C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* series and Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series and their adaptations will be used as references to gain better perspective into this study. Chapter six will be an overall analysis of the entire study aimed at evaluating and highlighting the significant findings and conclusions drawn through the process of writing the thesis. The limitations and recommendations for future research in this area of study will also be deliberated on. Overall, the concluding chapter will attempt to present the crux of the arguments and discussions presented in the thesis.

**Chapterisation**

**Chapter One: Introduction**

The first chapter will outline the purpose and aim of the study. It will also make reviews of existing literatures on the topic of research, discuss the theoretical framework of the study and state the objectives and scope of the study.

**Chapter Two: Narrative Adaptation of Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings* into a Twenty First Century Cinematic Saga**

J. R. R. Tolkien is popularly known for his works *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* series (1954 – 1955) but these tales are a product of a complex history of Middle-earth fabricated with miniscule details, it is a product of all kinds of races and fantastical creatures, it is a product of invented languages rooted in

etymologies, syntax, grammar and phonetics, it is a product of an imagined geography elaborated with detailed maps; on all of which Tolkien worked laboriously for years, paying attention to microscopic details to add dimensions of reality to this fabricated secondary world of his creation.

"Narrative Adaptation of Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings* into a Twenty First Century Cinematic Saga" is an attempt to study Tolkien's Middle-earth with reference to narrativity in *The Lord of the Rings* exploring the spatial, temporal, mental, formal and pragmatic dimensions as discussed by Marie-Laure Ryan in her essay "Toward a Definition of Narrative". Each of the dimensions will be applied to the source text and its film adaptations, alternatively, to gain more insight into the transference of a story from one medium to the other while also constantly investigating into how the history of Middle-earth is played out simultaneously in the text and the film.

When the first of *The Lord of the Rings* series, i.e., *The Fellowship of the Ring* was adapted into screen by Peter Jackson in 2001, it re-established and redefined filmic fantasy genre for the twenty first century filmmakers and its audience as it set standards on the use of computer and camera technologies to bring the fantastical into the real. The success of *The Lord of the Rings* evoked a wave of interest – academically, commercially and for entertainment purpose in Tolkien, his works and also in the fantasy genre as a whole. In the light of the "cultural afterlife" that Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings* gained after Jackson's adaptation, this chapter will also attempt to probe into the film adaptation as a cinematic saga of the twenty first century (Rosebury 219).

**Chapter Three: *The Chronicles of Narnia*: Analysis of Narrative Structures in Select Narnian Books and Film Adaptations**

Vladimir Propp's functions and spheres of action as he identified in his detailed reading of the folktales from Russia has been found to be of universal relevance. Chapter two is an attempt to deduce the underlying narrative elements as suggested by Propp in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series authored by C. S. Lewis and their film adaptations by Andrew Adamson and Michael Apted. This chapter will attempt to identify the thirty-one functions and the seven spheres of action as discussed by Propp in Lewis's select texts – *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and film adaptations. A Proppian analysis of Lewis's Narniaverse will be made by tracing the functions and spheres of action to deduce the relevance of the Proppian analysis not only in the text but also in films. Apart from identifying Proppian functions and actions, this chapter will also enquire into the changes that occur in due course of adaptation and how that alters the chronology of the film vis-à-vis the source text.

Filmmakers Andrew Adamson who directed *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005) and *Prince Caspian* (2008), and Michael Apted who directed the film *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (2010) will also be taken within the purview of this research chapter. Under the sub heading "Reinventing Narnia: Language of the Lens" attempts will be made to recognise the transference of language from the verbal to the visual, to understand the language of films and how filmmakers recreated a new Narnia using camera and computer technology.

**Chapter Four: Riordan's Narrative of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* and its film adaptation*: (Re) Connecting Modern America to Greek Mythology**

Greek myths have found to be embedded in literary texts from the earliest century till date. These myths abound in themes of love and hatred, sacrifice and vengeance, ambition and arrogance, loss and regret, family and friendships, to list a few. They are stories of gods and goddesses, of heroes and villains, of the struggle between good and evil, of battles won and lost, of quests and adventures. The characters, themes, motifs, morals and meanings are found ingrained not only in our literary texts but in our cultures, art, philosophies and languages; its interpretation and adaptation certainly changing and evolving through the ages, thus its influence definitely relevant and growing.

Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* is a fine example of one such text that has transformed Greek myths to fit modern American context. Riordan commingles characters and elements from Greek myths into contemporary American situation and locale. "Riordan's Narrative of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* and its film adaptation: (Re) Connecting Modern America to Greek Mythology" attempts, as the chapter title suggests, to (re)connect Modern America to Greek mythology. Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* wherein he introduced the concept of the monomyth will be used to explore the protagonist, Percy Jackson's journey in *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters.* The three stages of Campbell's monomyth as identified in the select texts will be deliberated at length and the chapter will also enquire into those aspects of the texts where subversion and omission of the monomyth may have occurred.

The film adaptations of *The Lightning Thief* and *Sea of Monsters* did not perform as well as *The Lord of the Rings* series or *The Lion, the Witch and the*

*Wardrobe* in the Box Office. Chris Columbus who directed *The Lightning Thief* and Thor Freudenthal, the director of *Sea of Monsters*, altered the source text to a great degree. This chapter will hence, make an attempt to enquire into the nature of transference from source text to film adaptations and the reasons why it may have suffered as a film adaptation.

**Chapter Five: Narrativity of Modern Fantasy: Adapting Literary Fantasy into Filmic Fantasy**

Fantasy is perhaps one of the oldest and most popular genres in the world as it traces its roots to fairy stories, myths and folktales. Fantasy, as a genre has evolved over time and today it has become a favourite amongst readers and film audiences. In the light of the given statement, the crux of this chapter will comprise of tracing the evolution of fantasy genre both as a literary text and a filmic text.

"Narrativity of Modern Fantasy: Adapting Literary Fantasy into Filmic Fantasy" will also attempt to study the increasing popularity of film adaptations of modern fantasy with reference to the works and approaches of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan. This chapter will also study the works of Lewis, Tolkien and Riordan as high fantasies and the creation of Narnia, Middle-earth and Camp half-blood in the verbal text and its recreation by filmmakers as a visual text. The issues of fidelity in film adaptations, a point of contention among critics, film scholars and audiences for more than a hundred years now, will be addressed and deliberated at some length.

Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* broadly classified audiences who watched film adaptations into two types: the knowing audience and the unknowing audience. Under the subheading "Reading Film Adaptations", this chapter will attempt to study the nature of the knowing and the unknowing audiences, how they read and

respond to film adaptations and how filmmakers deal with the two types of audiences. Overall, this chapter is an attempt to recognise the growing popularity of modern fantasy in contemporary period with reference to the three authors and their works selected for the purpose of this research study.

**Chapter Six: Conclusion**

**Purpose Statement: Objectives and Scope**

Concurrent to technological advancement and globalisation, the world has metamorphosed into one small "interconnected, metaphorical 'village'" (Gibson 312). Mass media and social media have created a world of virtual reality that is taking over almost every aspect of an individual's life. Films, in the present technologically driven world closely linked by the internet, have become major influence on lifestyle, culture, art and commerce. In this context, narrativity and film adaptations in the larger scheme of things have become central to cosmopolitan culture. Furthermore, the twenty first century witnessed a revival of the fantasy genre with the release of Christopher Columbus's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* in 2001.

Having stated thus, one of the objectives of the study is to examine the dynamics or changes and transition that occur in narrativity as it shifts from one medium of storytelling to the other (books to films). Another aspect of the study is to delve into the question of significance of fantasy genre amongst readers and audiences and the continuum of narrativity that exists along stories of fantasy in spite of changing socio cultural contexts in a creative manner with the impetus of modern technology. The study aims to explore both literary and filmic fantasies as genres that are intersections of imagination and reality, education and entertainment.

**Conclusion**

Stories are the golden thread that has sewed culture, tradition, language and emotions of humankind together across many civilizations, down several ages. Narratives may vary from age to age and from culture to culture, but it has never ceased to fascinate, engross, entertain, teach, mould and preserve humankind. Fairy stories, folktales, myths and legends began as oral traditions that passed down traditional beliefs, rituals and practises; explained natural phenomenon and attributed it to the workings of supernatural entities; they were used to teach moral lessons, to educate, to mould, to build feelings of compassion and empathy. The elements of magic and the supernatural that were woven into the fabric of these tales continue to take its listeners on flights of fancy even today.

The modern fantasy genre, the roots of which can be traced back to the eighteenth century has inherited the genetic traits of fairy stories, folktales and myths but the eminence of this genre grew in the twentieth century when the world was grappling with the horrors and aftermaths of the two World Wars. Albeit mostly set in an alternate universe amidst fantastical creatures, where elements of magic and realism entered a marriage of harmony, these tales often layered in metaphors and allegories of the socio-political order of the day, religious and philosophical ideologies of the writers, appealed as much to the matured readers as it did to the younger ones.

The twenty first century ushered in an age of filmic fantasy, beginning with blockbuster film adaptations of J. K. Rowling and J. R. R. Tolkien. Modern audience's popular reception of filmic fantasies led film industries to churn out many films belonging to this genre but this reciprocity has, of late, been showing mixed reception. Regardless, questions abound. Why is the fantasy genre a popular and a favourite genre even today? What is the scope of this genre? How do changing narratives

impact the manner in which a story is told and received? Will filmic fantasy

adaptations become the future course of entertainment in this tech-driven world? In

the light of the plethora of questions that surround the study, the ensuing chapters will

further the discussions and explore each of the questions and issues that find relevance

within the purview of this research.

**Chapter 2**

**Narrative Adaptation of Tolkien's Middle-Earth in *The Lord of the Rings* into a**

**Twenty-First Century Cinematic Saga**

**Introduction**

"The theatre of my tale is this earth, the one in which we now live, but the historical period is imaginary." J. R. R. Tolkien (Carpenter *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* 308)

**John Ronald Reuel Tolkien**

Born to Arthur Tolkien and Mabel Tolkien on 3 January 1892, in Bloemfontein, South Africa, J. R. R. Tolkien was a brilliant scholar who showed immense interest in medieval literature and philology at a very young age. He learnt Old and Middle English, the Gothic grammar, and medieval literature which was his academic discipline. He meticulously read Anglo-Saxon works such as *Beowulf* and works from medieval literature like *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* including lesser known texts of the period such as *Ancrene Wisse.* Tolkien's Middle-earth and its languages was not simply a product of his imagination but a combination of his philological knowledge and academic discipline. He imagined a world where all kinds of races and fantastical creatures occupied parts of his Middle-earth wherein he detailed elaborate accounts of the four ages of Middle-earth, the genesis of the races of the Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, Orcs while also laying out its genealogy, its language and elaborate maps.

Tolkien had only one sibling, Hilary Arthur Reuel Tolkien and after the loss of their father in 1896, the family moved to Sarehole and then to Birmingham. Unlike most English writers of the day, Tolkien did not enjoy the benefits of education in a

proper London school. Financial instability forced Mabel Tolkien to educate her two boys at home and that was when she recognised Tolkien's aptitude with language which she encouraged by getting him a lot of books to read. The first ten years of Tolkien's formal education was, as a matter of fact, acquired in a ramshackle building covered in soot with a prospect of railway lines and factory chimneys. Tolkien received his education at St. Edward's School, Birmingham and later at St. Philip's School. He shifted back to St. Edward's School in 1903 after he won a Foundation scholarship.

At the age of twelve, Tolkien's life shattered as he and his brother were orphaned. Mabel Tolkien died of diabetes in 1904 and with that the two young Tolkien brothers were put under the guardianship of a priest, Father Francis Xavier Morgan. After being orphaned, Tolkien and his brother were moved to a boarding house and it was here that Tolkien met another orphan, Edith Mary Bratt whom he would later marry. Despite the romantic attachment that the two teenagers developed for each other, their romance was intervened by Father Francis who forbade Tolkien from contacting Edith until he attained the age of twenty one, under the ultimatum that he would otherwise have to forfeit his university education. On his twenty first birthday, Tolkien wrote to Edith only to receive a letter from her that informed him of her engagement to a certain George Field. On receiving her reply, Tolkien made haste to her home in Cheltenham with the hope of winning her back. They married in 1916, and though at times their marriage was troubled, they remained married for fifty-five years until her death in 1971. Tolkien died two years later on 2 September 1973. Edith and Tolkien are buried together and their tombstone is encrypted:

Edith Mary Tolkien, Lúthien, 1889–1971

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, Beren, 1892–1973.

It was during his period of separation with Edith in 1911, that Tolkien went to Oxford to study classics. In 1913, Tolkien developed an enthusiasm for the study of language and shifted to the study of philology and literature. In 1915, he graduated with a first class in the analytical skill and mastery of philological detail which was accompanied by an unusual emotional, intellectual and imaginative approach to languages. Besides Greek and Latin, Tolkien had mastered and became fluent in Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Finnish and Welsh. For many later linguists, Tolkien's obsession with language seemed eccentric but his formidable range of philological knowledge, which continued to be enriched by his work on the New English Dictionary (1918-1920) two years after his graduation led to the invention of the languages of Middle-earth "whose styles he evolved, in a half-intuitive, half systematic fashion, alongside, and in intimate connection with, the development of the narrative 'history'" (Rosebury138). Quenya  and Sindarin which are Elvish languages are two complete languages invented by Tolkien and are based largely on the Finnish and Welsh phonology.

Besides his mastery of languages, certain elements from Tolkien's own life are also discernable in his works. The estrangement of interest as Edith and himself suffered through the course of their long marriage is depicted in the distancing between the Ents and the Entwives in *The Lord of the Rings*. Elrond, who forbids Aragorn from marrying Arwen until he became king of Arnor and Gondor, reminiscences Father Francis's intervention of Tolkien and Edith's romantic relationship. Sarehole, the town where Tolkien stayed with his widowed mother in the 1890s offered a picturesque landscape of open farmlands, mills by the riverside, dells and pools, willow trees and swans; a pre-industrial model where motor cars were rare sights and these became model images for Tolkien's Hobbiton Shires. In a letter that he wrote to his son Michael

Tolkien in 1967, he tells him about how Bilbo's journey in *The Hobbit* was a direct outcome of his own adventure as their party of 12 hiked through the woods and glades of Switzerland in 1911, "I am…delighted that you have made the acquaintance of Switzerland, and of the very part that I once knew best and which had the deepest effect on me. The hobbit's (Bilbo's) journey from Rivendell to the other side of the Misty Mountains including the glissade down the slithering stones into the pine woods, is based on my adventures in 1911" (Carpenter 494).

**Peter Jackson, the Cast and Crew of *The Lord of the Rings* Film Trilogy**

Peter Jackson (1961) is a film director, screenwriter and producer from New Zealand who discovered his interest in filmmaking at a very young age. When he was only eight years old, he made his first experimental home movies. By the age of twenty, he saved his money to buy a 16mm camera to make his first amateur feature film *Bad Taste* (1987) which was screened at the Cannes Film Festival. It became a launching pad for his career. Jackson went on to direct several other films after that but in 1996 when he made *The Frighteners* that used computer-generated special effects, his directorial career shifted as "*The Frighteners* was to spur Peter's imagination in the direction of making a fantasy film - a road that would, eventually lead him to Middle-earth" (Sibley 14, 15). Jackson is best known today as the director of the epic *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. This film took eight years to complete and was an enormous challenge for Jackson and the entire team involved in the making of the film.

With an eager Tolkien fan base standing by on internet ever since the announcement made by New Line Cinema on August 24th 1998, Jackson began working on his film project. *The Lord of the Rings* needed a large casting considering the plethora of characters that Tolkien created. The casting for the film began in the

later part of 1998 and was a long, slow tedious process. Jackson was determined to make the characters in Middle-earth as close to Tolkien's creation as possible.

For the role of the main protagonist Frodo Baggins, Jackson auditioned over 200 English actors but he couldn't find any actor that fit the role of Frodo. Ironically, after all the auditions, Jackson was "struck" by American actor Elijah Wood's audition which was videotaped and emailed to the casting office (Pryor 260). Wood wore a Hobbit costume and delivered his dialogues with an English accent which Jackson found impressive and signed him up as Frodo Baggins, the Hobbit protagonist of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

The trouble with finding the right cast persisted even with finding the right actors for the other roles. For instance, Orlando Bloom who initially auditioned for the role of Boromir, played the role of Legolas, the elf. Christopher Lee who intended to play the role of Gandalf, played Saruman instead. The role of Gandalf went to Ian McKellen though Jackson's first choice was Sean Connery. The role of Aragorn was played by Viggo Mortenson, Arwen by Liv Tyler and Cate Blanchett played the role of Galadriel. The character of Gollum was a tricky one to fit. Jackson opted for a digital creation of Gollum. Andy Serkis's voice was used to create the voice of Gollum.

Besides the main cast, the casting directors had to struggle with finding thousand of extras that they would need to play Orcs, Ringwraiths, Hobbits, Elves and the several other races of Tolkien's Middle-earth. The team especially needed extras for the battle scenes that were to project a huge population of Middle-earth from all races. Pryor in his book wrote about the casting process saying that many of the extras and stuntmen hired had to wear "uncomfortable prosthetics" and it got to the point where the casting office decided to hire anyone who would be able to fill into the role of the extras (26).

As far as finding the right location for Middle-earth was concerned, Peter Jackson's immediate choice was his home country New Zealand. It was budget friendly and the landscape of New Zealand with its vast meadows and high mountains, rough and hilly terrain, marshes and thickly populated forests were the perfect locales to built Tolkien's Shire, Rivendell, Minas Tirith, Rohan, etc. John Howe and Alan Lee were the concept artists for this film who travelled New Zealand extensively to transform Tolkien's Middle-earth into a visual reality. Next, Jackson signed up with Weta Workshop to design the many prosthetics, miniatures, weapons and costumes that would be required for the film. Weta Workshop in turn hired several costume designers, blacksmiths, jewellers, sculptors to complete the numerous props and costumes that were needed for the film.

The biggest challenge, however was writing the screenplay. It was a humongous task to reduce Tolkien's over 50,000 worded book into a film trilogy without ruining the essence of the book. Several drafts were made and remade before the final one. Screenwriters Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh and Phillipa Boyens had to structure the film in a way that the ending of the first film connected to the next, while also providing a climax and a denouement in each individual film. It also became necessary for the scriptwriters to omit certain characters and incidents from the book like that of Tom Bombadil in the film to reduce the running time of the film trilogy. Howard Showe composed, produced and conducted the music score for the film.

**Application of Theories and Methodology**

This chapter aims to make a study of Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings* and their film adaptation. Gerard Genette's theory of narrativity as discussed in Chapter One will be used to analyse Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings.*

Besides Genette's theory on narrative discourse, the chapter also aims to study the various dimensions of narration, viz., spatial, temporal, mental, formal and pragmatic as explicated by Marie-Laure Ryan to make a comprehensive reading of the text as well as the film and relate it to the shift in narrative structure/ type that occurs in due course of adaptation from one medium to another. The chapter will look at how Tolkien's secondary world with its maps and geographies have been adapted into a film trilogy. It will also attempt to study the transportation of Tolkien's invented languages and the various invented races of Middle-earth into screen and will briefly look at its impact on readers/ audiences in general.

**Works on Middle-earth by J. R. R. Tolkien**

Tolkien in his lifetime had written and edited several scholarly essays and articles, books and stories, but it was the publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937 that established his name in the literary world and put Middle-earth on the literary map. Tolkien spent his entire life writing about this fictional secondary world.

After the success of *The Hobbit,* his publisher Stanley Unwin wanted a sequel but Tolkien was a meticulous writer, devoting months and even years to revising and rewriting his works many times. So the sequel to *The Hobbit* had to wait for almost twenty years to appear. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers* were published in 1954 and *The Return of the King* appeared a year later in 1955. Tolkien was a perfectionist and he wanted every detail to be engrained in consistency and coherence. He not only meticulously drew maps of Middle-earth which showed direction of wind, the phases of the moon and calculations of time and distance but made endless lists of dates, calendars, charts of family trees, annals of kings and rulers of Middle-earth, elaborate listings of pronunciation of words and names he had

coined, his invented languages and their translations. Tolkien wanted his readers to simply get into his story and take it (in a sense) as actual history and this is perhaps the reason why Tolkien lent such devotion to his "sub-creation" (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 15). There is an entire chain of work by Tolkien that details the history, geography, languages, races and peoples of Middle-earth.

**Tolkien's Middle-earth**

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* are intricately linked to the history and oral traditions of Middle-earth. Tolkien's fictional Middle-earth is about 6000 years old and belongs to the prehistoric age. In *The Lord of the Rings* (set in the Third Age) much of the information, events and characters embedded in its narrative revert to historical events from the First and Second Ages of Middle-earth. The external information for the main narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* can be found mostly chronicled in *The Silmarillion* and *The History of Middle-earth*. Besides *The Silmarillion* and *The History of Middle-earth*, his other works on Middle-earth like the tales of the children of Hurin, the epic love story of Lúthien and Beren (the names engraved on Tolkien and his wife's tombstone), the fall of Gondor and the hand drawn maps of Middle-earth by Tolkien supplements the narrative events in *The Lord of the Rings*.

**The First Age**

The creation of Arda (earth) out of void by the music of Ainur made before Eru Ilúvatar (God) is often considered to be the genesis of the First Age. After the creation of Arda, several Ainurs descended to Arda. The Ainurs who lived in Arda came to be known as Valar and they lived in Valinor, a paradisal realm lit by two great trees known as Telperion and Laurelion, the Silver Tree and the Gold Tree. But the corrupted Valar, Melkor (Morgoth) by name introduced destruction and cruelty on earth through his

music and destroyed the two great Trees of Valinor. Melkor after causing such destruction fled to Middle-earth. The Sun and Moon were created out of the last flower and fruit of Telperion and Laurelion, to illuminate Arda by the Valar. With the Years of the Sun, Men also appeared in Middle-earth. Elves in Tolkien's legendarium are the elder children while men are the younger children of Eru Ilúvatar. Elves were not conceived by the music of Ainur. In Middle-earth, the Elves established several settlements and waged wars against Morgoth and his armies. The First Age came to an end with the overthrow of Morgoth by the combined forces of Valar, Elves and Men in the War of Wrath.

**The Second Age**

The Second Age follows immediately and is marked by the rise of Sauron to power. After the defeat of his master Morgoth, Sauron forms his own force of armies with the Orcs and the Goblins. He lusts to become the master of dark power and to control the entire dominion of Middle-earth. He builts his fortress in Mordor which is called The Dark Tower or Barad-dúr. This age is also characterised by the close alliance formed between Elves and Dwarves. It was also in this Age that Elrond established Rivendell.

The Dwarves of Middle-earth were skilled in metalcrafts and masonry. Their alliance with the Elves brought the craftsmanship of the two races together and attained such heights of perfection that it remained unparalleled in the history of Middle-earth ever again. But Sauron tricked the Elves into forging the Rings of Power. Nineteen Rings were forged as a result. But it was the One Ring, which Sauron forged, all by himself in the fires of Mount Doom that was to become the Ruling Ring. This Ring

Sauron forged in secrecy and all the remaining nineteen Rings were brought under the control of this One Ring. This appears on the epigraph of *The Lord of the Rings*:

> *Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky,*
>
> > *Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,*
>
> *Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,*
>
> > *One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne*
>
> *In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.*
>
> > *One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,*
>
> > *One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them*
>
> *In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.* (v)

The Elves eventually regret their folly and begin to resist Sauron's power. An alliance is formed between the Elves and Men, called the Last Alliance of Elves and Men, to destroy Sauron. In a great battle fought between the forces of the Dark Power and the Last Alliance of Elves and Men, the One Ring is cut off from Sauron's finger by Isildur, a numenorean, and the King of Arnor and Gondor. With that Sauron and his dark forces are defeated for the time being as the disembodied spirit of Sauron flees into hiding in the Dark Tower of Mordor. After the victory in battle, Isildur instead of destroying the One Ring, overcome by greed and lust for power keeps the One Ring for himself. But Isildur is killed by Orcs in the River Anduin and the One Ring is lost for over 2000 years until it is found by Sméagol (Gollum), a Stoorish Hobbit in the Third Age.

**The Third Age**

Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are set in this age. The Third Age immediately succeeds the first defeat of Sauron. The initial millennium was a period of peace and prosperity but it was also an age of transition as the population of

Elves and Dwarves began to dwindle and the population of Men increased. Many of the Elves sailed West to the Undying Lands, the paradisal realm of the Valar and the Elves. This age comes to an end after the final defeat of Sauron and the destruction of the One Ring of Power in the fires of Mount Doom. *The Lord of the Rings* end with Gandalf, Elrond, Galadriel, Bilbo Baggins and Frodo Baggins leaving Middle-earth for the Undying Lands.

**The Fourth Age**

The Fourth Age is the Age of Men. It follows the final defeat of Sauron in the War of the Ring. It is an age characterised by the reign of peace and order and also of the dominion of Men in the realms of Middle-earth. Tolkien's stories about Middle-earth end in the Fourth Age.

**Maps of Tolkien's Middle-earth**

Tolkien was not an expert cartographer but his service to the British Army during the First World War had given him certain knowledge about the art of mapping and reading them, and the use of map symbolism which he used extensively in the creation of his Middle-earth. Though Tolkien had started working on his Middle-earth legendarium before the war broke out, it was after he returned from the war that he put his cartographic knowledge to use. Tolkien's first published maps were the ones Tolkien used in *The Hobbit*: Thror's map of the Lonely Mountain and a general map of the Wilderland.
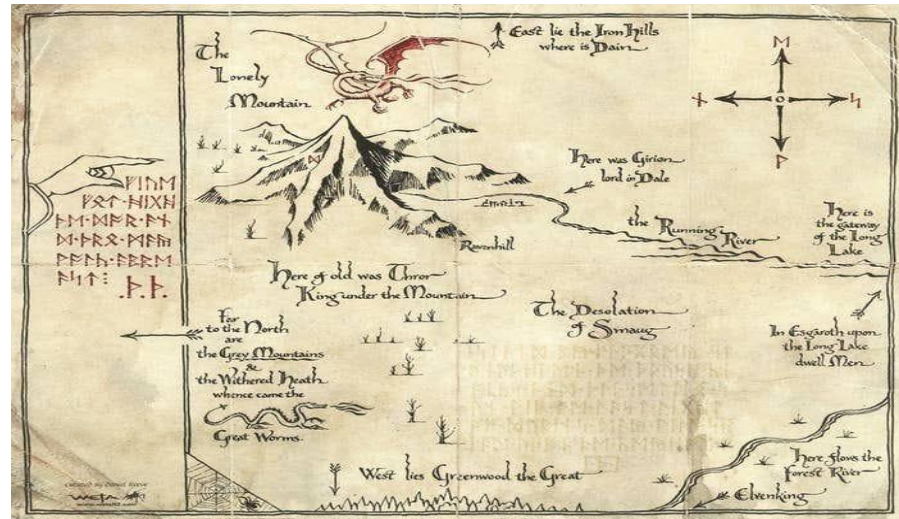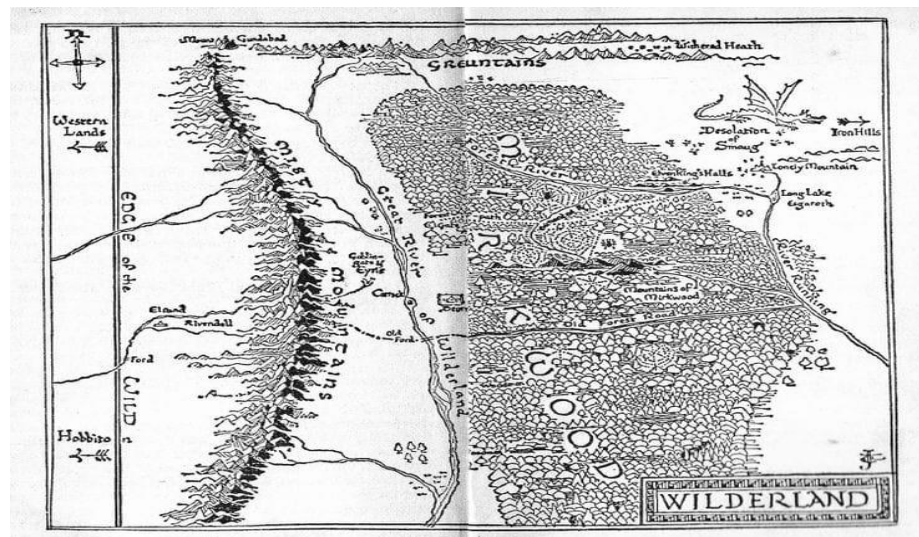
Fig 1:"Thror's Map." https://pin.it/4hydPzJ. Accessed on 08.08.2022.



Fig 2:"A general map of Wilderland." https://pin.it/DARKsa8. Accessed on 08.08.2022.

Ever since his return from the war, Tolkien always had a working map by his side which he drew, redrew, planned, organised and reworked as his story developed. Tolkien had several drafts of his maps for *The Lord of the Rings*. He extensively revised and paid miniscule attention to every detail in the maps. In a letter addressed to Naomi Mitchison, the draft reader of *The Lord of the Rings* he wrote, "I am sorry about the Geography. It must have been dreadfully difficult without a map or maps" (Carpenter

195). Tolkien had initially submitted the manuscript of *The Lord of the Rings* to the publisher without any maps. For Tolkien, the maps were "paratexts-first for himself as author, then for the reader" and hence he insisted on including maps in his work for the benefit of the readers (Danielson 6). *The Lord of the Rings* has three maps: the map of the Shire, the map of Northwest Middle-earth, and the map of Gondor, Rohan, and Mordor.
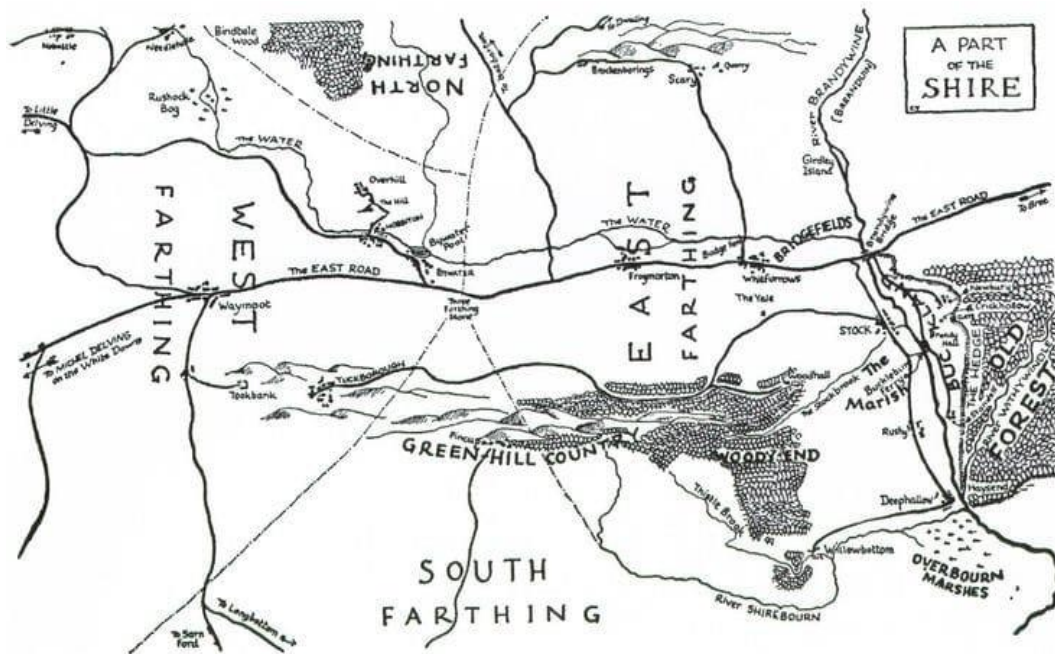


Fig 3: "The map of the Shire." https://pin.it/5tx5pkp. Accessed on 08.08.2022.
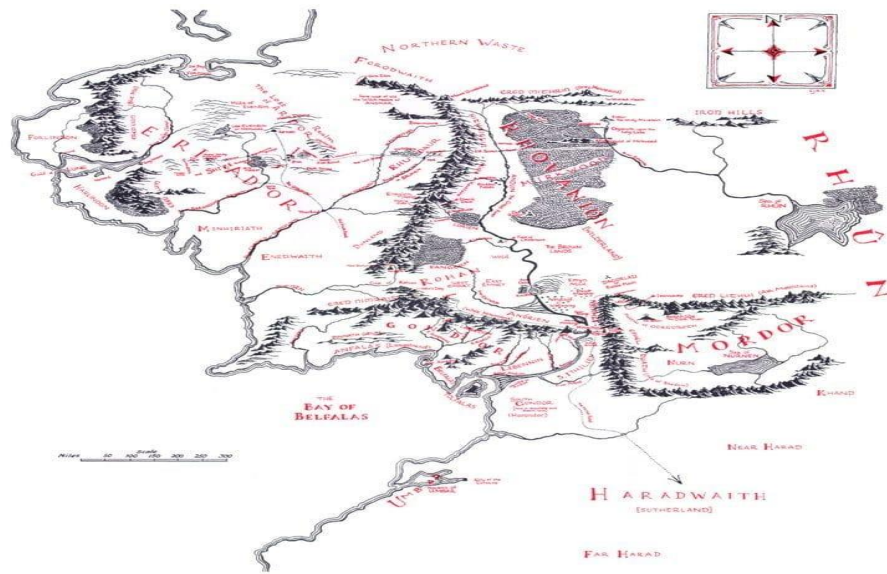
Fig 4: "The map of Northwest Middle-earth." https://pin.it/2UMfkr5. Accessed on
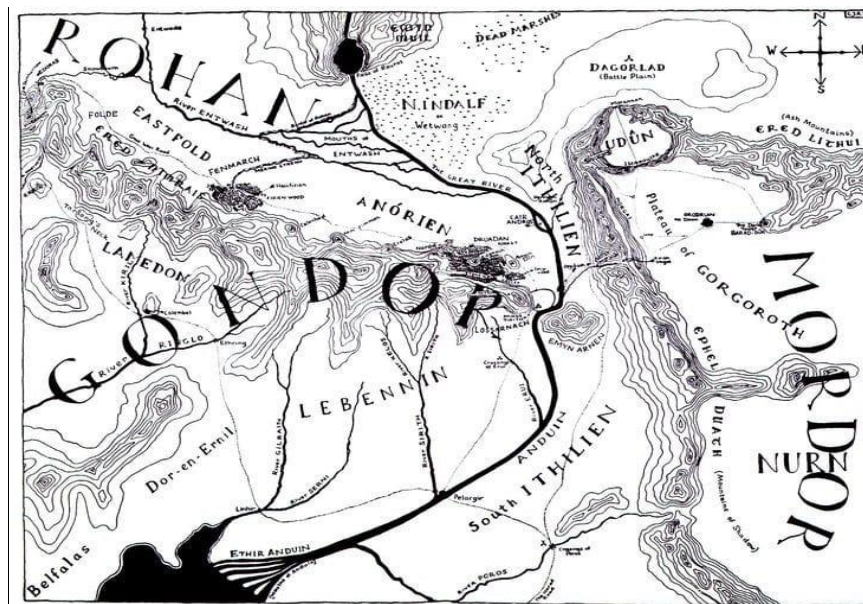
08.08.2022.



Fig 5: "The map of Gondor, Rohan and Mordor." https://pin.it/6YcnQZo. Accessed on

08.08.2022.

In *The Lord of the Rings* film adaptation, Peter Jackson used the map of Middle-

earth drawn by Daniel Reeve, an artist, calligrapher and cartographer in the opening

scenes of the film. The camera zooms onto the map and then pans across the various parts of the land on the map.



Fig 6: "Map used by Peter Jackson in the film." https://pin.it/6la58Kv. Accessed on
  08.08.2022.

The detailed and close-up maps that Tolkien and Jackson used aid the readers/ audience at several planes. It assists readers/ audience to follow the long journeys undertaken by the characters in a geographical space that is purely a work of fiction. Visual representations of the various locations and places that keep recurring in the course of the narrative not only retains the reader's/ audience's attention and interest in the narrative but also instil in the reader's/ audience's mind a belief in the existence of Middle-earth and the various races that appear in it, however fictional they may be.

**The Tongues of Middle-earth**

"The invention of languages is the foundation. The 'stories' were made rather to provide a world for the languages than the reverse. To me a name comes first and the story follows." J. R .R. Tolkien (Carpenter *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* 283)

Tolkien was inclined towards coinage of words right from his childhood and his knowledge of philology propelled this fascination into the invention of at least fifteen new languages of which Quenya and Sindarin are the most popular, especially among linguistic researchers and Tolkienians. The invention of languages was a personal art form which Tolkien gave life to through his legendarium. The peculiarity of Tolkien's language further lies in the fact that he never invented the languages for humans to speak: "Tolkien had no interest for extra-diegetic use of Middle-Earth languages; he envisaged no fans talking in Sindarin in Tolkienian convention or similar, as in the case of *Star Trek's* Klingon or Dotwaki from *Game of Thrones"* (Gobbo 6). It was meant to be the language of the Elves and the many races that do not belong to the realms of our existence. His languages were meant to evoke experiences of magic and fantasy. It was made for his "mythopoeic endeavour" (6).

Tolkien is most known for his invention of the languages of the Elves: Quenya and Sindarin. Quenya or "Elven- Latin" was the language of the High Elven and Sindarin was the language of the Low Elven also called the "Grey-Elven" (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 1127). These two Elven languages were the most developed languages by Tolkien in the course of his writing. In the film, the different tongues of Middle-earth are interspersed throughout the films just as it is in the book. The translations for the films were made by David Salo, an American linguist who studied Tolkien's languages. He meticulously expanded on Tolkien's languages by adding vocabularies wherever needed, using sources that had already been published about Tolkien's language.

To be able to speak and read the invented languages as the author intended it to be, a reader would need to know the basics of philology and phonetics and will have to keep flipping back and forth between the pages of the story and the appendices where

Tolkien included the pronunciations to his coined words. This however was not the case with the film. Jackson included several scenes in the film with dialogues in Middle-earth languages. These scenes become instantaneously intelligible to the audience as the subtitles become self-explanatory. The aural medium of the film adds dimensions of realism to Tolkien's languages as readers can now listen to characters converse in the invented languages on screen.

Unlike the opening of the book which begins with an omniscient narrator telling its readers about the preparation for Bilbo Baggins' "*eleventy-one*" birthday celebration in Hobbinton, the opening scenes of the film begin with a prologue which uses Galadriel's voiceover (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 22). The first part of the prologue is in Sindarin: "I amar prestar aen (the world is changed), han mathon ne nen (I feel it in the water), han mathon ne chae (I feel it in the earth) a han noston ned 'wilith (I smell it in the air)" after which Galadriel uses English to narrate the rest of the prologue (Jackson *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* 00:00:30 – 00:00:48). The use of Sindarin in the prologue is significant for the film as it lays the groundwork for the rest of the story. It summarises the lengthy backstory about the forging of the One Ring of Power by the evil master Sauron which underlines the central theme of the film trilogy. Additionally, using Sindarin for the opening lines of the prologue piques the interest and curiosity of the audience. It evokes an aura of the fantastical, the mythical and the mysterious from the first scene itself.

Elvish was meant to be a poetic language by Tolkien. In the film adaptation, there is a considerable exchange of dialogues in Sindarin between the two lovers, Arwen and Aragorn, when they meet in Rivendell. The conversations in Sindarin between the two lovers, set amidst Rivendell's paradise-like setting with Aniron playing in the background, evokes a sense of the magical, poetic and mythical blending

Tolkien's language into the poetic climate of the scene (Jackson *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* 01:36:00 – 01:37:32). Besides the Elvish languages, there is the language of Men in Middle-earth. The ancient language of Men was Adunaic but with the help of the Elves, Men learned the art of writing. Over time, with the mingling of Men with Elves, Men also learned Sindarin from the local Elves and very few Men even learned Quenya. Men mingled with the different races of the Middle-earth like Hobbits and Dwarfs, and soon Adunaic passed on to become the Common Speech of Middle-earth known as Westron. The Hobbits did not have a distinct language of their own and adopted Westron as their language of communication.

Tolkien also developed the Ent-language which he described as, "slow, sonorous, agglomerated, repetitive", which "formed a multiplicity of vowel-shades and distinctions of tone and quality (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 1130, 1131). The Ent-language was difficult and no other race ever learnt to speak it. Similarly, the Dwarves had a distinct language which was slowly changing. They used it in a lot of secret discourses and private speeches which were unintelligible to most races. The language of the Dwarves was called Dwarvish or Khuzdul and like Ent-language, their language was known to very few outside their own race. Their language was ceremoniously loved and protected by them. "It had become a tongue of lore rather than a cradle-speech" and in *The Lord of the Rings* it appears only in name of places as revealed by Gimli through their quest (1132). The most common Dwarvish phrase known to other races was *Baruk (*1132). In the film, the most famous Dwavish is spoken by Gimli where he makes the uncourteous remark "Ishkhaqwi ai durugnul" to Haldir meaning "I spit upon your grave!" (Jackson *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* 02:31:39 – 02:31:43).

Then there was the crude and detestable language spoken by the Orcs called the Black Speech. Sauron was involved in the invention of the Black Speech where words from different languages were rigged up and cobbled together to form speech. Their speech was primitive sounding which was lost for a time after Sauron's first defeat in the Second Age. This language revived as Sauron slowly gained power and was made the language of his court in Mordor. It is also the speech that is inscribed on the One Ring but the script used was Tengwar (Elven script). The inscription read in Black Speech would be *Ash nazg durbatulûk, ash nazg gimbatul, ash nazg thrakatulûk, agh burzum-ishi krimpatul* and its English translation is *One Ring to rule them all, One ring to find them; One ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them* ("Ring-inscription").
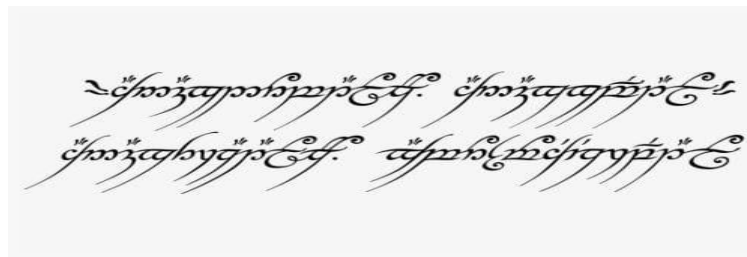
Fig 7: "Inscription on the One Ring in Tengwar Script." https://pin.it/4tATbI5. Accessed on 11.07.2022

The Ring is given a character of its own, a will that dominates the bearer. The evil will of Sauron is wielded into the Ring and the voice of the Ring, often heard in hushed whispers overpowers the will of the bearer. The speech used by the Ring is Black Speech – the language of Mordor. In the film, the voice of the Ring is given by Alan Howard. Black Speech was intended by Tolkien to be mysterious and ominous and hence it is least developed as a speech as compared to Quenyaf, Sindarin or Khuzdul. In the film adaptation, keeping with the temperament of the Black Speech, it

is uttered only a few times and occurs mostly in connection to the inscription on the One Ring. The minimal use of Black Speech in the film, further serves to evoke a sense of fear and foreboding associated with the language.

Tolkien created an ecology of words in his narratives that correlated with the cultural, lingual, historical, geographical and racial features of Middle-earth. Tolkien's language is linguistically categorised as "artificial languages" or "artlang" as it does not have any pragmatic application or existence outside the realms of literature but it has not failed to intrigue the interest of readers, scholars and fans alike (Coker 1244). The nature of any spoken language is that it is never static. Some word usages may become archaic and forgotten with time, while some evolve and change; and many more words are coined and added onto contemporary speech in due course of time. Tolkien was keen on reflecting this nature of spoken speech - of languages changing and evolving over the passage of time which he realistically developed in his legendarium.

## Narrativity in *The Lord of the Rings*

Narrativity, as discussed in the first chapter is the composite whole of all the elements that make a story. A good story is when the writer assembles all the individual units like plots, characters, dialogues, points of view, etc. and gives the narrative proper shape and form, keeping the readers (and audiences) gripped until the last word is read (or the last scene watched). Tolkien was a master storyteller whose simple story originally meant to be read to his children, eventually evolved into a book with complex narrative patterns interlaced with the history of Middle-earth, invented languages, imagined creatures and an elaborate fictional geography. Tolkien's narrativity transports the readers into this created imaginary world and though fantastical in nature, it has carved an identity of its own in the world of fantasy literature that any Tolkien fan

will instantly recognise. Having stated thus, the adaptation of Tolkien's masterpiece into film was a huge challenge for the filmmakers given the intricacy of narrativity and the popularity of the book amongst its fans. The filmmaker had to take utmost care not to ruin the narrative of the story while at the same time making careful changes to suit the timeframe of cinematic storytelling.

**The Spatial Dimension**

One of the aspects where Jackson's adaptation of the film has kept the narrative integrity is in its visual evocation of Middle-earth. The spatial dimension in many narratives is rarely of focal interest, aside from the fact that it used to develop the mood and setting of the narrative. The contrary, however is true for *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy - the book and the film. The landscape and geography of Middle-earth is integral to the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings.* Middle-earth is always in the backdrop of the narrative and the film version has successfully captured this essence both thematically and visually. The spatial dimension in *The Lord of the Rings,* thus become a prominent element in the narrativity of the text and the film.

While discussing spatial dimension in text and films, Jakob Lothe observes that most spatial dimension in narrativity is connected to the theme of travel (49). The main theme of *The Lord of the Rings* is the quest to destroy the evil wielded into the One Ring of Power. Frodo Baggins of the Shire is fated to carry the burden of the ring by becoming the ring bearer. The quest takes Frodo and the elected members of the Fellowship of the Ring through various terrains and marshes, across mountains and rivers, past forests and kingdoms inhabited by all kinds of creatures. This kind of narrative space where the scene of action keep shifting and transitioning from one locale to the other is termed "spatial frame" by Ryan ("Space"). The spatial frame in the

*The Lord of the Rings* is Middle-earth as all events revolve around its geography and history.

Whether a locale or setting has been described sparingly or in detail, the general consensus among most narratologist is that "it can never be presented in a narrative text in its totality" (de Jong 142). A reader creates a cognitive map to navigate through the events of the narrative whenever there is a spatial frame embedded in the text. Since imagination and retention varies from person to person, the cognitive maps tend to be incoherent and inconsistent. Tolkien was well aware of this cognitive process and wanted his readers to go through the pages of his book unhindered by the spatial frame in his work and so he developed his maps. The use of maps, Ryan observes is particularly prominent in certain genres like children's literature, travel stories, detective stories and fantasy literature. She supplements her observation by stating that the maps "spare the reader the effort of building a cognitive map" ("Space"). Concordantly, Peter Jackson also employed the use of map in his adaptation to acquaint the audience with the magnanimity of Middle-earth. Besides the use of maps which zooms across the screen, Jackson also uses montage to show the expansiveness of the landscape using panning, zooming, extreme long shots, mounting a stationary camera on a moving support, shot reverse shot sequence from the character's perspective, panoramic shot where the focus is on the narrative space and not the characters per se, etc. which intrigues the audience into believing in the existence of a Tolkienian Middle-earth.

In *The Lord of the Rings,* the story begins and ends in the Shire but the rising action occurs after Frodo and his Hobbit friends leave the Shire and embark on a journey the perils of which they, themselves, were not prepared for. Throughout their travel, the Hobbits are shown to be in reminiscence of the home they left behind.

Hobbits have been described by Tolkien as people who "love peace and quiet and good tilled earth" (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 1). They were a merry folk who heartily laughed, ate and drank, they were fond of "simple jests", ate "six meals a day", were "hospitable and delighted in parties" and they loved giving presents as much as they loved receiving them (2). In due course of the quest, Frodo, Sam, Pippin and Merry began to see how dark and humourless the quest was turning out to be. Tolkien shows this longing to be back home through the thoughts of the characters and their wishful longings about which they often spoke. This kind of narrativity is called the "story space" which Ryan defined as "the spatial frame plus all the locations mentioned by the text that are not the scene of actually occurring events" ("Space"). The spatial frame occurs in thoughts, memories, reports, dreams of the characters (de Jong 144).

For instance, in the film version of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, while making the arduous climb to Mount Doom to destroy the One Ring once and for all, Frodo and Sam are shown completely wearied unable to take a step further. Sam comes towards Frodo, takes him in his arms and asks,

> Do you remember the Shire, Mr. Frodo? It'll be spring soon. And the orchards will be in blossom. And the birds will be nesting in the hazel thicket. And they'll be sowing the summer barley in the lower fields and eating the first of the strawberries with cream. Do you remember the taste of strawberries?" (Jackson 03:23:27 – 03:24:05)

The memory of the Shire gives hope, rejuvenates their determination to complete the quest even if they cannot carry themselves any further. In Tolkien's book, Frodo tells Sam, "As I lay in prison, Sam, I tried to remember the Brandywine, and Woody End, and the Water running through the mill at Hobbiton. But I can't see them now" (Tolkien

*The Lord of the Rings* 918). Frodo looks to memories of Shire as a momentary escape from the torments of carrying the burden of the Ring.

Spatial dimension in narrativity is lesser discussed and explored by narratologists as compared to the temporal dimension. This however, does not necessarily dim the significance of space in narrativity. Spatial dimension in narrativity often time acquires thematic and symbolic significance, especially if the narrative is centered on the setting in the story as is the case with *The Lord of the Rings* (de Jong 165,167).

Irrespective of whether a narrative space plays a crucial role in propelling the movement of the narrative or not, a well- written description of the spatial dimension is essential for a successful narrative. While the author puts in much effort to paint the spatial dimension in words, a filmmaker engages much attention in finding the right location and/or constructing the best possible sets to capture the heart of the narrative through the narrative space. According to Gerald Mast, films are "space-and-time art" in which "space and time play a fully equal role" (10). In films, the spatial dimension is further perfected by use of various camera angles, editing techniques, on location shots, stage settings, mise-en-scène, etc. which Jackson also capitalizes on in *The Lord of the Rings*.

**The Temporal Dimension**

Gerald Genette's *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* has been called "a treatise on the poetics of narrative" by Seymour Chatman, an apropos description considering its pragmatic discussion on narrative discourse and its easy applicability to text and film narratives. Genette in his book extensively discussed three main kinds of categories in relation to narrative time, viz., order (*odre),* duration (*durée)* and

frequency (*fréquence)*. The application of Genette's narrative terms vary from text to text and from film to film or even from text to its adaptation.

*The Lord of the Rings* occupies a narrative time that is secondary to our world. The temporal dimension is imaginary and follows a timeline with Three Ages. *The Lord of the Rings* being set in the Third Age requires the readers and the audience to travel through time and space as the narrative is intertwined with events of the past. The order of narrative time has several analeptic passages in the book that are explanatory and acquaint the other characters in the book about past events that have repercussions in the present. This is what Gerard Genette called "analepsis" in narrative order; wherein the main narrative is embedded with events from the past (48, 49). The chapter "The Shadow of the Past" in *The Fellowship of the Ring* is an important analeptic chapter since Frodo and the readers are told about the One Ring, the circumstances under which it was forged and how it came to be in Bag End. This is the preparatory chapter in the book because every other event will be linked to this chapter thereafter.

The main theme of the story was, as Tolkien wrote in his foreword to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* "settled from the outset by the inevitable choice of the Ring as the link between it and *The Hobbit"* (xxiii). Also, the epigraph of *The Lord of the Rings* is an ancient chant which is proleptic in nature foreshadowing the role of the One Ring in connecting the various strands of the story together. Prolepsis in narrative order "consists in evoking in advance an event that will take place later" (Lothe 55). The epilogue in *The Lord of the Rings* bears an ominous tone about the events that will be unravelled in the course of narration soon. Another instance of prolepsis occurs in the book when Gandalf tells Frodo about Gollum; that "he has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before the end" which Frodo remembers in a flashback narrative when he tells Sam, "'But do you remember Gandalf's word: *Even Gollum may have something*

*yet to do*? But for him, Sam, I could not have destroyed the Ring'" (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 59, 946). The role of Gollum in the book was related by Tolkien through Gandalf's prophetic words to Frodo much before he met Gollum.

Marie-Laure Ryan while discussing the temporal dimension in narrativity in her work "Toward a Definition of Narrative" proposed two significant conditions to aid in comprehending the degree of temporal narrativity in any given text; the conditions being:

(i) This world must be situated in time and undergo significant transformations

(ii) The transformations must be caused by non - habitual physical events (29)

*The Lord of the Rings* is set in the Third Age (T.A.), at the end of 1418 (September T.A. 3018) and beginning of 1419 ( March T.A. 3019) by Shire Reckoning (S.R.), and any reference to events in *The Lord of the Rings* refer to the Shire Calendar, as Tolkien mentioned in *Appendix D* of the book (1111). The Ring that Bilbo Baggins takes from Gollum in *The Hobbit* is the link to *The Lord of the Rings.* The history of the forging of the Ring and how it passed into the hands of Gollum spans through the Second and Third Ages of Middle-earth and remained with Bilbo in the Fourth Age, its power gradually increasing unknown to its keeper, in the quiet of the Shire for almost sixty years until it is passed to Frodo as part of the many other things he inherited from him. The book begins on a note of celebration as Bilbo will be turning *"eleventy - one",* and the entire Shire preparing in jubilance for this occasion. Frodo himself was going to be 33, a number which indicated coming of age for the Hobbits (22).

In the book, it is seventeen years after Bilbo's *"eleventy-one"* birthday celebration and Bilbo's departure from the Shire thereafter, before Frodo is told about the true nature of the Ring by Gandalf (22). In the film, the time span is not made clear but a sense of urgency is evoked as the story progresses faster than the book. Frodo is

made to leave Bag End immediately after Gandalf tells him about the Ring and its growing power; but the book does not evoke such urgency as Frodo takes months preparing for his departure from the Shire. Further, following Tolkien's timeline of events, Frodo's quest begins at the age of 50 but the film does not follow this timeline as it is approximately a year after Bilbo's birthday celebration that Frodo leaves the Shire. His appearance is kept more youthful and Merry and Pippin who are 36 and 28 in the book are made the age - contemporaries of Frodo and Sam in the film. This was intentionally done by the filmmakers so as to make the characters more relatable before a younger audience since *The Lord of the Rings* had a fan base comprising largely of teenagers and young adults. In films, the narrative time is presented visually rather than narrated and hence the temporal speed occupied in the book and in film inevitably varies. The narrative order in *The Lord of the Rings* is episodic in nature. It follows the chronological style of story- telling with occasional flashbacks, analeptic and proleptic narratives in between. The plot - based structure is one with a simple outline but complex details.

The Hobbits were a merry folk and the mechanical passing of time did not burden them so much. Their life and work circled around the clock but they "do not worry overmuch about the passing of time, about building monuments for eternity ('ruins') or about the continuation of dynasties ('kings')" (Honegger 86).
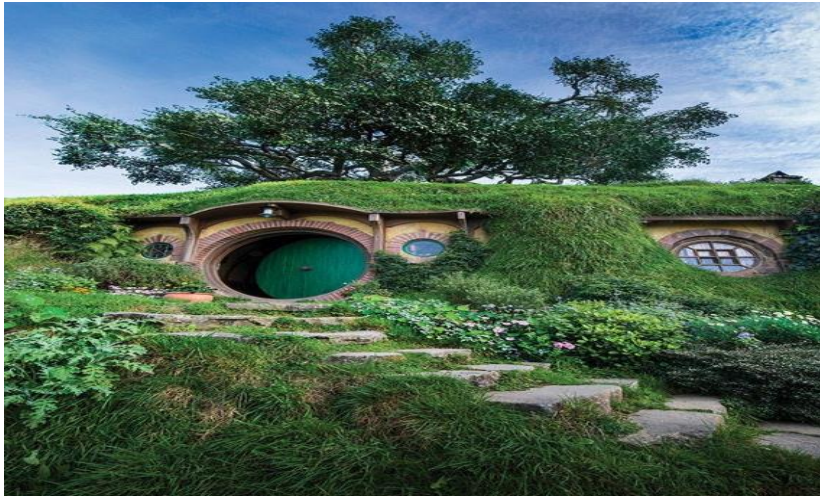
Fig 8: "Bag End of the Shire." https://pin.it/7ATSpKB. Accessed on 11.07.2022

In the film version, Jackson presents the Shire as an idyllic place nestled in the midst of a hilly valley, green pastures, fertile fields, in the middle a lake with a mill beside it and their local pub. The introductory scene of the Shire begins at Bag End where Bilbo Baggins writes in his notebook about the Hobbits which is narrated by Bilbo as a voiceover while aspects of the Hobbits way of life is shown on screen in sync with the narration: "life in the Shire goes on very much as it has this past age full of its own comings and goings, with change coming slowly – if it comes at all. For things are made to endure in the Shire, passing from one generation to the next" (Jackson *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* 00:11:37 – 00:11: 54). It can be said that it mis for this reason, perhaps that the Hobbits are shown to be more resistant to the power of the Ring as compared to the rest of the races in Middle-earth.

The lines about Hobbits are an instance of what Genette termed "summary" under narrative duration and "Iterative narrative" under narrative frequency (94, 113). The story time which is referred to, is stretched for over several years but the story space that it occupies in the book is shorter. It summarises the social life of the Hobbits which has remained unchanged in many years. The quoted lines are what Genette

termed "Iterative narration" as it tells the readers once what happened several times (116). In the film, Jackson compressed the story space into about two minutes of visual narrative as the camera takes the audience across the Shire where shots of individual Hobbits are shown farming, gardening, choosing cupcakes over a lover's kiss, smoking pipes and drinking ale, etc in their merry temperament as Bilbo Baggins gives the voice over:

> Hobbits have been living and farming in the Four Farthings of the Shire for many hundreds of years, quite content to ignore and be ignored by the world of the Big Folk Middle-earth beings…In fact it has been remarked by some that Hobbits' only real passion is for food. A rather unfair observation as we have also developed a keen interest in the brewing of ales and the smoking of pipe-weeds. (Jackson *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* 00:08:50 – 00:10:20)

The rising action in *The Lord of the Rings* begin with the coming of Gandalf to Bag End with the history of the forging of the One Ring, kept sealed in an envelope in the very room where they spoke. This event of the forging of the Ring propels the story forward as Frodo now has to bear the burden of the Ring, eventually becoming the Ring bearer when the fellowship is formed in Rivendell. The temporality in the book and also the film changes after the Hobbits leave Bree with Aragorn as time begins to be measured, in Honegger's words by "distances covered and by the astronomical units of 'day' and 'night'… Life follows the natural rhythm of getting up with the sun, of making camp when darkness falls, and of eating when hungry (if possible). The day is no longer structured along meals and snacks to be taken at leisure but according to the 'basic' animal needs of the travellers" (90).

The "Council of Elrond", is an establishing chapter in which the history of the Ring is told to all present at the Council. Discussions and suggestions are made within the council and the fate of the Ring is decided. In this regard, lines uploaded in a blog post in "The Lord of the Rings Wiki" may be quoted, "if this episode had been filmed as written, it likely would have run on over an hour. Instead, the material was presented in a different way that kept the pace of the plot speed up for the medium" ("Tolkien vs. Jackson"). In order to keep the continuum of the pace of the plot, it is necessary to reduce/alter/delete certain parts of the book. Any film has to keep the pace of the plot in tune with the general length of motion pictures. The enormity of *The Lord of the Rings* led the filmmakers making several changes in form and substance to adhere to the narrative adaptability of the book.

**The Mental Dimension**

Any oral or print narrative will evoke mental images and cognitive representations (signified) which are not of fixed nature. The signified will vary from person to person and from time to time. The narrativity in books and the oral discourses allow the readers and listeners to engage in imaginative ruminations and creative construction of images actively in their subconscious mind. These imaginary constructions rely largely on the social and cultural values of the individual, on their race, gender and class. Narratives are, as Ryan posits in her essay "On the Theoretical Foundations", "more than temporary drafts in the theatre of the mind, more than transitory fringes of neurons in the brains along individual pathways; they are solidified, conscious representations produced by the convergence of many different mental processes that operate both within and outside stories" (8, 9).

The narrativity in films however, is a pictorial representation of the narrative and so the signified in an individual is not an active cognitive creation as is with oral and print narratives. The interpretation of the signifier and signified are understood in a different dimension in comparison to its oral and printed mode of narration. Marie - Laure Ryan writes that narrative on the one hand is "a textual act of representation (or presentation) – a text that encodes a particular type of meaning" and on the other hand, "a mental image built by the interpreter as a response to the text" (6). What the narrator intends and what is conceived in the minds of the receiver will hence invariably differ.

Ryan mentions that the mental dimension of narrativity is made complete when a narrative exhibits one, some or all of the following features:

> 1. Narrative involves the construction of the mental image of a world populated with individuated agents (characters) and objects (spatial dimension).
>
> 2. This world must undergo not fully predictable changes of state that are caused by non - habitual physical events: either accidents (happenings) or deliberate actions by intelligent agents (temporal dimension).
>
> 3. In addition to being linked to physical states by casual relations, the physical events must be associated with mental states and events (goals, plans, emotions). This network of connections gives coherence, motivation, closure, and intelligibility and turns them into a plot (logical, mental and formal dimension). (4)

In *The Lord of the Rings*, "the mental image of a world populated with individuated agents (characters) and objects" can be implied to the entire Middle-earth geography and its various inhabitants, the second feature can be implied to the forging of the One

Ring and the quest to destroy it once and for all while the last feature is a culmination of all the events leading to the quest (4).

The adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* has vividly brought to the screen what had remained in the mind of readers. Middle-earth was only an imaginary place and though the cognitive images were supported by Tolkien's cartographic efforts of giving Middle-earth its measure of authenticity, it remained an inconsistent geography in the reader's mind. The same may be stated about Tolkien's imaginary creatures like the Hobbits, Elves, Dwarves, Orcs, giant spiders, etc.

"All Hobbits had originally lived in holes in the ground" begins Tolkien as he describes Hobbit homes in the prologue of *The Lord of the Rings* (6). The Hobbit homes, he writes "were usually long, low, and comfortable…thatched with dry grass or straw, or roofed with turves, and having walls somewhat bulged…A preference for round windows, and even round doors, was the chief remaining peculiarity of hobbit-architecture" (7). This pristine description of Tolkien has found apt interpretation in Peter Jackson's film so much so that the sets where the Shire was shot have become a tourist destination in New Zealand. A Hobbit home in Khonoma, Nagaland, constructed by a local is also, in fact, a tourist spot in our own state. The Hobbit homes and the Shire in general, have become places of real time existence after Jackson gave form to what had remained in the minds of the readers all these long years.

Fig 9: "Hobbit Home, Khonoma." https://images.app.goo.gl/GE8TrzgNY1hXRNEYA.

Accessed on 30.08.2022.

Rivendell is another iconic landscape in the film. When Bilbo Baggins sees

Rivendell for the first time in *The Hobbit,* the omniscient narrator describes Rivendell

through the eyes of an astonished Bilbo, "Bilbo never forgot the way they slithered and

slipped in the dusk down the steep zig-zag path into the secret valley of Rivendell. The

air grew warmer as they got lower, and the smell of the pine-trees made him drowsy, so

that every now and again he nodded and nearly fell off, or bumped his nose on the

pony's neck" (57). Nestled on the foothills of the Misty Mountains, Rivendell gives out

an aura of peaceful melancholy, a sense of security and serenity almost reminiscent of

paradise. The architecture of Rivendell in the film was influenced by Art Nouveau and

Celtic design which imitates natural forms and shapes (Carl 66). Elves are creatures

more distinguished than the other creatures of Middle-earth. The Elves are also

spiritually very connected to nature and are described as "simply more beautiful, more

serene, more wise: young and old, sad and blissful at once" (Rosebury 211). For the

filmmakers, these essential characteristics of the Elves needed to be brought out largely

through casting, acting and the creation of Rivendell and Lothlorien that would reflect

the Elvish ambience in the film and hence Jackson and his team opted for architecture and ornaments in the films that depicted natural motifs so as to visually evoke the integration of the Elves with nature.

The technological wizardry of cinematography of present times has enabled the creation of almost anything and everything, adding a sense of visual reality no matter how divorced from reality, logic and rationale it may be. Hutcheon calls this new possibility "fidelity to the *imagination"* which, driven by technological advancement, have made adaptations of even the most unrealistic and outlandish films a plausible reality (29). The advancement in technology and cinematography have led to the creation of Hobbits almost half the size of men, the digital creation of Gollum with its alter ego, the creation of the Orcs, Ents, Elves and Dwarves and a realistic representation of the battles which go on for several minutes on screen without suspending the disbelief that exists between reality and fantasy.

**Formal and Pragmatic Dimension**

Tolkien believed in the concept of "Happy Ending" in fairy tales and fantasy. It was the opposite of catastrophe in tragedies and since there was no word to express this opposite term, he coined "Eucatastrophe" in his essay "On Fairy Stories" which he says is "the true form of fairy - tale, and its highest function" (22). Tolkien's theory on fantasy asserts a joyous turn of events at the end of the tale, and in *The Lord of the Rings* the quintessential eucatastrophe is achieved through a series of chain events which Tolkien patterned to give a true fairy tale like ending by making the hero of the story undergo a perilous journey to achieve its end.

The perilous journey begins when Frodo and Sam leave the Shire and ends in Mount Doom. Marie-Laure Ryan writes that there must be a cause and effect

relationship between the events in the narrative that will lead to its final closure (Ryan "Toward a Definition of Narrative" 29). The final closure is the destruction of the Ring in Mount Doom. This closure, which is eucatastrophic in nature, is achieved ironically by accident. Overpowered by the will of the Ring, Frodo standing at the Crack of Doom, the source at which the Ring was to be destroyed, spoke to Sam, "I do not choose to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!" (Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* 945). In the film, this climax is altered and given a more dramatic makeover as compared to the book. Frodo succumbing to the Ring is shown through a series of medium shots and close ups, focussing on Frodo's face which appears to be giving in to the will of the evil Sauron as he stands on the brink of the cliff on Mount Doom with the ring held out to be dropped into the fiery pit.

The cause-effect relationship of the climactic scene is that Sauron becomes completely aware of the presence of the Ring and summons all his slaves that were fighting with the forces of the West outside the Black Gate towards Mount Doom. The film captures this episode through scenes that alternate between Mount Doom and the battle between the forces of the West against the Dark Legions at the Field of Cormallen. Outnumbered and surrounded by the Dark Legions, it was a losing battle but it was also one last desperate attempt to match up to the forces of the Dark Legion. The scenes are shown in slow motion to allow the audience enough time to grasp the gravity of the situation – a losing battle, a ring that has overpowered the will of the ring-bearer and the tussle for the Ring between Frodo and Gollum.

In the Book, Gollum acquires the Ring after biting off Frodo's finger, but "Gollum dancing like a mad thing" toppled and fell into the chasm of Mount Doom (946). In the film, Jackson alters the scene to suit the visual ambience of films. Frodo and Gollum struggle for the possession of the Ring and in the process, both fall into the

chasm but Frodo manages to cling to the edge of the cliff just in time, later helped up by Sam; but Gollum, with his eyes gleaming at the sheer possession of the Ring falls into his own doom and along with it the doom of the Ring too. The destruction of the Ring gives the final closure to the story. Flames roar, the Dark Legions are destroyed, Mordor shakes and writhes under its very foundation, mountains crumble and the evil power of Sauron is completely annihilated.

The "closure" as Ryan called it, is acquired but it is by accident and not by intention in *The Lord of the Rings*. Besides leading the story to a closure, and in Tolkien's case, a eucatastrophic closure, Ryan mentions that the formal and pragmatic function of a narrative should also "communicate something meaningful to the audience" (Ryan "Toward a Definition of Narrative" 29). *The Lord of the Rings* has been interpreted at various levels by academicians, literary critics and fans alike, but Tolkien never wanted a linear interpretation of his work, as was made apparent in his foreword to *The Lord of the Rings,*

> As for any inner meaning or 'message', it has in the intention of the author note. It's neither allegorical nor topical. As the story grew it put down roots (into the past) and threw out unexpected branches: but its main theme was settled from the outset by the inevitable choice of the Ring as the link between it and the Hobbit. (xxiii)

Martha C. Sammons wrote that Tolkien did not believe *The Lord of the Rings* belonged to him once he completed it but that it was brought forth and going its appointed way in the world (191). In his book *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination*, Richard Matthews points out several meanings and messages that can be drawn from the book: "the moral importance of love and sacrifice" ,"the paradox of unity in division" ,"a spiritual order that transcended history, politics, and commerce; it was a mirror of divine order in the

universe", "a struggle for cosmic order, an elemental conflict that encompasses and swallows up all space and time" (71, 73, 77, 83). Irrespective of the plethora of interpretations that can be surmised from reading the book and watching the film adaptations, Ryan's formulation of the four tiered dimension and Genette's concept of narrativity accounts for the applicability of their schema to the corpus of Tolkien's complex Middle-earth narratives.

## On Film Adaptations of Fantasy

Film adaptations of the fantasy genre poses a greater challenge for filmmakers because they have to bring to life what lives in the imagination of people. This must be the reason why Tolkien was not particularly keen on adaptations of his work. In a letter to radio producer Terrence Tiller, Tolkien wrote, "I think the book quite unsuitable for "dramatization"" (qtd in Rosebury 204). For Tolkien, drama and literature were two different genres which relied on separate modes of narratives. Drama was mostly mimetic and literature mostly diegetic. Drama can never adapt the fantasy genre because mimicking animal characters and its like, for instance, will only make a "buffoonery" out of the elements of fantasy (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories"16). Tolkien further expressed his disdain for dramatization of fairy stories and fantasy fables for the theatres, stating that it is confining it to the "limitations of stage-plays", thus asserting his belief that the fantasy was best suited for literature and not for performance art (17).

Contrary to Tolkien's opinion on adaptation/dramatization, Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* was a huge cinematic success. The film adaptation by Peter Jackson remains to this day one of the greatest films of the twenty first century. The two other notable adaptations of Tolkien's work that came before Peter Jackson's adaptation were the adaptation by Ralph Bakshi in 1978 and the BBC audio version

(1981). Rosebury writes that these two adaptations were "honourable failures, let down mainly by technical, and in Bakshi's case economic constraints" (206). The "cultural after - life" of the film and the re-surge in sales of Tolkien's books after the release of the film reflect the popularity amongst the mainstream audience (219). What rendered the success of the adaptation is, as Rosebury observed, "the development of computer technology to the point at which a scene can be digitally assembled out of a multitude of images, some photographed live, others computer-generated, with little or no loss of visual credibility" (209).

Although it is impossible to replicate readers imaginative visualisations, technological advancements have made possible the creation of visual and aural realities of the imagined and the fantastical. Despite the immense success of the film, "five BAFTA awards, four awards at the Golden Globes including the prize for the best film and eleven Oscars (all it was nominated for) at the 2004 Academy Awards including best picture" the film is not without criticism (Bestvinová 34). Many avid readers of Tolkien's works showed discontent as there have been issues of fidelity in the film adaptation .The large fan base and the even larger mainstream audience that waited for the film to release proved to be a huge challenge for the filmmakers, as they had to work with an expecting audience in mind on the one hand, and the technicalities of transforming a literary work into visual - aural medium on the other. One thing however was clear right from the beginning – there could not be a literal adaptation of the book.

In his article, "The Lord of the Rings: Tolkien, Jackson, and "The Core of the Original"", David Rozema writes that the majority consensus is that "Jackson has been as successful as any filmmaker could be in presenting the essence of the original story and the spirit of the original characters. The minority report, however, is that Jackson,

despite his skills as a director and cinematographer, has failed to identify and present what is at the heart of Tolkien's tale and, correlatively, fails to portray the true character of the main characters in the story" (1). Additionally, making a case for the minority consensus, Rozema states that Jackson failed to bring out the "moral-theological theme that is essential to understanding both the main characters in the story and the plot of the story itself" (1). Another criticism raised is on how the film "skips the building up stage and jumps straight into the action phase" unlike the book "which is long, gradually speeding up story line" (Bestvinová 34). In spite of the criticisms it faces, Peter Jackson's version of *The Lord of the Rings* has successfully remodeled a twentieth century literary saga into a twenty first century cinematic saga by taking Tolkien's underlying vision and philosophical contributions of the Middle-earth legendarium into a gigantic visual reality. The inevitability of the fact that there are significant changes and revisions, omissions and additions of scenes, dialogues and characters in the process of adaptation, does not nullify or cancel out the innate spirit of the source text, rather it resurrects a whole new Tolkien era in the twenty first century.

In essence, *The Lord of the Rings* has had a significant impact upon readers and audience. Apart from the cultural reawakening of Tolkien's epic fantasy and the boost in book sales, influence on popular culture and a renewed appreciation of Tolkien's works, the film adaptations have greatly redefined modern filmic fantasy. *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy pushed boundaries of visual storytelling thereby advancing the use of computer technologies, advanced editing techniques, CGI and VFX in the film industry. It has contributed to the creation of a large audience base that waits upon filmmakers to recreate their favourite fantasy books. *The Lord of the Rings*, both the book and the film may be said to have made transformative contributions in

revolutionizing modern fantasy that not only influenced storytelling but also the depth and complexity with which imaginary worlds can be crafted.

**Conclusion**

Tolkien created a twenty first century literary saga through the temporal - spatial order and the historical and geographical dimensions that he created for his secondary world. Tolkien's imaginary world is populated with races of all kinds that speak different languages which Tolkien invented. Tolkien, of course is not the first writer to coin words and invent nomenclatures that the literary world remembers long after it has been written. For instance, Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* used the word "Lilliput" and there are several coinages by Lewis Carroll like "jabberwocky" and "frabjous" that has taken the literary imagination to its furthest heights. Besides, there are several instances where invented languages have been used in films like Na'vi in *Avatar*, Klingon in *Star Trek,* Huttesse in *Star Wars*, Cityspeak in *Blade Runner*, Dothrake in *Game of Thrones,* etc but Tolkien's work finds its place not only in the complex – historical macrocosm which he invented and the range of invented languages therein but also the manner in which he used his invented languages – in proper names, in verse and songs, in dialogues and salutations that make Tolkien a literary marvel and his work a twenty first century saga.

Tolkien's book had influences even outside the literary world. Led Zeppelin is one of the few obvious examples whose lyrics were a product of Tolkien's influence. In "Ramble On", the lines "'Twas in the darkest depths of Mordor, I met a girl so fair, but Gollum and the Evil One crept up and slipped away", or in "The Battle of Evermore", his lyric runs "The Dark Lord rides in force tonight…The ringwraiths ride in black" are examples where Zeppelin used explicit references to *The Lord of the Rings* ("Ramble On" and "The Battle of Evermore"). "The Lord of the Rings" by Blind Guardian is

another example of Tolkien's influence as the song itself is about the book. Also, the popularity of Tolkien's work was such that fans "were often seen wearing buttons labelled "Frodo lives" or "Gandalf for President"" (Bestvinová 15). Merchandises and video games, Tolkien fan clubs and websites dedicated to Tolkien became a common phenomenon ever since the release of the book which surged after Jackson's adaptation was released.

The success of *The Lord of the Rings* continues to remain even today. Imdb lists *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy in the top five highest rated films released between 2000-2009 (BonaFideBoss). Tolkien's literary saga and Peter Jackson's successful adaptation has now given our generation and several other generations to follow easy access to both the book and the film. But, it may also, on the flipside normalize the popular consciousness of the audience by representations of the landscape, characters and languages as represented in the film and the original text may, in the fast paced digital world, loom in the ambiguity of literary limbo like that of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein.*

**Chapter 3**

***The Chronicles of Narnia*: Analysis of Narrative Structure in Select Narnian Books and Film Adaptations**

**Introduction**

"He must make us believe that what he shows us, fantastic though it seems, has some relations with the great veins and arteries of our existence. He must connect it with what we are pleased to call reality. He must make us believe that our loves and hates lie that way too." (Woolf 1925)

**Clive Staple Lewis**

Clive Staple Lewis (1898-1963) was the second son of Albert Lewis and Florence Hamilton. Lewis grew up in their spacious house Little Lea, which was located in the fashionable suburb overlooking the Belfast Lough. It was a house with long passages and corridors, unoccupied upstairs rooms and attics that children used as secret passages to create imaginary boyhood adventures. The house also had a large oak wardrobe wherein as children they would go inside the wardrobe like a little hideout and Lewis would usually tell his stories there. Lewis and his brother Warren had a fulfilling and idyllic childhood until the tragic passing away of his mother in 1908 which put the family into perpetual gloom. This was traumatic for Lewis as he lost not just his mother but even his father and home to a grief- stricken father who had become very irritable and ill-tempered to the needs of his children which eventually led to Lewis and his brother being sent to a boarding school in Watford, England. The boarding school turned out to be a miserable place for the brothers to be in, with very little facilities and very poor infrastructure. Young Lewis grew up abandoning his Christian faith and remained so until his re-conversion to the Christian faith in his early thirties after his friendship with

J. R. R. Tolkien and other like-minded friends from their literary circle which they called Inklings.

## C. S. Lewis's Early Childhood Memories and Some of its Recreation in Narnia

In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis recreated certain experiences and characters from his childhood memories. The attic in *The Magician's Nephew*, for instance which "Polly had discovered long ago that if you opened a certain little door in the box-room attic of her house you would find the cistern and a dark place behind it which you could get into by a little careful climbing" is written in reminiscence of Little Lea the oak wardrobe that Lewis's grandfather had made in the 1800s which was made the medium of transport and the central prop of action in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (14,15). Even people Lewis had been acquainted with have been immortalised in his work like Lizzie Endicott, his nurse during his growing up years. Lizzie Endicott would tell stories and Irish folklores to Lewis and his brother Warren and had shaped the growing up years of Lewis to a great extent. Lizzie Endicott is sketched in the character of the nurse of Prince Caspian in *Prince Caspian* who would tell him stories about Aslan and of what Narnia was like once upon a time. The lovable but pessimistic Puddleglum in *The Silver Chair* is actually Fred Paxford, who was Lewis's gardener and a general handyman who always anticipated the worst out of anything. Lewis's skilful craftsmanship with words brought to life and forever immortalised certain memories, people and incidents from his childhood.

## The Genesis of Narnia

It was in the autumn of 1939, when the world was reeling quickly into the whirlpool of a destructive war that some evacuees came to Lewis's home to escape

bombing from London. C. S. Lewis had never fancied being with little children until the war brought them to him. He realised then that there were hardly any children books the pages of which were filled with coloured imaginations and moral coding. He decided to write one himself and he began by drafting the first book of his Narnia Chronicles *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which was first published in 1950, 11 years after the idea of writing a children's adventure book first took shape. The idea of creating a Narniaverse filled with all kinds of talking trees and animals and of setting it in a parallel universe in which a lion is the Supreme figurehead germinated quite gradually. The creation of Lewis's Narniaverse was not wholly a product of Lewis's figment of imagination but as Lewis himself wrote, "The *Lion* all began with a picture of a faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood. This picture has been in my mind since I was sixteen. Then one day, when I was about forty, I said to myself: 'Let's try to make a story about it'" (qtd. in Hooper 42). He began imagining a world were dwarfs, centaurs, fauns, etc could talk and had human attributes. A world which was not anthropocentric but one where children's adventures would be in a fantastical land away from parental interferences or guidance so that the children are left alone to venture into the unknown and be kings and queens, fight villains and be saviours and be all that they can be and want to be, away from the bombings and house trenches, the sound of flying fighter jets and news of the World War blaring on radios. The creation of Narniaverse, Aslan and every other creature that inhabited this magical land were not the outcome of a deliberate and meticulously planned-out story but it occurred, as was Lewis's style of writing, spontaneously wherein his writings preceded the characters and morals in his story. Lewis discovered his own story as he wrote.

**The Narnia Chronology**

The seven books of *The Chronicles of Narnia* came in quick succession, one after the other as Lewis completed the series in six years. The chronology in which Lewis wrote is different from the book compilation of sequences of *The Chronicles of Narnia.* The first book that Lewis wrote was *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) and within the next six months he wrote *Prince Caspian* (1951). The third and the fourth books to be published were *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952) and *The Silver Chair* (1953) and he took three months each to complete both books. The fifth book *The Horse and His Boy* (1954) soon followed and the Narnia series completed with the publication of the last two books *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Last Battle* (1956). The sequence of the Narnia chronicles were rearranged by HarperCollins edition in 1994 and it has been printed in that sequence ever since:

Book 1: *The Magician's Nephew*

Book 2: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Book 3: *The Horse and His Boy*

Book 4: *Prince Caspian*

Book 5: *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*

Book 6: *The Silver Chair*

Book 7: *The Last Battle*

**Application of Theories and Methodology**

This chapter aims to study the narrative structure of the *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and its film adaptations respectively to examine the changes it has undergone in due course of its transference from print narration to visual narration.

Vladamir Propp's thirty-one functions and seven spheres of action as enumerated in his seminal work *Morphology of the Folktale* will be used to examine the characters and their functions in the text as well as their translation into films. Propp's methodological framework will also be used as an analytical tool to examine the component parts of narrative structure of the book and the film. This chapter will also briefly enquire into the nature of the language of films and examine changes incorporated into the film during the process of adaptation to reinvent a visual Narnia and attempt to enquire into its resultant impact on the film and its audience.

**Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*: Thirty-one Functions and Seven Spheres of Action**

Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp (1895 – 1970), also referred to as the "Aristotle of film narratology" by many critics is most remembered for his invaluable contribution to analysing narrative structures in folktales (Bordwell 5). In his seminal work *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928)*,* Propp enumerates thirty-one functions and seven spheres of action where he attempts to discuss and determine the structure and formal organizations found in folktales. Although Propp's analysis has been criticised by some theorists on grounds of being a narrow analysis as it takes only Russian folktales into consideration disregarding historical, social and cultural contexts, ignoring points of views and narrative styles, Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* has had enormous impact on folklorists, linguists and literary critics ever since the translation of this book into English in 1958. The Proppian analysis is a useful tool in studying various narratives and can be applied to all types of narratives – folktales, literature, films, cartoons, television series, films, series and episodes in Over-the-top (OTT) platforms, etc.

In his foreword to *Morphology of the Folktale*, Propp states his purpose of writing the book in the following words:

> In botany, the term "morphology" means the study of the components of plant; their mutual relationship, and the relationship of the parts to the whole – in other words, the study of a plant's structure.
>
> But what about a morphology of the folktale? Scarcely anyone has thought about the possibility of such a concept. (1)

Propp's analysis of the folktales is not centred on the psychological motivation of the characters but rather on the structuring of the folktale that is common to many folktales. His analysis can be understood in terms of the actions of the characters in the stories and the consequences of those actions which he broadly discussed under two headings: thirty-one functions and seven spheres of action. All of the thirty-one functions and seven spheres of action may/does not always appear in a given narrative and may/does not necessarily follow the given order.

The thirty-one functions of the dramatis personae as enumerated by Vladimir Propp has been summarised below:

I. Absentation: One of the member/s of a family is absent from home

II. Interdiction: Some kind of warning or foreboding is issued to the hero

III. Violation: The interdiction is violated

IV. Reconnaissance: The villain attempts to scout information

V. Delivery: The villain succeeds in acquiring information from the victim

VI. Trickery: The villain attempts to trick the victim to serve his/her purpose

VII. Complicity: The victim is tricked and unwittingly helps the villain

VIII. Villainy: Member/s of the hero's family is/are harmed by the villain

IX. Mediation: The hero is approached with a request or command that signals the hero's departure from home

X. Counteraction: The hero decides to counteract

XI. Departure: The hero departs from home

XII. The first function of the donor: The hero receives a magical agent or helper

XIII. The hero's reaction: The hero reacts to the action of the donor

XIV. Receipt of magical agent: The hero acquires certain magical agents

XV. Guidance: Spatial transference of the hero

XVI. Struggle: A direct combat between the hero and the villain

XVII. Branding: The hero is branded

XVIII. Victory: The villain is defeated

XIX. Resolution: The initial function or lack is liquidated

XX. Return: The hero returns

XXI. Pursuit: The hero is pursued

XXII. Rescue: The hero is rescued from the pursuit

XXIII. Unrecognized arrival: The hero's arrival is unrecognized in his own home/ country

XXIV. Unfounded claims: The villain/ false hero make unfounded claims

XXV. A difficult task: The hero is asked to perform a difficult task

XXVI. Solution: The task is accomplished

XXVII. Recognition: The hero gets due recognition

XXVIII. Exposure: The villain is exposed

XXIX. Transfiguration: The hero is given a new appearance

XXX. Punishment: The villain is served due punishment

XXXI. Wedding: The hero is married and ascends the throne. (24 – 57)

The thirty-one functions that determine the narrative path are assisted by the seven types of characters or the seven spheres of action as traced by Propp. The seven spheres of action as discussed by Propp has been summarised below:

1. Villain: The antagonist of the story and the opposing force of the hero

2. Donor: Provides the hero with certain gifts, object, information or advice that will assist the hero in his quest

3. Helper: The hero's companion or assistant that helps him complete his quest and restore narrative equilibrium

4. The Princess: The victim that needs rescuing by the hero

5. Dispatcher: Responsible for sending the hero on his task

6. Hero: The protagonist of the story who is expected to restore the narrative equilibrium

7. The False Hero: A variant of the villain who deceives the characters in the story by posing as a hero. (72 – 75)

An analysis of Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and their film adaptations by Andrew Adamson (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 2005, *Prince Caspian* 2008) and Michael Apted (*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* 2010) has been attempted below.

**A Proppian Analysis of Lewis's Narniaverse**

**Thirty-One Functions in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe***

Any tale begins with an initial situation that prepares the readers for future course of actions and adventures in the story. Usually a family and its members are introduced and a certain situation is created that will decide the future action of the

story. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the initial situation in the book and its adaptation is the war because of which the Pevensie siblings, i.e., Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy were sent away to the countryside to live in Professor Kirke's house which had "long corridors, endless spare bedrooms, series of rooms lined with books, and one very bleak enormous room that had nothing in it but a very large wardrobe" which the youngest Pevensie discovers. In the book version, Lucy discovers the wardrobe while exploring the huge house but in the film version, the discovery is made while playing hide and seek with her siblings. This leads to the beginning of the adventures in Narnia (1).

**I. Absentation**

Vladimir Propp begins with the initial situation in the story i.e., absentation. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, absentation occurs three times. The first absentation takes place when Lucy stands mesmerised by the huge wooden wardrobe in Professor Kirke's large house. While Peter, Susan and Edmund troops out of the room seeing nothing exceptionally charming in the room, Lucy stayed behind because she wanted to look into the wardrobe and when she did, she found herself going further inside the wardrobe until she reached a snowy wood at night time (12, 13, 14). In Andrew Adamson's adaptation of the film, Lucy's journey through the wardrobe and into an alternate universe has been captured in all faithfulness as Lewis had detailed in his book, albeit the discovery of the wardrobe by Lucy occurs when she is playing hide and seek with her siblings and looking for a place to hide herself in (00:11:15 – 00:12:10). A slight change seemingly, but it does add to the casual effect and allows dramatization of the scene.

A second absentation occurs when Lucy and Edmund venture through the wardrobe and Edmund experiences Narnia for the first time (35, 00:28:30 – 00:28:45).

The final absentation takes place when all the Pevensie siblings finally get to Narnia through the same large wooden wardrobe (63, 00:40:00 – 00:40:10). The filmmaker chose to remain faithful to the source text in these scenes as no notable alterations have been inserted into the scenes. This may have been done by the filmmaker in order to capture the author's vision in as magical and authentic manner as possible.

## II, III. Interdiction and its Violation

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* the interdiction is indirect and is evidenced in Tumnus's confession to Lucy about his service to the White Witch - the villain in the story, and his initial intention to kidnap Lucy and surrender her to the White Witch. Later when Lucy tells about the White Witch to Edmund and how her evil magic has caused Narnia to be always in winter, Lucy and Edmund should have realised the looming dangers of being seen in Narnia, but instead the interdiction is violated and the four Pevensie siblings land in Narnia as they hide in the wardrobe one day, trying to stay clear of Mrs Macready (48, 00:22:57 – 00:22:59).

## IV, V. Reconnaissance and Delivery

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Edmund is the object of the White Witch's cunning interrogation and she successfully extracts the required information from Edmund about having a brother and two sisters, of which one of his sisters had already been to Narnia and met a Faun (43). The narrative voice in the book is translated into dialogues between the White Witch and Edmund in the film adaptation (00: 30:49 – 00:30:55).The dialogues in the film creates an immersive cinematic experience as the audience become engaged in the conversation between the White Witch and Edmund, thus providing a direct connection of the audience to the characters and their emotions on screen.

## VI, VII. Trickery and Complicity

After the required information is extracted from Edmund, the White Witch tricks Edmund into bringing all his four siblings to Narnia by enticing him with more Turkish Delight treats and promising to make him the Prince and later, King of Narnia (45, 00:30:00-00:30:10).

The complicity in the plot arises when Edmund quietly slips away from the Beaver's house and heads out alone in search of the White Witch's house. On reaching the White Witch's house, Edmund in his naivety reveals to her all that was said and discussed about Aslan at the Beaver's house (109, 00:55:16 – 00:55:27). Thus a repetition of functions IV and V occurs in the book as well as in the film adaptation, leading to complicity as he unwittingly helps the White Witch find his victims.

## VIII. Villainy

Villainy, according to Propp is central to the movement of the story. He lists 19 forms by which villainy may be executed. The 15th point, "The villain incarcerates, imprisons" is relevant to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (31). Edmund is incarcerated and imprisoned by the White Witch. In the book, Edmund is not forced within prison walls. Instead, he is forced to sit alongside the White Witch on her sledge as they prepare to find the Pevensie siblings. The incarceration and imprisonment, on the other hand, in the film version occurs quite literally as Edmund is shown bound in chain shackles in a dungeon before the White Witch takes him along with her on her sledge after she has gained enough information from Edmund to plan retaliation (01:01:15 – 01:06:12). This can be seen as an instance of how filmmakers attempt to visually engage audience's attention by dramatizing descriptive narration in the source text as it allows for a more impactful reaction from the audience.

**IX, XV. Mediation and Guidance**

Mediation has been explained by Propp as constituting "the signal for the hero's departure from home" (34). Peter, Susan and Lucy much against their will proceed to find Aslan and the Stone Table as they want to rescue Edmund from the clutches of the White Witch. Guidance in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is given by Mr. and Mrs. Beaver who lead the three siblings to the Stone Table to meet Aslan.

**XIV. Receipt of a Magical Agent**

A magical agent is usually given to the hero(es) that will prove to be of significance or of great need in due course of their quest. Magical agent in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* comes from Father Christmas who gives Peter, Susan and Lucy each objects that they will require in their quest to free Narnia from the White Witch. To Peter, Father Christmas gives "a shield and a sword", to Susan "a bow and a quiver full of arrows and a little ivory horn" and finally to Lucy "a little bottle of what looked like a glass…and a small dagger" (118, 119, 01:09:40 – 01:10:59).

**XXV. Difficult Task**

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, it is not a difficult task per se, but a difficult sacrifice that is demanded by the White Witch to Aslan citing her rights in accordance to the decree of the Deep Magic the Emperor-beyond-the Sea laid down in Narnia when it was created. She demands the life of Edmund as "every traitor belongs to me as my lawful prey and that for every treachery I have a right to a kill" altered to "Then you'll remember well that every traitor belongs to me. His blood is my property" (153, 01:32:44 – 01:32:47). This scene in the film is aided by several close up shots of the White Witch as she delivers her lines. Thus, the filmmaker, by altering the

dialogues capitalizes on the visual and auditory elements thereby evoking a sense of fear and terror amongst the audience and propelling the story towards its climax.

## XXVI. Solution

The difficult task is accomplished as Aslan sacrifices his life that Edmund's life may be saved. It was the pact that Aslan made with the White Witch in order to appease the Deep Magic. Aslan's death creates an air of perpetual gloom as the battle appears to be lost even before it is fought. The solution to the entire scenario is realised when Aslan, after his resurrection tells Susan and Lucy, who were otherwise mourning his death, that Death worked backwards in this case because he willingly laid his life down for a treachery he had not committed (176, 01:54:26 – 01:54:38).

## XVI, XVIII. Struggle and Victory

This function refers to the battle that takes place between the hero(es) and the villain. It usually takes place in battlefields where the opposing individuals or groups come face to face to fight each other. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, this struggle takes place at the Fords of Beruna, later referred to as the Battle of Beruna in *Prince Caspian*. This climactic battle is fought between Aslan and his soldiers on one side and the White Witch and her army in the other. The battle ends in defeat of the White Witch and her army. Propp suggests several ways in which the villain may be defeated. In his first point he writes, "The villain is beaten on an open field" and this occurs quite literally in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (48, 01:47:20 – 02:03:05).

In the film, Adamson uses a combination of dramatic background music and loud battle cries sounded by the Narnians as they fight the battle. This heightens the emotions and compliments the visual narrative. Several close up shots are strategically

used in order to emphasize on the intensity of the battle and capture the emotional impact on the characters. Adamson also uses fast paced scenes to maintain audience engagement and create a sense of urgency, thus translating the verbal narration of the battle in the source text into a visually and emotionally engaging climactic battle scene for the audience.

## XX, XXIX, XX. Return, Transfiguration and Return

In the same manner that absentation occurs three times in the story, two kinds of return has been identified. The first return is the return of the children to Cair Paravel after their victory in the battle. This is when the long awaited prophecy comes to pass as the four Pevensie siblings are crowned by Aslan as Kings and Queens of Narnia (196, 02:06:21- 02:07:18). Transfiguration in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* occurs when the Pevensie children are crowned Kings and Queens of Narnia at Cair Paravel: "So the children sat on their thrones, and sceptres were put into their hands" (196, 02:06:20 – 02:07:45). The final return occurs when the children are transported back to Professor Kirke's house after they have reigned in Narnia as Kings and Queens for an unmentioned number of years.

## Seven Spheres of Action

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, six of the seven spheres of action have been identified:

i) Villain: The narrative complication is created with the introduction of the villain within the narrative frame of the text. The accidental stumbling of Edward into the White Witch during his first visit to Narnia and the tête-à-tête that followed propels the movement of the story. Still enticed by the White Witch's Turkish Delight and her

promise to make him King, lures Edmund into the White Witch's house during his second visit to Narnia.

ii) Donor: The donor is Father Christmas as he prepares Peter, Susan and Lucy for the battle ahead. The gifts from Father Christmas also recur in *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

iii) Helper*:* Mr. and Mrs. Beaver perform the function of helper as they lead Peter, Susan and Lucy to the Stone Table where Aslan waits for them. Edmund also becomes a helper in the later part of the story, after he realises that he was deceived by the White Witch.

iv) Princess: The damsel in distress that needs rescuing in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is not a person per se, but a place. It is Narnia that is in distress and needs to be rescued from the wicked clutches of the White Witch.

v) Dispatcher: The role of the dispatcher is crucial in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as the Narnian adventure begins after the children are send off on their task. The arrival of the Pevensie children in Narnia is a prophecy fulfilled made long ago as per Narnian times. The act of dispatching is performed by Mr. and Mrs. Beaver as well as Aslan as he informs the children, on different occasions about the prophecy that had surrounded the arrival of the four children to Narnia.

vi) Hero: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has not one but four heroes - Peter, Susan, Lucy and Aslan. These heroes restore the narrative equilibrium in the story by rescuing Narnia from the wicked White Witch and by beginning a new era of reign in Narnia.

Much in resemblance to the formulaic structure of the folktales as enumerated by Propp, Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe;* although a modern fantasy finds many of the functions applicable to the story. The same applies to the film

adaptation as Adamson has retained almost all the narrative events in the story and has stayed true to the narrative order in the book. Eighteen functions of the thirty-one functions have been found to be most relevant and the narrative structure responds to functions I to IX in the sequence Propp had arranged. Function XV is recognised before function XIV in both the book and the film. This is followed by functions XXV, XXVI and then back to functions XVI and XVIII ending with the resolution or "eucatastrophe" as Tolkien termed happy endings in fairy tales, viz., functions XX, XXIX, XX (22).

Apart from the thirty-one functions, of which more than half of the functions have been identified to fit the narrative course of the book and the film, six of the seven spheres of actions have been identified in both the book and the film. The film version has portrayed the children protagonists as Lewis had described and each of the characters – Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy are given enough screen time to develop their own character arc throughout the film. The role of the villain played by Tilda Swinton is perfected not only by her performance but by the use of make-up and costumes that gives the White Witch depth of character which is apt for a villain. The sort of warmth that Lewis had wanted Aslan, the Lion, to bring onto the story has also been made possible with the use of CGI and VFX bringing to life a magnificent lion with human attributes- grand and noble, powerful yet just.

**Thirty-One Functions in *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian***

Adamson's film adaptation of *Prince Caspian* has been significantly reworked as compared to his first Narnia film *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. One of the main changes is the rearrangement of the narrative chronology. The book begins in London where the Pevensie siblings suddenly find themselves transported to Narnia by magic. They have been summoned to Narnia by Prince Caspian who needs their help to

save Narnia from the evil King Miraz. The Pevensies learn much about Prince Caspian and the present state of Narnia from the dwarf, Trumpkin, and it is not until the last quarter of the book that the Pevensies and Prince Caspian meet for the first time. The film adaptation however took liberties with the narrative chronology as the film flash forward and begins with the flight of Prince Caspian from the castle which creates a sense of immediacy. The meeting of the Pevensies and Prince Caspian also occur much early on in the film. The choice for a different narrative structure in the film may have been made by the filmmakers to focus on a more dynamic narrative pacing. Beginning the story as it is narrated in the book may have slowed the narrative progress because it is only in the later part of the book that action begins to build. By beginning the film with Prince Caspian fleeing the castle, the oppressive atmosphere under the Telmarine rule is quickly established thus setting the overall tone for the development of the story. Taking the difference in the narrative structure in consideration, this section will list the thirty-one functions as identified in the book and in the film.

## I. Absentation

The absentation in *Prince Caspian* is different from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* athough the narrative opening shares the same fairy tale tone: "Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy" (13).The second visit of the Pevensies to Narnia does not happen through the wooden wardrobe, but it is simply magic that takes the Pevensies to Narnia for a second time. This is the first absentation in the story. The second absentation is not a magical transportation but the physical fleeing of Prince Caspian from the castle after Doctor Cornelius makes arrangements for the Prince's departure, once there is a known threat to the Prince's life (73). The second absentation is a departure from the comfort and security of home

environment while the first absentation is an escape from the monotony of school and boarding life in London, to a call of adventure.

The initial situation in the film version, much like the opening scenes of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* sets the context of the story. Adamson begins the film with Queen Prunaprismia giving birth to the son. The scene occurs in the middle of the night and this initial situations sets the story in motion and ushers in a sense of urgency as Doctor Cornelius, his tutor wakes the sleeping Prince and urges the young Prince to flee the castle as an heir has been born to his wicked uncle who usurped his father's throne years ago putting the life of the rightful heir in perpetual danger. The first absentation in the film is therefore also the central situation of the story (00:00:50 – 00:04:40). The second absentation brings the Pevensie siblings into the picture. It has been a year since their last visit to Narnia. The second absentation occurs as the children sit and wait for the arrival of their train as their holidays have ended and it is time to go back to their boarding schools. In a *Harry Potter* fashion, the children, in their uniforms are transported to Narnia as they wait in a crowded train station, though Lewis had imagined an "empty, sleepy, country station" (12, 00:11:38 – 00:12:25).

## II, III. Interdiction and Violation

As it is with absentation, two sets of interdiction may be identified. The first set of interdiction comes from Doctor Cornelius who warns Prince Caspian from openly displaying his curiosity about Ancient Narnia because the King does not like it. Another notable interdiction that Doctor Cornelius gives Prince Caspian to try and reach Archenland to the court of King Nain after he flees the castle.

In the film version, as opposed to the book version, the nurse and King Nain of Archenland do not appear in the story and the interdiction occurs in the opening scenes. It is a simple but urgent warning given by Doctor Cornelius to Prince Caspian who

wakes the sleeping Prince from his sleep and whispers to him, "your aunt has given birth to a son" (00:02:39 – 00:02:54). A sense of foreboding fills the room as the camera takes a medium close up shot of Prince Caspian who is in shock and fear. The next interdiction comes from Doctor Cornelius again when Prince Caspian comes to rescue him from Miraz's prison. He tells the Prince in a clear tone of warning, "Don't underestimate Miraz as your father did" (01:10:46 – 01:10:52). Rather than weighing the gravity of the circumstances under which he has been warned, Prince Caspian takes the reckless step of confronting his uncle which affects the Narnian siege of the castle, thus a violation of the interdiction is identified here.

The second set of interdiction is given by Aslan to the four Pevensie children and Trumpkin. It occurs when Aslan momentarily appears before Lucy on their route to Aslan's How, once known as the Stone Table where Aslan sacrificed his life. The children and the Dwarf, despite Lucy's telling, chooses to take a path different from the one Aslan had hinted them to take when he appeared before Lucy. This causes the violation of the interdiction which causes the children and the Dwarf unable to find their way out of the island into Aslan's How. Aslan appears again for a second time, first before Lucy and later to the others. In the second interdiction, Lucy is instructed to tell the others to follow her and should they refuse to listen to her, then she at least must follow him alone (157).This interdiction is not violated and so the entire party reaches their destination in the nick of time.

In the film version the interdiction occurs when Lucy sees just a glimpse of Aslan, who directs her to the right path but the rest of the members refuse to believe her. This is the violation to the interdiction because they end up going in circles. Trumpkin and the Pevensie siblings are able to find their way out across the gorge

easily, once they follow the lead given by Aslan to Lucy (00:41:50 – 00:42:00, 00:47:40 – 00:48:50).

## VII. Villainy

The act of villainy in *Prince Caspian* is committed by King Miraz who, as Doctor Cornelius reveals to Prince Caspian on the night of his departure from the castle, was the usurper of the throne of Narnia. King Miraz's villainy is further exposed when Doctor Cornelius tells Prince Caspian of King Miraz's newborn son whom he will want to be the next King and hence he will plan to clear him (Prince Caspian) out of the way (71).

In the film, Miraz's villainy is exposed in a single sentence. Doctor Cornelius, as he prepares Prince Caspian's escape from the castle tells him, "your aunt has given birth to a son" (00:02:49 – 00:02:53). This is an instance of narrative compression in the film where filmmakers condense the scene to suit the narrative pacing and film runtime. This dialogue is immediately followed by a medium close up shot of Prince Caspian with ominous music playing in the background to indicate the gravity of the situation. Miraz's villainy is implicated in the scene where he tells General Glozelle "You know your orders", when the news of his newborn son is given to him (00:01:53 – 00:01:54).

## IX, XI. Mediation and Departure

Doctor Cornelius is the mediator in *Prince Caspian* as he is the one who knows and recognises the villainous acts and plots of King Miraz. He knows what will transpire from the King's villainous actions and hence, informs and instructs Prince Caspian before sending him away from the castle. The departure in *Prince Caspian* is rather sudden and an unexpected movement in the plot and occurs immediately after the birth of King Miraz's son.

## XIV. Receipt of a Magical Agent

Magic is pivotal in Lewis's Narnia stories. It is through magic that Narnia was created in Book I and through magic Narnia is protected in all subsequent books of the series. In *Prince Caspian*, the receipt of magical agent becomes elemental for the movement of the plot. In the first instance, Prince Caspian is given Queen Susan's magic horn by Doctor Cornelius that was believed to bring "strange help" (72). In the film, as Doctor Cornelius gives Susan's magic horn to Prince Caspian, he tells him that it had taken him many years to find it and that he must use it only in his greatest need which gives more character to the magic horn (00:03:57 – 00:04:07).

In the second instance, the Pevensie siblings after their magical transport to Narnia find their magical agents. The magical agents of the Pevensie siblings are the gifts that Father Christmas had given to them, except to Edmund, on their first adventure in Narnia which they find in the ancient treasure chamber amongst the ruins of Cair Paravel.

## XV. Guidance

In *Prince Caspian*, it is Aslan's How that the Pevensie siblings have to reach in order to restore order in Narnia. It is also in Aslan's How that Prince Caspian along with other Narnians plot against the evil King Miraz. They wait in anticipation of any help after Prince Caspian blows Queen Susan's magic horn. The Pevensie children, who now find that Narnia had changed drastically, needed to be guided to Aslan's How. This guidance comes from Aslan.

**XVI, XVIII. Struggle and Victory**

Two kinds of struggle have been identified in Lewis's *Prince Caspian* and three kinds of struggle in Adamson's adaptation of *Prince Caspian*. The chapter "Sorcery and Sudden Vengeance" brings a surprising twist to the story as Nikabrik had brought two sorcerers – "a Hag and a Wer-Wolf" to the council at Aslan's How, inciting the council into denouncing the power and authority of Aslan by invoking the White Witch into power through black sorcery (185). A violent clash breaks out between Nikabrik and the two sorcerers on one side and the remaining Narnians on the other. The clash gets Nikabrik, the Hag and the Wer-Wolf killed, bringing the first victory to the Narnians at Aslan's How. The second struggle occurs when High King Peter challenges King Miraz to a wager of battle. This challenge is accepted and High King Peter and King Miraz meet for an open combat. The victory is Peter's as King Miraz is killed. However, it is not High King Peter who kills King Miraz but a lord in his own army, Glozelle, who treacherously stabs him to death. For a moment, the Telmarines believe that the Narnians had treacherously killed their King and rushes forward to attack the Narnians but it is at that very moment, in a fairy tale like manner that Aslan comes to their rescue having awakened every tree and every other talking creatures of Narnia (211,212).

The film version of *Prince Caspian* has admittedly made interesting changes to the story. In the first instance, in an obvious deviation from the book, Adamson introduced a lengthy scene of siege on King Miraz's castle led by High King Peter, which is an utter failure as the Telmarines soon take stock of the situation. An inversion of the function of victory is recognised here. The second struggle is the scene where Nikabrik brings the two sorcerers to resurrect the White Witch. Adamson has again made relative changes to this scene as the White Witch is brought to life for a brief moment, but before assuming full power, she is destroyed by King Edmund thus

building suspense and creating an immersive cinematic experience. It is a moment of victory especially for King Edmund because it establishes Edmund's character as having overcome his fear of the White Witch. The next struggle is the wager of battle between King Miraz and High King Peter. Adamson has remained relatively faithful to this part of the story but he deviates from the part where King Miraz is treacherously killed by his own Lord. An engaging battle scene follows after the murder of King Miraz. Aslan comes to the rescue of the Narnians only when they are at breaking point, adding much suspense, tension and excitement to the final scene; bringing this scene to a momentous close with the final defeat of the Telmarines.

## XXXI. Wedding

Though the XXXIst function is wedding, Propp writes that "Sometimes, on the contrary, only accession to the throne is taken into consideration" (57). Likewise, in *Prince Caspian*, there is only the accession to the throne of Narnia. In the book, High King Peter, at Aslan's command, bestows the Knighthood of the Order of the Lion on Caspian (226).

In the film, this scene is replaced by an entirely different one. After the battle when Peter, Susan, Edmund and Caspian meet Aslan for the first time, they kneel before him, Aslan commands the Kings and Queens of Narnia to rise. Prince Caspian does not rise because he thinks he is not ready, to which Aslan replies "It's for that very reason, I know you are" (02:06:42 – 00:07:03). Next, there is a scene of Caspian wearing a crown and parading through the town of Narnia along with all the Pevensies as they are cheered on by Narnians and Telmarines alike (02:09:49 – 02:10:17). The parade of the Kings and Queens through the streets of Narnia makes the coronation of Prince Caspian appear grand and royal. This scene also visually presents happy and free Narnians that look forward to being ruled by their new King Caspian.

**XX. Return**

Just as magically the children were summoned to Narnia, their return to London is equally magical. After peace and order is restored in Narnia and Prince Caspian is crowned the rightful King, the children are bound to return back through a door in the air that Aslan creates (239).The closing scene is slightly altered in the film. Susan and Caspian are shown to have developed romantic attachment as Queen Susan kisses King Caspian just before she, along with the rest of her siblings leave Narnia through the door as Regina Spektor's song "The Call" plays in the background (02:15:38 – 02:16:40). The musical score and narrative pacing, further serves to make this scene a significant and an emotionally charged scene thus, providing for a more engaging storyline, making it particularly appealing to the younger audience.

**Seven Spheres of Action**

As in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, six of the seven spheres of action have been identified in *Prince Caspian*.

i) Villain: King Miraz is the usurper of the throne of Narnia and his character brings the required narrative complication in the story as he schemes to kill Prince Caspian, the rightful heir to the throne.

ii) Donor: Prince Caspian's tutor Doctor Cornelius is the donor as he gives Queen Susan's horn to Prince Caspian before he flees the castle. Besides Doctor Cornelius, the ancient treasure room in Cair Paravel performs the function of the donor as it is there amongst the ruins that High King Peter, Queens Susan and Lucy find the gifts that were given to them by Father Christmas during their last visit to Narnia.

iii) Helper: There are several characters that help in restoring the task of equilibrium in the story. Doctor Cornelius aids Prince Caspian in escaping the castle,

Dwarf Trumpkin aids the Pevensies as he informs them of the trouble in Narnia, the Pevensies aid Prince Caspian in freeing Narnia and restoring the throne to Prince Caspian, and finally it is Aslan himself that restores equilibrium by breathing life into all Narnia as in the days of old.

iv) Princess: The Princess that needs rescuing is Narnia.

v) Dispatcher: Doctor Cornelius is the dispatcher in the story as he sends Prince Caspian to perform his task. Besides Doctor Cornelius, the magical transportation of the Pevensies from London station to Narnia, performs the function of a dispatcher.

vi) Hero: The four Pevensie siblings along with Prince Caspian are the heroes of the story as they strive to restore the throne of Narnia to the rightful heir and creatures.

Narrative structures are inherent attributes to the dynamics in narrativity as their analysis become useful to interpret the elements that make up the story. It helps gain a fuller appreciation in the larger context. Since stories do not merely relate connected series of events but also detail characters, settings, background, motives, etc, the Proppian analysis have been found useful to analyse the narrativity dynamics that exists in the book and the film. During the course of the analysis, notable changes were identified in the book and the film. For instance, the siege of Miraz's castle (XVI, XVII. Struggle and Victory) is seen as a significant departure from the source text. It prioritizes heightened action, dramatic fight sequences, fast changing shots to create a more intense and dramatic portrayal of the siege which is not found in the book. The narrative chronology is also altered. The book uses traditional narrative technique where the story has a proper beginning, middle and an end. The film on the other hand, restructures the narrative order to impact the narrative pacing and flow of the story by beginning the story from the middle. The resetting of Lewis's narrative structure has changed the order in which certain functions occur and the manner in which certain

character types have been projected. Susan is depicted as more courageous in the film as is seen by the way she boldly gives her opinions and participates in battles. Peter has been made predictably more mature and arrogant while Doctor Cornelius has a more prominent role in the movie and hence has a more direct impact on the unfolding of events. In fact, the Proppian analysis has simplified the structural elements of the two mediums thereby making comparisons between the book and the film relatively simpler. Twelve most relevant functions have been identified to be common to both the book and the film. In the film version, function XVI has been identified to occur thrice as there is an additional scene in the film of the siege on Miraz's castle.

## Thirty-One Functions in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*

Like the film *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* has also taken notable liberties with the narrative structure of the book. The main plot in the book is to find the seven Narnian Lords that disappeared during the reign of King Miraz. Prince Caspian sails out into the unknown East to fulfil this quest. He is joined by Edmund, Lucy and Eustace Scrubb as they get magically transported to the Dawn Treader. The journey to the East proves to be an adventurous one as the crew encounter several challenges throughout their voyage. The film made several changes in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, the most notable one being plot change. The quest in the film is changed to finding the seven swords of the seven Narnian Lords which needed to be placed on Aslan's Table so that the Dark Island is dispelled forever. Following are the functions of Propp as identified in the book and the film.

## I. Absentation

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, two kinds of absentation may be identified. In the first instance, Edmund, Lucy and Eustace Scrubb are magically transported to Narnia. The absentation in their case is one where they do not know what adventures lay ahead but as King and Queen of Narnia, a new adventure is welcoming. For Eustace Scrubb, their obnoxious cousin that "had only read the wrong books" and knew nothing about magic and the fantastical creatures that lived in other worlds believed that Edmund and Lucy were pulling some silly tricks on him (100). The second instance is that of Prince Caspian who leaves the comfort and security of his home to sail east for a year and a day to find his father's friends or to learn of their deaths and avenge them if he could (29, 00:11:10 – 00:11: 39).

## II, III. Interdiction and its Violation

*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is a story with several separate adventures that they encounter as they sail from one shore to the other and hence several different interdictions can be identified in this story. An unspoken rule amongst adventurers who land in unknown places is to never leave the company with which one travels. This interdiction is broken by Eustace when they land on an unknown island, later named Dragon Island by King Caspian, after being rocked for several days by a sea storm. While the crew members were busy mending the wrecked ship after days of tossing in the sea, Eustace slips away from the crew hoping to catch a good sleep and escape work. In the film, Eustace's motive of hiding away from the company is not made known but he is shown grumbling about all the fantastical talks that the rest of the company appear to believe in (00:58:07 – 00:58:20). The violation of this interdiction

results in Eustace's transformation into a dragon, an ironical twist as the skeptic himself transforms into a dragon.

The second interdiction comes from Edmund at Deathwater. It was "That water that turns things into gold" and would have turned anyone and anything to gold had they taken a dip into the pool (143). This second interdiction is never violated. In the film version, after Deathwater is discovered, there is a moment of suspense when Edmund and King Caspian are enchanted and attempt to fight a duel but is thwarted by Lucy (00:56:20 – 00:57:24).

A third interdiction which also remains unviolated is a subtle one and is meant for Lucy alone. In the magician's house, as she reads the Magic Book, Lucy is tempted to chant "*An infallible spell to make beautiful her that uttereth it beyond the lot of mortals*" (171). Before she can do that, Aslan gives the interdiction to Lucy as his face stares out at Lucy's from the page with the spell that Lucy was tempted to chant (173). In the film, Lucy violates the interdiction by tearing off the page with the spell and later chanting it while in the ship (00:48:13 – 00:48:30). Lucy desires to be as beautiful as Susan and hopes to become like her by chanting this beauty spell. The consequence of chanting the beauty spell is that Aslan appears before Lucy to remind her that her brothers and sister would not have known Narnia without her, telling her "You doubt your value. Don't run from who you are" (00:50:50 – 00:50:52). This scene reflects on Lucy's inner struggle with low self esteem and insecurities about her appearance, though, the subsequent scenes depict Lucy as more confident and content contributing to her growth as a character.

The final interdiction in the story comes from the Great Lion Aslan who tells King Caspian that he must turn back from sailing to the World's End and be homeward bound to his people who are waiting for him. In the film, King Caspian has a chance to

go into Aslan's country but he deliberately chooses not to as he realises that would not be what his father would want him to do (01:37:00 – 01:38:05). This scene is significant because it aids in understanding the difference in character arc and leadership journey of Lewis and Adamson's Caspian. The book version sketches a young Caspian whose growth into a wise and just king is a gradual process but Adamson, opts for a matured king so as to expedite his character development within the constraints of film runtime.

## XXIX. Transfiguration

The transfiguration in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is symbolic, physical and psychological. Eustace Scrubb, the Pevensies obnoxious cousin who also became a part of the Narnian adventure, turns into a dragon in Dragon Island when he falls asleep inside a dragon's lair. The transfiguration of Eustace is symbolic of the "greedy, dragonish thoughts" that he harboured in his heart (105). However, when Eustace is changed back to his former self, he transforms not just physically but psychologically too. The obnoxious, complaining and nuisance of a company that he was at the Dawn Treader, undergoes significant changes in his character. He is no longer tiresome and though he did relapse to his former self time and again, he did become a better person eventually.

## XXXI. Wedding

Propp's thirty-one functions end with wedding/s, wherein "The hero is married and ascends the throne" (57). In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* since Caspian is already a King, there is no ascension to the throne but the story ends with King Caspian's marriage to Ramandu's daughter. In the film version, there is no wedding for King Caspian. The omission of the wedding scene in the film was perhaps a deliberate decision of the filmmakers to prioritize the central adventure of the story. Adding the

wedding scene, would require a shift in the narrative focus, which would interfere with the narrative pacing of the film and lengthen the film runtime. Since the wedding of King Caspian and Ramandu's daughter is not central to the development of the plot, the scene is omitted in the film version. These are often the difficult choices a filmmaker must make in order to remain faithful of the essence of the story.

## XX. Return

Two kinds of return are identified in both the book and the film adaptation of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.* The first one is King Caspian's decision to return to his country and the second one is the return to normalcy after a life of adventures for Edmund, Lucy and Eustace as they are transported back to the room in Eustace's house where it all began.

## Seven Spheres of Action

In C. S. Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, six of the seven spheres of action have been identified.

i) Villain: *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* does not have a central character that upsets the narrative equilibrium to fulfil the role of the antagonist in the story. The several separate adventures in the story, however have several characters that may be identified as villains in the brief episodes they appear.

The slave merchants were the first villains that the Dawn Treader encountered on their adventure who abduct the Kings and Queen of Narnia, along with Eustace and Reepicheep, to be sold as slaves at Narrowhaven market in Lone Islands.

The great sea serpent is the second villain that the Dawn Treader encounters. It had the entire ship wrapped around its tail by making a loop of itself round the Dawn Treader which nearly snapped as a result of it.

The third kind of villain that may be identified in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* are the Dufflepuds. Although later understood to be foolish and harmless subjects of Coriakin, the dufflepuds obstructed the path of the Dawn Treader after they landed on their island only because they wanted Lucy to help undo the spell that made them invisible by going into the Magician's House.

ii) Donor*:* Lord Bern, whom King Caspian meets at Lone Islands performs the role of a donor. He informs and instructs King Caspian about the governance of Lone Islands by Governor Gumpas and the slave trade that was rampant under Gumpas' governance. Lord Bern's aid and assistance restores and re-establishes Narnia's reign in the Lone Islands. In the film, Lord Bern is a captive and there is no Governor Gumpas that governs Narrowhaven. The situation is altered in the film. The slaves are taken to sea and they suddenly disappear as they are consumed by a mysterious green mist. Lord Bern does not perform the function of a donor in the film as he is ignorant about the mysterious green mist that consumes the slaves taken to the sea.

Ramandu, a retired star also performs the function of a donor as he tells King Caspian and the rest how the enchanted sleep upon the three Lords of Narnia can be broken.

iii) Helper: Reepicheep helps in restoring equilibrium in the narrative in one of their adventures at sea, hence, performs the function of a helper in the story. When the Dawn Treader is wrapped in a loop by the sea serpent, and the entire crew have seemingly given up hope as they were fighting against an enemy whose strength and weakness they had no knowledge of, it was Reepichep on command who called out, ""Don't fight! Push!"" and that saved the Narnian ship from being wrecked to pieces (133).

In the film, Eustace fulfils the role of the helper as he takes the last sword to Ramandu's Island and places it along with the others, thus unleashing its magic. This allows Edmund, who was fighting the sea serpent to slay it with his own sword and kill the sea serpent, thus also destroying the mist and the Dark Island and freeing every slave taken captive to the Dark Island.

iv) Princess: It is not a Princess in the real essence of the word that *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* seeks to rescue but the seven loyal Lords of King Caspian's father whom King Miraz banished during his reign/.

v) Dispatcher*:* The dispatcher in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is again magic. It is the wall frame with a picture of a ship that hung in one of the rooms at Eustace's house that transports Edmund, Lucy and Eustace to the Dawn Treader.

vi) Hero: In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, King Caspian, King Edmund and Queen Lucy perform the function of the hero as they assist King Caspian in his search for the Lords and accompany him as he voyages towards the end of the world to fulfil his quest.

Proppian analysis of the narrative structure of the Narnian books and the film adaptations not only make comparative analysis simpler but it also enriches one's understanding of the techniques and creative choices of storytelling in books and films while also providing insights into their impact on the readers/ audience. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* took advantage of the Computer-generated imagery (CGI) and visual effects (VFX) to depict the magical world of Narnia. The filmmakers added a climactic battle scene against a green mist, a deviation in the narrative in the book version. This and several other scenes like recreating the Dufflepuds, the sea serpent, the dragon or the painting that transports the children to Narnia are recreations of Lewis's imagination which offer a visually immersive adaptation of the Narnian world. This was the only

Narnian film to be released in 3D and while it is also the final instalment in the Narnian film series, and in spite of the plot shifts and several action sequences added for cinematic effects, the film did provide for a visually captivating and engaging film experience for the audience.

Though *The Chronicles of Narnia* was written years after Propp formulated his *Morphology of the Folktale,* it has been has found that it can be applied to works other than folktales. The universality of the human experience that rejoices in the victory of good over evil, which is the central theme of any folktale and the fantasy genre, make the Proppian analysis ideally suitable to categorically study narrative structures and character types. In the three Narnian texts that has been taken up for a Proppian analysis, eighteen functions in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, twelve functions in *Prince Caspian* and six functions in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* has been identified; and six of the seven spheres of action identified in each of the book and its film adaptations. It has been found that each of the book and the film adaptations follow a logical sequence for the story to reach its climax and resolution and though there are absences of some of the functions and spheres of action enumerated by Propp, it did/ does not affect the narrative logic in the text. The Proppian analysis of the select texts and the film adaptations illustrates the way in which multiple narrative structures can be used to tell a single story. The book and the film adaptations do not use the same narrative order but the essence of the story is not diminished by the rearrangement, rather the Proppian analysis become crucial in understanding the narrativity in text and films and the necessity to alter the narrative order in films for the purpose of creating cinematic experience amongst the audience while also accommodating the expectations of the target audience. The Proppian identification of the seven main types of characters and the role of each of these characters that fall within the thirty-one functions offers a

comprehensive understanding of the structuring of the narrative thereby the narrativity in the text/film at large.

**Reinventing Narnia: Language of the Lens**

**Andrew Adamson and his Adaptations of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian***

The Narnia chronicles have been adapted several times by several filmmakers. The recent adaptation by Andrew Adamson has used the same order that the author C. S. Lewis had used while writing his Narnia series. Adamson's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was released in 2005 and *Prince Caspian* in 2008.

**Andrew Adamson, the Cast and Crew Members**

Andrew Ralph Adamson (1966) is a film director, screen writer and producer from New Zealand. Before he directed *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Adamson was already known for directing successful animated films like *Shrek* (2001) and *Shrek 2* (2004). He was also the visual effects supervisor of *Batman Forever* (1995) and *Batman & Robin* (1997).

Like every child that had read *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the images and the various characters created by Lewis forever remained in Adamson's memory. When Perry Moore, executive producer and Cary Grant, Walden Media CEO after meeting several other directors who had shown interest in directing the film, met Andrew Adamson, claimed that they immediately knew that Adamson would be the right person to direct the demanding film (Pajasek99 00:01:35- 00:01:37). Adamson after meeting with Perry Moore and Cary Grant in an interview said, "The first thing I did after meeting with Walden and before meeting with the estate was that I sat down and wrote

all my memories from reading the book, before actually even re-reading it…I really wanted to capture what it was that I loved as a child" and this turned out to be a comprehensive 20 paged director's note which detailed how Adamson had already begun envisioning the film-from the use of colour palettes, CGI effects, the kind of music he wanted to use, characters, the battle scenes, etc (00:03:15 – 00:03:24).

As far as casting of the main characters were concerned, Adamson wanted for the role of Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy children in whom the nature of the four children as created by Lewis would be inherently reflected. For this purpose, Adamson says that he extensively watched more that 2500 children taped, of which he met about 700, selected 400 with whom he workshopped, working with 120 from them and finally narrowing down to the final four - William Moseley for the role of Peter, Anna Popplewell for the role of Susan, Skander Keynes for the role of Edmund and Georgie Henley for that of Lucy (00:12:59 – 00:13:10).

The two other characters that required careful selection was that of Jadis, the White Witch and Aslan, the Lion. Tilda Swinton was the unanimous choice of both Andrew Adamson and Mark Johnson, the producer of the film, for the role of the wicked White Witch in the film. With Aslan, the challenge was to find a voice that would sound commanding and authoritative, but also warm and comforting. This perfect voice for Aslan was found in that of actor Liam Neeson.

**Michael Apted and his Adaptation of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader***

The preparation for filming *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* began in 2007 vis-à-vis the production of *Prince Caspian*. However, differences over budgetary concerns for the film between Walden Media and Walt Disney Pictures delayed production. The concern occurred after *Prince Caspian's* failure to hit it off at the Box Office unlike *The*

*Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Walden Media and Walt Disney Pictures parted ways and its distribution was taken over by 20th Century Fox. Filming began soon after in 2009 and was released in 2010.

Michael David Apted (1941-2021) was a British television film director and producer. Known for his versatility in the world of filmmaking, his most popular work even to this day remains to be *Up*, a documentary series (1964-2019), *Coal Miner's Daughter* (1980), *Gorillas in the Mist* (1988), *Nell* (1994), *James Bond: The World is not Enough* (1999), *Enigma* (2001), *Amazing Grace* (2009), *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (2010), *Unlocked* (2017). While Andrew Adamson chose to be one of the producers of the film, Michael Apted took up the challenging task of directing the third film of *The Chronicles of Narnia* series. It was all the more challenging for Michael Apted as he had to work under very tight budget, especially after *Prince Caspian* underperformed at the Box Office. After the successful release of *Avatar* in 3D, 20th Century Fox only 9 months before its scheduled month of release, i.e., December 2010 announced that *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* would be released in 3D formats.

Besides Ben Barnes who played Prince Caspian in *Prince Caspian*, Skander Keynes and Georgie Henley, Will Poulter is introduced as a new character that plays the role of Eustace Scrubb, the obnoxious cousin of the Pevensies. Liam Neeson continues to lend his voice to the character of Aslan while William Moseley, Anna Popplewell and Tinda Swindon make cameo appearances as Peter Pevensie, Susan Pevensie and Jadis, the White Witch respectively.

Jim Rygiel, who had supervised the visual effects of *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, was called in to supervise the visual effects in the *The Voyage of Dawn Treader*. An approximate of 1400 special effect shots were taken and British visual

effects companies the Moving Pictures Company, Framestore CFC and The Senate VFX along with Cinesite and The Mill were hired by the production houses to create the visual effects (unique crafts & comic books).

In adapting the film, both Andrew Adamson and Michael Apted were posed with the challenging task of reinventing a Narnia into a visual reality which Lewis had imagined in ink and on paper. The mise-en-scène used by the directors have added significant meaning and vividness to the narrative of Narnia - from the costumes of the various characters, to the landscapes of New Zealand used for the battle scenes, the palaces and the vast extensive sets to project Narnia, or the use of visual effects to depict Dawn Treader out in the sea and the use of CGIs to create the numerous anthropomorphic characters that make up the population of Narnia.

**Narniaverse: Reading the Beginnings**

The beginnings of any book or film are significant and important. They serve as preludes to the story. How an opening line is worded or an opening scene executed has great impact upon the expectations of the readers/audience. Lewis's Narnia chronicles is told by an omniscient narrator in the "Once upon a time" fairy tale fashion. But the two filmmakers – Adamson and Apted, opted for grimmer beginnings. When the printed is translated onto the screen, changes and alterations become inevitable. But that does not necessarily imply condemnation and destruction of the sanctity of the source text. On the other hand, it may be seen as an artistic and technological renovation of bringing the imagination to the screen. To this effect, this section will analyse of the opening lines vis-à-vis the opening scenes of the three Narnia chronicles and probe into the resultant impact upon the audience and the film as a whole.

The opening line of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is in a typical fairy tale like fashion as Lewis begins his story by introducing the characters to the readers

through the omniscient narrator. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* begins with "Once", a narrative typical to fairy tale beginnings: "Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy" (9). The next line gives the background against which the story is set – the Second World War: "This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids" (9). While the author, perhaps bearing his younger audience in mind, keeps the narrative tone mild and mellow when mentioning the war, Adamson takes on a darker shade quite literally, for his opening scenes. For the most part, Andrew Adamson is loyal to Lewis's story – the characters, plot and narrative order but his opening scenes are not fairy tale like in any manner. The opening lines which introduce the children protagonists and give the readers a fair idea about the context in which the story is situated is expanded in a five minute scene by Adamson.

The opening scenes are shot in dark lighting, bombarded by air raids and bombings in the middle of the night. As a result, Mrs Pevensie, a character not in the book, and her four children are shown to be in a state of chaos and confusion as they run helter-skelter to the underground room of their house amidst the sound of bombings, window glasses breaking, sounds of objects falling, shattering, all occurring simultaneously as the Pevensies help each other to shelter and safety. In spite of being a film adapted for the younger audience, Adamson keeps the audience for the first five minutes engaged in showing the true horrors of the war (00:00:50 – 00:05:18). This is the initial situation in Adamson's version of the story. The grim beginning soon takes a brighter turn as Adamson chooses open landscapes and bright lighting after the children board the train and set off for the countryside to Professor Kirke's house. The train hustling through the forests resemble scenes from *Harry Potter* where Hogwarts Express passes through similar London landscapes, thus cleverly evoking, especially

among the "knowing audience" a sense of the beginning of a fantastical adventure (Hutcheon 120).

Unlike the opening scenes of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, which begin in London with the war as the backdrop of the story, the opening scenes of *Prince Caspian* begin with Queen Prunaprismia screaming in labour. Instead of bringing joy and celebration at the birth of a son, the scene evokes feelings of fear and impending threats as Prince Caspian prepares in the darkness of the night to flee the castle. The book on the other hand, uses the same fairy tale like beginnings used in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*: "Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy" (11). These four children were waiting at the railway station as they were, in fact, going back to school after the holidays. The beginning sets a mundane tone, as these children wait for their train to arrive until they are magically transported to Narnia for their second adventure. The scene with Prince Caspian fleeing the castle, in the book occurs as what Genette terms an "analepsis" as the children learn about this event through the Dwarf Trumpkin (53).

Apart from the change in narrative sequence, this film also includes a number of fight scenes and battle scenes, some of which are inventions of the filmmaker. An observation about the film adaptation is that Adamson gave the Telmarines Italian accents while the Narnians British accents. Emphasising on the choice of accents, Alice Mills in her review of the film writes that the Italian accents were given to the Telmarines to "align them with the forces of Mussolini" and further states that the filmmakers used such tactics to reinforce the sense that the Narnians, by using the British accent becomes "unquestionably in the right" and the Telmarines with their Italian accent "unquestionably in the wrong" (Mills). While credibility to Mills

assessment for the choice of accents remain yet to be ascertained as the researcher hasn't come across any statements made about the use of accents to represent the Allied and the Axis powers from any of the cast or crew members in any interviews or any other relevant sources in as far as research on this topic concerns, it does reinforce the fact that, the Narnia Chronicles, although clearly made for a niche audience has also impacted the young and the old, the ignorant and the academicians, each with their own interpretation. As a matter of fact, it may be argued that the choice of accents may only have been made to distinguish one group from the other.

*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* was designed by the author to be a book that followed a series of adventures. This book also introduces a new character who is to appear in two more series of the Narnia chronicles – *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*. The opening lines, "There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb" continue to use the same fairy tale like pattern that Lewis had in his other Narnian series (11). The film, however, departs from the fairy tale like beginnings and adapts similar scenario of the wartime London as in the previous two adaptations. In Apted's opening scene is a hoarding that reads "Mother England Needs You. Enlist Here Now!" (00:01:20 – 00:01:22). The next shot shows Edmund lined up to enlist for the army and getting rejected owing to the fact that he was under aged. After the rejection, Edmund rants to Lucy about how he had "fought wars" and "led armies" in Narnia as King (00:02:06 – 00:02:10). This brief opening scene sets the context against which the story is set. It also hints at Edmund's character that longs for the adventures of Narnia and hopes to live them in the real world by enlisting in the army. This is followed by the introductory scene of Eustace Scrubb and then by the magical transportation to Narnia through the painting hung on the wall.

In as far as using the Second World War as a backdrop for the films are concerned, the filmmakers especially in *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* has invented more fight sequences and battle scenes in comparison to the book. The films are fast paced and action packed blending live-action with camera and computer technology. In *Prince Caspian*, before being transported to Narnia Peter is shown engaging in a fight with some other school boys. Adamson, has several soldiers in uniform moving around the railway station to make a visual case in point about the ongoing war. A similar pattern can be seen in Apted's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* where Edmund is almost ready to hit Eustace annoyed by his nasty remarks on Narnia right before they are transported to Narnia. Unlike, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, however, in *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* the emphasis is not on showing the horrors of the war per se but is used as a backdrop to establish the year around which the Narnian adventures take place. The second and the third book takes place a year each after the children's first visit to Narnia and hence the war was still ongoing.

It is an established fact that *The Chronicles of Narnia* series are rooted in Lewis's deep religious and philosophical ideals abounding in Christian symbols and metaphors. But very often Narnia Chronicles fail to be seen as commentaries on Lewis's contemporary England that was torn asunder by the war, the brunt of which were borne even by the little children who lived in fear of sudden air raids and bombings, of having to be separated from their parents owing to the war. In fact, the inspiration to write a children's book occurred to Lewis when he housed a few children during the war. *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is therefore rooted in elements of reality. In writing a fantasy story for children, Lewis does not provide escapism from the harsh realities of life per se, as is the popular opinion about fantasy literature but on the

contrary, emboldens his children readers into believing that they too can be heroes; that they too can battle their fears, stand for justice and restore peace much like Lewis's children protagonists. To substantiate this point, Rosemary Jackson may be quoted from her work *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* who writes, "Fantasy recombines and inverts the real, but does not escape it: it exists in a parasitical or symbolic relation to the real. The fantastic cannot exist independently of that 'real' world" (20). *The Chronicles of Narnia* offers children courage to face the harsh realities of life much like it was for Lucy in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* when darkness engulfed the voyagers and all seemed lost, Aslan whispered "Courage, dear heart" (208). This was perhaps the message that Lewis wanted to convey to his readers and in many ways, Adamson and Apted has reflected this aspect in their adaptations too, as is apparent even from the opening scenes.

**Conclusion**

The omniscient narrator in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* says, "Most of us, I suppose, have a secret country, but for most of us it is only an imaginary country" (13). With advancement in film making technologies this secret country no longer reside only in imaginations. Narnia has been made a possibility and a reality by Adamson and Apted through visual and animation effects, CGIs and camera technology; transporting audiences through the screens of the movie theatres, computers and smart phones into an alternate/ parallel world where magic and mythical creatures coexist; where good always defeats evil.

When motion pictures were first shown in 1895, there was little idea of what its future might hold. From Georges Méliès's special effect films to the use of 3D CGIs and IMAX films, film industry has come a long way. The art of narrativity itself has undergone remarkable changes and it is apparent in the way Narniaverse has been

reinvented by the filmmakers. C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* is a tale of childhood adventures that takes the four Pevensies, and later Eustace Scrubb and Jill Pole, to the magical land of Narnia. This alternate world into which these children travel to, offers them a world of possibilities and unimagined opportunities and responsibilities, the likes of which would remain only a farfetched dream in our world. The four Pevensies fight battles, are crowned Kings and Queens of Narnia, live among mythical creatures, talking beasts, talking animals and trees while Eustace turns into a dragon and has the strangest of experiences. Eustace would have believed in anything that had logical and scientific explanations but the inexplicability of being transported to a ship sailing in an unknown sea with all kinds of talking creatures was beyond Eustace's comprehension. On the other hand, Lucy and Edmund live in reminiscence of their days spent in Narnia and in anticipation of another visit soon. It was a world which one could only imagine but for the Pevensies it was a reality, a reality to which only they were privy to.

Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* though designed to study the narrative structure and the various functions and characters in folktales has been found to be conventionally applicable to various other literary and filmic genres too. The Proppian analysis has been found to be proper tool to scrutinise the narrative structure of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and to determine the narrativity found in the book and the film. Books and films use two very different mediums of narrations and several changes are incurred in due course of transference from one medium to the other but Propp's thirty-one functions and seven spheres of action have been useful to determine types of characters and the kinds of actions that recur in each of the Narnian series – the books and the film adaptations. Further, advancement in computer and film technology has changed the way films were made a few decades ago. Filmmakers are incorporating a

lot of CGI and VFX in the making of their films which adds dimensions of reality even to the most remote and distant creations of the mind. The film adaptations of the Narnia series stand testimony to it as is apparent from its popular reception from film critics, audiences and Narnia fans worldwide.

**Chapter 4**

**Riordan's Narrative of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* and its film adaptation:**

**(Re) Connecting Modern America to Greek Mythology**

**Introduction**

"…a sustainable notion of nation requires a historic territory or homeland for a people, a common public culture, common legal rights and duties for all members; but… it also requires common myths and historical memories." (Cobley 8)

In his introduction to *Demigods and Monsters,* Riordan wrote, "Myths aren't something that happened in the past …We didn't leave them behind in the Bronze Age. We are still creating myths all the time. My books, among other things, explore the myth of America as a beacon of civilization, the myth of New York, and the myth of the American teenager" (12). Percy Jackson is the story of a modern day coming of age American boy that is battling Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia. When he learns that he is a demigod and that he has a quest to complete, Percy transforms from an academic misfit in school to a hero who undertakes an important quest. Myths are expressions of the collective unconscious of people and nations through ages and civilizations; by giving Percy characteristics of a Greek mythical hero Percy becomes a symbol of hope and inspiration for all young readers.

Novels and films based on myths have become a favorite genre and a cultural phenomenon amongst present day readers and audiences. Many films and texts borrow extensively from myths and folktales like Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series, but there are also many other texts and films that utilize plots and characters from parts of certain myths but the text or film alludes nothing similar to the borrowed substance. For instance in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the*

*Philosopher's Stone* (1997), there is a three-headed dog called Fluffy that resembles Cerberus from Greek mythology. Apart from the similarity in its physical appearance and the fact that both these creatures stand sentry at entrances (Hades in Greek mythology and chamber of the philosopher's stone in *Harry Potter*), there are no other adherences to the Cerberus of Greek mythology. Netflix series *The Sandman* (2022) portrays Morpheus, the King of the Dreaming. Though the plot and story has no resemblance with that of Greek mythology, the character's name and role is borrowed directly from the Greek god of sleep. The harpies in Philip Pullman's *The Amber Spyglass* (2000) can also serve as another example. The harpies in Pullman's novel resemble the harpies of Greek mythology but they are in no manner connected to the Greek myths in the novel. Each of the instances cited follow a set structure and contain certain archetypes. While authors like Rick Riordan display the structures and archetypes more prominently and openly, others like Rowling and Pullman are more careful in their depictions. The structure, irrespective of whether it is used overtly or covertly, is the monomyth, popularized by Joseph Campbell when his book was first published in 1949. Director George Lucas openly acknowledged Campbell as his mentor and *Star Wars* as the product of Campbell's well structured three-tiered monomyth.

**Rick Russell Riordan Jr.**

Rick Riordan shot to fame in the fantasy literary world of the young adults when his work *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, the first of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series was released in 2005. The latest book of the series, *The Chalice of the Gods* was released on the 26th of September 2023 and the seventh book *The Wrath of the Triple Goddess* is scheduled to be released on 24th September

2024. Born on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 1954 in San Antonio, Texas, Riordan has a double major in English and History from the University of Texas at Austin. Riordan's interest in literature led him to choose a career as an English teacher. Riordan, in an interview admitted that he liked Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* and Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth* but was not an avid reader until he discovered *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien and books on Norse and Greek mythology during his Middle School ("The Guardian"). Before becoming an author, Riordan taught school children for about fifteen years. Riordan's years of teaching in school and his experiences with students in their tweenage and teenage years gave him a deep psychological understanding of the nature and behaviour of children in those age groups. This and the diagnosis of his son Haley Riordan with dyslexia and ADHD prompted Riordan to wield a story where the heroes are everyday school going young adults with the ability to make a difference in the world despite their dyslexia, ADHDs and other disabilities.

*Big Red Tequila* was Riordan's first book which was released in 1997. This book earned him the three most prestigious awards in the mystery genre, viz., Edgar, Anthony and Shamus Awards. His students would often ask him why he did not write more books that would cater to readers their age but it was a chance incident with his son Hailey that led Riordan to really pen down his imaginations about Greek mythological characters in present day American society. Having run out of bedtime stories about Greek mythologies, his son asked him to make up a story and Riordan did. Hailey so liked the story that he asked his father to write the story down. That story became The New York Times best seller and the first of the pentalogy of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*. Riordan attributed characteristics of dyslexia and ADHD to Percy and some other characters in his story so that his son and several other children that were struggling with it may find a hero in themselves.

Despite his love for children and teaching, Riordan eventually stopped teaching and became a full time author. Ever since the success of the *Percy Jackson* series, he went on to write several other books that centred on mythology with tweens and teens as the protagonists and heroes of the story. Riordan has won several awards for his works including the prestigious Mark Twain Award for *The Lightning Thief* (2008) and *The Sea of Monsters* (2009), Rebecca Caudill Award for *The Lightning Thief* (2009), School Library Journal's for the Best Book for *The Red Pyramid* (2010), Children's Choice Book Awards: Author of the Year (2011), Children's Choice Book Awards: Fifth Grade to Sixth Grade Book of the Year for *The Red Pyramid* (2011), Wyoming Soaring Eagle Book Award for *The Last Olympian* (2011), Milner Award for *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series (2011), Indian Paintbrush Award for *The Red Pyramid* (2012), Best Fiction Book for Children in Bulgaria for *The Mark of Athena* (2013) and Stonewall Book Award for Children's Literature for *The Hammer of Thor* (2017) ("Rick Riordan"). Riordan's Olympian series include *The Lightning Thief* (2005), *The Sea of Monsters* (2006), *The Titan's Curse* (2007)*, The Battle of the Labyrinth* (2008) and *The Last Olympian* (2009). This was followed by a sequel *The Heroes of Olympus* (2010 – 2014) and several other books like *The Kane Chronicles*, *Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard*, *The 39 Clues, The Maze of Bones*, *Daughter of the Deep* and *The Sun and the Star* co-written with author Mark Oshiro ("Rick Riordan"). *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* is New York Time best seller and is the book that sealed Riordan's literary career as an American author. The *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series has been translated into more than 37 languages and has sold 30 million copies worldwide ("Success Story").The first two copies of the series have been adapted into films by 20th Century Fox in 2010 and 2013 respectively.

**Application of Theories and Methodology**

Rick Riordan follows Campbell's monomyth structure in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series, though only *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* will be considered for the purpose of analysis. While it is difficult to state if Riordan had applied the theory unconsciously or in a matter of fact manner, its presence permeates the novel. Riordan maintains a linear narrative path in applying Campbell's nuclear units of the monomyth structure – Departure, Initiation and Return but the seventeen points distributed under each of the three nuclear units does not always occur in the listed order and in some case is either subverted, omitted or altered to suit the circumstance. This chapter attempts to explore Rick Riordan's *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* in the light of Joseph Campbell's seminal work *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* where he introduced the concept of the monomyth. Campbell argues that myths all over the world share similar and essential features of a single, identifiable story that unites all other disparate myths around the world. This chapter will use Campbell's concept of the monomyth to illustrate the hero's journey to understand the manner in which Riordan has reimagined ancient Greek mythologies in a contemporary American set up. Campbell's theory and its application will also be used to inquire into the close approximation of Riordan's plot with that of Campbell's monomyth structure in the first novel and its deviation in the second. This chapter will focus on the monomyth structure of source text, the changes that were made onto the film and the resultant impact upon readers/audience.

**Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: Monomyth in *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters***

Joseph Campbell (1904-1987) in his seminal book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) details the power of myths that transcends time, place, culture and language by exploring the archetypal hero's journey. He theorizes that every myth is universal in tone because it develops themes that relate to universal human experiences, which uses archetypes that give strength and add meaning to the story. Myths explore and define core behavioral, psychological and spiritual truths and its manifestations in different ways in human beings through the narrative of the hero's journey.

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* Campbell describes monomyth as, "a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation-initiation-return," meaning when "a hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons in his fellow man" (23*)*. This is the structural formula on which writers and filmmakers build their archetypal hero's story. Most stories that revolve around the universal themes of quest, self discovery or call to duty with presence of supernatural elements in it share this fundamental structure of the monomyth. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* is Campbell's attempt to analyze and understand human behavior mythically and symbolically, thus coming to the general conclusion that humankind across cultures and civilizations share universal human values, set - beliefs and sentiments reflected in folktales and myths told for centuries. A similar pattern of plot structures and character archetypes in Russian folktales was theorized by Vladimir Propp in his *Morphology of the Folktale* in 1928 but whether Joseph Campbell was influenced by his writing is hard to tell because Propp's work was translated into

English only after the publication of Campbell's book. Propp's work too discusses narrative structures and plot components wherein he mentions thirty one functions that build the structure of the story and seven spheres of action, referring to character archetypes in the story.

Campbell's three nuclear units of the monomyth, "separation-initiation-return", of the mythical hero's adventure has seventeen subsections (23):

Separation - The hero leaves the mundane and the ordinary to venture into a realm of the unknown and the supernatural. The hero at this stage may encounter all or some of the following sub-units of the monomyth: "The Call to Adventure", "Refusal of the Call", "Supernatural Aid", "The Crossing of the First Threshold" and "The Belly of the Whale" (28).

Initiation – This stage is the hero's journey through trials wherein he encounters several supernatural forces, often aided by objects and advices to guide the hero through the perilous journey. The hero at this stage may encounter all or some of the following sub-units of the monomyth: "The Road of Trials", "The Meeting with the Goddess", "Woman as the Temptress", "Atonement with the Father", "Apotheosis" and "The Ultimate Boon" (28, 29).

Return: The hero's adventure comes to rest at this stage. The hero has matured, is wiser and returns to the ordinary way of life to share the boon with his people. The hero at this stage may encounter all or some of the following sub - units of the monomyth: "Refusal of the Return", "The Magic Flight", "Rescue from Without", "The Crossing of the Return Threshold", "Master of the Two Worlds", "Freedom to Live" (29).

The existence of the archetypes and the universal nature of the themes in the myths prove how stories and characters are recycled products of ancient myths and

folktales. Plato's remark in *Republic* in reference to mimesis*,* his concept of art as imitation said "Everything that fable-tellers or poets say is a narrative of past or present or future", thus reflecting on the nature of humankind in general (Russell 29). The past, the present and the future may base its stories in different ages but the characters and the circumstances in which they take place, the predicaments and the choices of action presented before them are repeated, like in a never ending loop of fate. The ancient myths about gods and heroes, wars and monsters whether it is from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, *Odyssey, Iliad, Beowulf, Arthurian Legend, The Book of One Thousand and One Nights*, etc continue to be reinvented and retold even today. The universal motif of adventure is recurrent and repeated over and over in modern literature. Contemporary authors have not ceased borrowing from the archives of past mythological themes and motifs, metaphors and symbols. Many heroes and monsters from these ancient tales have been reincarnated to fit into a modern technologically led society which shares a culture and set belief system which is/may be different from the days of yore. Yet, the imaginations and mimetic instincts of writers across ages continue to revolve around these mythic patterns of ancient tales. Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* (1995 – 2000), Neil Gaiman's *American Gods* (2001), Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* (2005 – 2009), Saksham Garg's *Samsara: Enter the Valley of the Gods* (2022) serve as examples of modern stories that have brought the ancient to the modern. This chapter will attempt a study of Rick Riordan's popular coming of age adventure series *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*: *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* to identify the relevance and applicability of Campbell's monomyth formula in modern contemporary American context.

**Separation-Initiation-Return:** *The Lightning Thief* **and** *The Sea of Monsters*

When Riordan created the hero of his story, he had in mind a modern American coming of age hero. Percy Jackson is one of the half - bloods in the story. He is the son of Poseidon, the Greek god of water and the sea and Sally Jackson, a mortal. When the story begins, Percy is introduced as a regular adolescent American battling low grades and low self esteem, a misfit in school who has ADHD and dyslexia that lives with his step father whom he nicknamed "Smelly Gabe" (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 30). Percy Jackson does not display any heroic qualities until he enters Camp Half-Blood where he develops his demigod skills. Though Sally loves him unconditionally, she keeps sending Percy away to boarding schools which leave him feeling rejected. Growing up not knowing his biological father and living with a step father that mentally abuses him makes Percy socially awkward and easily irritable. Once he learns who he is and the responsibilities that are thrust upon him, followed by the quests and adventures he is expected to undertake, Percy grows from a social misfit to a hero. Percy is a bildungsroman hero who through his quests and adventures learns to make sacrifices and accept challenges that will lead to his ultimate realization of who he is.

In *The Lighting Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters*, the hero passes through the three stages of separation-initiation-return and the novel is replete with instances that use Campbell's model. In addition, Riordan at times subverts and omits the traditional expectations from Greek myths and role of heroes to adhere to a young contemporary audience. In most young adult fantasy novels, the writers subvert the adult-child position in the ordinary world. Fantasy literature is inherently liberating and empowering for the young protagonists. The young heroes assume more power and responsibility than they would in the real world. Often the fate of the world depends on these young heroes. There is a subversion of power and responsibility in these

secondary worlds. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* for instance is a tale of wonderment filled with extraordinary fantasy and devoid of the elements of didacticism and moralizing that were common in children's literature. Carroll not only satirizes and parodies mid-Victorian society and culture but also subverts them. In a similar manner, Riordan uses his half-bloods to subvert the normal adult responsibilities and power in the real world to that of the quests and obstacles that the young protagonists undertake in the stories.

Apart from subversion, there are also instances of omission of some of the elements that make up the monomyth structure. In his book, Campbell writes that the omission of certain archetypes and variations within the structure does not alter the basic structure of the monomyth: "If one or another of the basic elements of the archetypal elements is omitted from a given fairy tale, legend, ritual, or myth, it is bound to be somehow or other implied – and the omission itself can speak volumes for the history and pathology of the example" (30).  Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* is a fitting example of how the author sets ancient Greek mythologies and the archetypal hero's journey in the twenty first century. This section is an attempt to enquire into Campbell's monomyth structure as is apparent in Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters.* In due course of the analysis, subversion and omission will also be discussed if and when such instances are chanced upon.

**Departure**

**Call to Adventure**

Campbell writes that the hero's "Call to Adventure" is "the first stage of the mythological journey" signifying "that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred

his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown"
(48). In *The Lightning Thief,* Percy is attacked by his mathematics teacher Mrs. Dodd in
the museum, whom he later comes to learn is one of the Furies, euphemistically called
the "Kindly Ones" (23). He manages to dodge attacks by Mrs. Dodd because of his
demigod reflexes (ADHD) and the timely intervention of Mr. Brunner, his Latin teacher
who throws him a pen which when uncapped turns into a celestial bronze sword. This
was the beginning of Percy's call to adventure.

In the *The Sea of Monsters,* Percy's "Call to Adventure" occurs when he starts
having dreams about Grover being in danger (28). The dreams as it happens were a
result of the "empathy link" that Grover had created to have telepathic conversations
with Percy (Riordan *The Sea of Monsters* 74). This is when Grover tells Percy that he is
in the Sea of Monsters (The Bermuda Triangle) held captive by the Cyclop Polyphemus
who guards the Golden Fleece. Apart from finding and saving Grover, there is another
parallel call to adventure. Thalia's tree which protects Camp Half-Blood has been
poisoned and has now become an open ground for attacks from monsters. Grover's
empathy link gives direction to the quest as Percy and Annabeth hopes that the Golden
Fleece which has healing properties may restore the boundaries of Camp Half-Blood.
So their call to adventure becomes dual in nature – of rescuing Grover from the Sea of
Monsters and saving the camp at the same time.

**Refusal of the Call**

"Refusal of the Call" is the next stage in Campbell's monomyth which discusses
a stage where the hero may refuse to answer to his call to adventure (28). The refusal,
as Campbell suggests "is essentially a refusal to give up what one takes to be one's own
interest" (49).

In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy's discovery of his true identity comes as a surprise. After he reaches the safety of Camp Half-Blood, he is told that there is a quest he is expected to undertake. Percy learns that he is the son of the Greek sea god Poseidon on the second day at the camp during a botched training exercise. Later on when Percy's quest is made known, he experiences a mix of emotions not knowing whether to celebrate or be angry because he realizes that his father had claimed him only when he needed him to go on a quest. Percy is told that because he is the son of Poseidon, he has been accused of stealing Zeus's lightning bolt for his father. His quest is to journey to the Underworld, find the lightning bolt and return it to Zeus before summer solstice and prevent a war between the gods. If Percy fails to find the lightning bolt and return it before summer solstice then the war between the gods will tear the fabric of reality between the mortals and the gods and destroy every living thing on earth. The only reason Percy accepts the quest is because he wants to rescue his mother from Hades. In this regard, Percy rejects the quest of finding Zeus's lightning bolt for his father. Percy's refusal of the call is, therefore an inward one because he accepts the quest but with a hidden personal motive when he initially sets out.

In *The Sea of Monsters*, the "Refusal of the Call" comes from an external agent and not the hero himself (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28). Percy and Annabeth figured out well ahead that the only way to restore Thalia's tree is to travel to the Sea of Monsters and find the Golden Fleece. When Percy and Annabeth proposed this idea to Tantalus, the Camp director, he did not sound very enthusiastic about it but the other campers who heard Percy and Annabeth insisted on a quest and kept chanting, ""WE NEED A QUEST! WE NEED A QUEST!"" (92). Giving into the demand of the campers, Tantalus finally agrees to the quest but he chooses Clarisse, the daughter of Ares to lead the quest. This comes as an obvious shock to Percy and Annabeth because

they had suggested the quest. While this proved frustrating for Percy and Annabeth, their spirits weren't to be so easily deterred. Percy, Annabeth and Tyson take up the quest at the risk of getting expelled from the camp by stealing away from camp.

Accordingly, Campbell's observation that refusal of the call converts the adventure into its negative is subverted by Riordan's young protagonists who take up the quest in both instances. In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy motivated by more personal reasons than the actual cause of the calling still accepts the quest and in *The Sea of Monsters*, all the half - bloods in the camp are shown enthusiastic about leading quests. In fact, the entire *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series is about quests that the half - bloods hope would be theirs to lead. Riordan's heroes, the half - bloods, are in fact always looking for a quest and in the entire Olympian series, all half - bloods have always answered to the call to adventure and in doing so, Riordan subverts Campbell's monomyth theory.

**Supernatural Aid**

In Campbell's words, "Supernatural Aid" is "a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against dragon forces he is about to pass" (57). In *The Lightning Thief,* the magical pen "Anuklusmos" or "Riptide" that Percy is given by Mr. Brunner (Chiron) is the supernatural aid that Percy receives (153). The "dragon forces", in this case refer to Mrs. Dodds, one of the Furies, who attacked Percy in the museum; Mr. Brunner is the "protective figure" who gives Percy the "amulet" - a magical pen that shields Percy from the deadly attacks of Mrs. Dodd (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 57). This supernatural aid becomes Percy's most trusted weapon as he encounters several other monstrous creatures throughout his quest. Following Percy's acceptance of the quest, he is aided by Grover

and Annabeth. As a satyr, Grover is sensitive to nature and can commune with animals while Annabeth, as the daughter of the goddess of wisdom is smart and intelligent. She has a deeper knowledge of classical mythology and is better at battle strategies than either Percy or Grover which helps them get through several obstacles. Besides this, the trio set out on their quest with key items that serve as supernatural aid: Percy with Riptide and a pair of sneakers that gain wings upon wearing - a gift from Luke to Percy which he got from his father god Hermes, Annabeth with her Yankee's cap that made the wearer invisible, a gift from her mother; and ambrosia and nectar for the journey.

In *The Sea of Monsters*, the supernatural aid comes from various agents. It is however, Hermes, the messenger god that propels the quest forward. He nudges Percy to take up the quest by breaking camp rules. He prepares them for the trials ahead by giving them amulets – three yellow duffel bags, thermos and a bottle of vitamins for the adventure. Annabeth and Tyson, become Percy's confederates on the journey (Riordan *The Sea of Monsters* 106). Annabeth's acumen provides much assistance through the quest while Tyson's comes from his physical strength and his mechanical aptitude which comes in handy while fighting monsters and fixing boat engines.

**The Crossing of the First Threshold**

"The Crossing of the First Threshold" is another important stage that a hero must pass (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28). It may be a psychological and a spiritual threshold or simply a physical obstacle. In *The Lightning Thief*, the threshold is a physical one as Percy encounters one of the first mythological monsters, a Minotaur just outside Camp Half-Blood. Percy crosses his first threshold in a state of complete confusion and chaos as he tries to comprehend why his best friend Grover has hooves instead of feet and bleats like a goat, why they were being chased by monstrous

creatures which did not seem to belong to this world and how his mother seemed to be prepared for such attacks as she instructs Percy on how to tackle the Minotaur:

> "Percy," my mom said. "When he sees us, he'll charge. Wait until the last second, then jump out of the way – directly sideways. He can't change directions very well once he's charging. Do you understand?"
>
> "How do you know all this?"
>
> "I've been worried about an attack for a long time. I should have expected this. I was selfish, keeping you near me."(51)

The Minotaur's attack was a dangerous one that nearly destroyed Percy but he manages to disintegrate the monster by thrusting the Minotaur's broken horn through his rib cage. But the disintegration cost Percy his mother as she vanishes along with the Minotaur into thin air. It is in this state that Percy crosses his first threshold and is guided forward into the life of a hero that he was destined for. A reversal of Campbell's structure is thus witnessed here as Percy's crossing of the first threshold occurs even before his quest is made known and whereas in Campbell's monomyth, this stage occurs after the hero's call to adventure.

In his monomyth structure, Campbell suggests that crossing the first threshold often takes place when the hero crosses the boundaries of one's home. In *The Sea of Monsters*, the crossing of the first threshold occurs when the heroes escape the boundaries of Camp Half-Blood. The quest had been given to Clarisse, Percy sits by the beach that night trying to devise a plan to join the quest. Hermes comes to the rescue as he aids Percy with the required materials for the quest: a thermos, a bottle of chewable vitamins, and five minutes to make an impossible decision (Riordan *The Sea of Monsters* 106). Percy makes up his mind sooner than expected as Annabeth and Tyson come running down the beach immediately after Hermes leaves. Percy and Annabeth

decide to slip away regardless of the consequences and Tyson insists on joining the quest too, much to the annoyance of both Percy and Annabeth. But with little time in hand and with no other options left, Tyson is allowed to tag along the quest. Percy prays for help to Poseidon who in response sends them a hippocampi and the first threshold is crossed by the questers. So, the first threshold is crossed by means of supernatural aids that come from the two gods – Hermes and Poseidon.

**The Belly of the Whale**

The next stage after crossing the threshold is that the hero, "instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would have appeared to have died" (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 74). This stage that Campbell calls the "The Belly of the Whale" is where the death in reference is more symbolic and metaphorical in nature than physical (28). This stage in Percy's life occurs after he reaches Camp Half-Blood. Reaching Camp Half-Blood is the first threshold that Percy crosses as he has to give up all that he knew of the world that he grew up in and embrace a world that is completely foreign to him. He meets mythological creatures of all sorts in this camp, from learning that his friend Grover is a satyr to coming to terms with the fact that his Latin teacher is a Centaur, seeing hippocampi and Pegasus and meeting other demigods like him. Percy is psychologically trying to make sense of everything around him, struggling to accept the loss of his mother and then his shock at learning that the Greek mythologies are real and that he is the son of one of the gods. Percy tries to make sense of all these which become apparent when he asks Chiron, "Who are you, Chiron? Who…who am I?" (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 73). Percy thus asks the central question of self - discovery before he sets out to fulfill the tasks of a hero. He must make an inward journey, be "swallowed

into the unknown" before he can undertake a physical adventure (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 74).

"The Belly of the Whale" in *The Sea of Monsters* occurs quite literally as Percy, Annabeth, Tyson and Clarisse with her crew and ship CSS Birmingham are sucked in by Charybdis, the sea monster that guards the Sea of Monsters (28). The only way to get to the Sea of Monsters was by passing either through Charybdis or Scylla. Both were sea monsters that swallowed whatever came in its way. Clarisse chose to sail through Charybdis because she felt that they stood a chance of destroying Charybdis from within whereas Scylla would capture and destroy the ship leaving them very less chances of survival. But things take a turn for the worst when CSS Birmingham is swallowed by Charybdis. Although they managed to escape "The Belly of the Whale", Tyson was nowhere to be found among the wreckage (28). This stage of the adventure repeats in action almost verbatim "swallowed into the unknown" and "would have appeared to have died" as Tyson disappears into the sea of monsters and is assumed to be dead by the questers (74). Percy had always treated Tyson on sufferance. Percy did not want to be associated with him but through the course of the quest, he realized how selflessly and how loyally Tyson loved Percy as his brother. The disappearance of Percy makes him value Tyson for what he had been to him. It took the supposed death of his half-brother in the second quest for Percy to wake up to a call of acceptance and reality of who he really is and what Tyson meant to him.

**Initiation**

**The Road of Trials**

The second phase of the hero's journey is called "Initiation" and this is one of the longest and most laborious parts of the journey (23). Campbell begins this section of

the hero's journey with "The Road of Trials" where "the hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this world. Or it may be that he discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his superhuman passage" (81).

In both *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters*, Percy is covertly aided by his father Poseidon. Though Percy realizes that he is receiving aid and assistance from his father, Percy continues to remain angry and frustrated with his father because he is distant with him. In *The Lightning Thief,* after Percy engages in a conversation with the Nereid who is sent to Percy by Poseidon in Santa Monica just before he goes to the Underworld, Percy learns of Poseidon's limitations as a god - father to mortal children. The Nereid tells Percy that the gods were forbidden to directly participate or meddle in the affairs of the mortals especially their children: ""The gods may not show such favoritism"" (272). Forbidden thus, Poseidon conceals his concern by watching over Percy from a distance. Percy is sent three white pearls as a gift by Poseidon through the Nereid to assist him as he ventures into the Underworld. The Nereid functions as the "secret agent of the supernatural helper" and the three white pearls are the "amulets" that Percy receives from his helper (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 81).

In *The Sea of Monsters*, Percy continues to receive supernatural aid from his father especially when he is out at sea. Percy begins to slowly comprehend the ease with which he can navigate water bodies and control its course. This was something that Percy had discovered in his previous quest, "I wasn't wet. I mean, I could feel the coolness of the water. I could see where the fire on my clothes had been quenched. But then I touched my own shirt, it felt perfectly dry… But the strangest thought occurred to me only last: I was breathing. I was underwater, and I was breathing normally" (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 213). But the second quest at sea enables Percy to

discover his innate nautical senses and further explore the extent of his control over water bodies. Percy's road to trials is interspersed with Poseidon's presence in the form of the various aids he gives whenever Percy seeks his help like sending the hippocampi for urgent transportation and sending him Tyson, whom Poseidon had sent on purpose to be his company and also his protector through the quest.

**The Meeting with the Goddess**

"The Meeting with the Goddess" is the next stage in Campbell's structure and he writes, "The meeting with the goddess (who is incarnate in every woman) is the final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: *amor fati*), which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity" (28, 99). The goddess in Percy's quest is subverted in Riordan's work as she is not endowed with any supernatural abilities and is his mortal mother. Alexander Leighton in his analysis of Percy's quest in *The Lightning Thief* remarked "Percy is twelve years old and it is significant that, at this age, the goddess role in the story is played by his mother, and not by an erotic charge as is more commonly found to be the case in adult literature" (19). Keeping his target audience in mind, Riordan perhaps wanted his hero to reflect his age in the choices that he made and the situations that he encountered. Thus, Sally Jackson becomes the archetypal Mother - Goddess figure for Percy. Passing the true test of a hero, when Percy is left with the predicament of choosing only between his friends and his mother, he makes a difficult resolution of committing himself to doing what is right, i.e., leaving his mother behind in the Underworld and answering to the greater call of saving the world by returning the lightning bolt before the given deadline. Sally Jackson is the archetypal Mother-Goddess figure in Percy's life as she fulfills the purpose of the "purging, balancing and initiation of the mind into the nature of the invisible world" (Campbell

*The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 94). Percy's attachment to his mother is platonic in nature and hence there is a diversion from Campbell's formula of the hero journey in this case.

In *The Sea of Monsters*, this section of Campbell's structure does not appear. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series depicts Percy as a bildungsroman hero and every sequel of the series is attributed to a certain aspect of the growth of the titular hero. By omitting this stage in *The Sea of Monsters*, Riordan leaves room for development of the hero's character in the succeeding sequels of the book. Besides, *The Sea of Monsters* is Clarisse's quest and hence this stage can be conveniently omitted from the plot.

**Woman as the Temptress**

The next subsection that Campbell discusses is another trial that the hero must face and it is usually in the form of a temptation that the hero must overcome. Subtitled "Woman as the Temptress", the hero at this stage is "tempted by a 'bad' mother figure, a goddess who attempts to either harm the hero, spurn his advances, hamper him in his quest, or tempt him into desire" (Campbell *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* 28, "Shortform"). In *The Lightning Thief*, the temptation comes not from a bad mother figure or a goddess but from Hades, the god of the Underworld in the form of an undeniable offer - to release Percy's mother who is held captive by Hades in the underworld in exchange for his Helm of Darkness which Percy is also accused of stealing along with the lightning bolt (315). Percy overcomes this temptation because he has begun to see that he must give up his personal quest to save the world from a war of the gods. He makes the sacrifice of his mother to answer to a higher call of duty. This is clearly an instance of subversion for the simple reason that Percy's temptation is

neither from a "'bad' mother figure" or "a goddess" but from Hades, the god of the Underworld. Riordan subverts the 'female temptress- male hero' equation popular in myths into 'male tempter – male hero' derivation thus, re-examining Campbell's association of the female evil with the archetypal hero journey in fresh lights (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28).

In *The Sea of Monsters*, however, Campbell remains true to the definition of the "Woman as Temptress" as offered by Campbell (28). In *The Sea of Monsters* Riordan engages a female minor goddess and enchantress to tempt and deter Percy's quest. After Percy and Annabeth reach the magical island on the Sea of Monsters, they meet Circe disguised as C. C. Any female that came to the beauty salon that she ran on this magical island were given spa treatment by her but every man was turned into guinea pigs. Percy enchanted in the magical island, feels an urge to please C. C and get her approval on his appearance. C. C. tempts Percy into believing that he needed physical transformation by showing him an image of his perfect self,

> "I saw myself – a reflection, but not a reflection. Shimmering there on the cloth was a cooler version of Percy Jackson – with the right clothes, a confident smile on my face. My teeth were straight. No zits. A perfect tan. More athletic. Maybe a couple of inches taller. It was me, without the faults." (174)

Yielding into C. C's temptation, Percy drinks the magic potion that transmogrified Percy into a guinea pig. Circe is the archetypal female temptress figure that leads the hero into temptation by appealing to a young adolescent's physical insecurities, thereby making Percy feel unconfident of his appearance especially at that point where he was questing with the girl towards whom he was showing certain romantic inclinations.

**Atonement with the Father**

"Atonement with the Father" is another important stage that a hero may encounter in due course of his quest (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28). This stage is often more symbolic, spiritual or psychological in nature but in *The Lightning Thief* it is quite literal and concrete. All his life, Percy grew up not knowing his biological father but the quest to retrieve the lightning bolt brings him the opportunity to meet his father in person when he goes to Mount Olympus to return the stolen lightning bolt. The "Atonement with the Father" is explained by Campbell thus:

> The problem of the hero going to meet the father is to open his soul beyond terror to such a degree that he will be ripe to understand how the sickening and insane tragedies of this vast and ruthless cosmos are completely validated in the majesty of Being. The hero transcends life with its peculiar blind spot and for a moment rises to a glimpse of the source. He beholds the face of the Father, understands – and the two are atoned. (125)

Percy had all along struggled between wanting to make his father proud of him and nurturing feelings of resentment for abandoning him. The atonement between father - son does occur despite the distant attitude that Poseidon maintains towards Percy. The atonement becomes apparent when Poseidon tells Percy, "You did well, Perseus. Do not misunderstand me. Whatever else you do, know that you are mine. You are a true son of the Sea God" (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 346). Percy's atonement with his father is an ongoing process throughout the Olympian series as he fails to connect with his father the way any normal adolescent would want to. Percy through the course of his life grows to understand that his life would never be like any other ordinary American

teenager and yet he suffers frustration at times because of the seeming indifference of his father.

In *The Sea of Monsters,* the atonement with his father takes place again but this time not through direct physical contact but through Hermes, Luke Castellan's father. As a father to a son who was rebelling because he felt abandoned by his father, Hermes tells Percy that it is difficult for a god to be a father to earthly children. Hermes brings Percy into thinking of the times when his father had answered him and how his physical absence had been filled in by supernatural aids and assistances, supernatural abilities that he had been gifted and how Tyson did not appear in his life by coincidence. The atonement with his father does take place again as Percy turns his mind to what Hermes just told him and learns to accept what his father is in the greater scheme of things.

**Apotheosis**

"Apotheosis" begins with "the hero's recognition of the divine within himself. It is the beginning of the hero being able to accomplish that which ordinary men and women cannot" ("The Supreme Ordeal"). In *The Lightning Thief,* Percy's victory in accomplishing the quest had taken him to the midst of the immortals at Mount Olympus and he comes to realize that he is indeed partly divine. After the atonement with his father he accepts his existence as semi-divine and is prepared to take on whatever trials and responsibilities he may be further expected to shoulder. As he leaves Mount Olympus, Percy describes the moment when he did indeed feel like a hero: "As I walked back through the city of the gods, conversations stopped. The muse paused their concert. People and satyrs and naiads all turned toward me, their faces filled with respect and gratitude, as I passed, he knelt, as if I were some kind of hero" (346). This

is one of the rare occasions in Percy's life where he is recognized for his deeds, when he is recognized for who he is.

As the second book of the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series, *The Sea of Monsters* is a continuation of one of the many quests the half - bloods are engaged in before the fulfillment of the Great Prophecy, this stage of the Campbell's monomyth stands omitted. In the final novel, *The Last Olympian* after the fulfillment of the prophecy, Zeus who threatened to blast him to pieces with his thunderbolt offers him immortality and a seat amongst the Greek pantheons. In *The Sea of Monsters,* since Percy is already in the know of who he really is and the process of self acceptance is set in progress, Riordan does not develop this stage of the monomyth in this book. It occurs, as mentioned in the first and final books of the series.

**The Ultimate Boon**

"The Ultimate Boon" is the final stage in the second nuclear unit of Campbell's monomyth and often occurs in close approximation to "Apotheosis" (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 29). In this stage of the hero's journey, the hero has already completed the quest and has attained a certain level of knowledge and understanding about the nature of being, which may be physical, spiritual or psychological, the hero also receives the ultimate boon from the divine.

In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy receives no such boon. His only reward is that he is allowed to continue living as a mortal. Zeus wanted Percy dead, but his service to the gods earned him his life. At this stage, the boon that Percy is granted is that he is allowed to exist and his mother is returned by Hades from imprisonment. Riordan's story therefore takes a flight from Campbell's final stage in the second substructure, though in the broader perspective of the story, this stage occurs in the final book *The*

*Last Olympian* when Percy is offered the gift of immortality for saving Mount Olympus from Kronos and his men.

Similarly, in *The Sea of Monsters*, Percy does not receive any ultimate boon. In fact, he is not even lauded for bringing back the Golden Fleece and restoring the borders of the camp. The recognition is given to Clarisse and the novel ends in a cliffhanger because Thalia, Zeus's daughter is brought back to life by the Golden Fleece indicating that Percy is perhaps not the only threat to Olympus as made by the Great Prophecy.

**Return**

**Refusal of the Return**

> When the hero - quest has been accomplished through the penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return with the life - transmuting trophy. The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the Golden Fleece or his sleeping Princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the then thousand worlds.
>
> (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 167)

Joseph Campbell begins the last section of the hero's journey with the given paragraph emphasizing on the return of the hero from his quest with the "life - transmuting trophy" and the "runes of wisdom" (167). The hero after transcending into the divine realms and experiencing a glimpse of the divine must return to the ordinary to live and share his enlightenment and his boon with the community or world at large. Campbell's

implication is not only physical and sapient, but also emotional, psychological and spiritual. The hero at this stage may however be unwilling to return to the monotony of ordinary life after leading the extraordinary quest.

In *The Lightning Thief* Percy's "life-transmuting trophy" is comical as it is Medusa's head which he had won in combat and is not contested for by any Olympian gods (167). It was parceled to Mount Olympus by Percy as an act of retaliation against the gods for the unwarranted quest he had been sent to. After coming back from his quest, Percy finds the parcel, which contained the head of Medusa returned to the sender in his mother's home in Manhattan. Medusa's head does not contribute to Percy's community or the world in anyway but there is a hint of Percy wanting to use it to better Sally's life with Gabe, ""I can do it," I told my mom. "One look inside this box, and he'll never bother you again"" (351). The tone is comical and light humored and Riordan perhaps chose to keep it that way considering the young audience he was addressing.

In *The Sea of Monsters*, the "life-transmuting trophy" is the Golden Fleece which helps to heal and return community life to normal in Camp Half – Blood (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 167). In fact, the Golden Fleece proved to be more powerful than anyone had imagined as it not only restored the protective boundaries of Camp Half - Blood but brought Thalia back to life. Thalia was Zeus's daughter who was killed at the borders of Camp Half - Blood by an army of monsters. She sacrificed her life so that her other friends – Luke, Grover and Annabeth may make it to the safety of the camp. As she lay dying, her father turned her into a pine tree and her spirit protected the borders of Camp Half - Blood until it was poisoned and its protective barriers destroyed. The restoration of Thalia's life leave everyone stunned and scared including Chiron, Annabeth and Grover who did not know whether to

celebrate her resurrection or fear it as they realized that Kronos, the antagonist in the entire series, had played right through them because he now had two pawns that he could use to fulfill the Great Prophecy.

In both *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters*, Riordan's hero does not display any desire to remain in the supernatural realm of the gods despite the extraordinary quests that had been successfully carried out but rather chooses to shuttle between the life of a regular American boy and that of a demigod in Camp Half - Blood.

**The Magic Flight**

In "The Magic Flight" Campbell writes that, "If the hero in his triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron" (170). In Mount Olympus, after Percy's life is spared by Zeus he returns to his world with the blessings of Poseidon, and thus Percy finds that he is guided by his father in all his later quests as becomes apparent in the succeeding series of the book. This offers Percy "The Magic Flight" in *The Lightning Thief* as he leaves Olympus with a warning from Zeus who actually wanted to destroy Percy (29). Percy is not given the option of remaining in Mount Olympus and in spite of emerging victorious from a prophetic quest, he is treated on sufferance by the other gods, in particular Zeus for simply existing as Poseidon's forbidden child.

In *The Sea of Monsters*, "the elixir for the restoration of society" is the Golden Fleece (170). After Percy, Annabeth, Grover, Clarisse and Tyson swim back to safety on the shores of Miami with the Golden Fleece from Polyphemus's island, they

squabble over how to get the Golden Fleece back to the camp. They were hundreds of miles away from the camp for several days with no money. When Clarisse recites what the oracle had prophesied, "*But despair for your life entombed within stone. And fail without friends, to fly home alone*" they begin to realize that it had been Clarisse's quest all along and that they were only meant to help her in her quest (Riordan *The Sea of Monsters* 234). Realizing thus, Percy tells Clarisse, that she must fly home alone with the Golden Fleece. The supernatural patron that aids the magical flight of the hero of the quest is Hermes since it is the money that he had put in the duffel bag along with the other supplies that is used to finance Clarisse's flight back to the camp.

**Rescue from Without**

In this stage, according to Campbell, the hero may require assistance from without to be brought back to the ordinary world after his supernatural adventures (178). In Percy's case, the rescue from without is more psychological than physical as Poseidon makes known to Percy that he had made a mistake and was regretful about the fate he had brought upon Percy, "I have brought you a hero's fate, and a hero's fate is never happy. It is never anything but tragic" (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 346). Percy felt hurt but it was also his moment of epiphany of his father's limitations as a god to fulfill the roles of an earthly father. Percy realizes that Poseidon can never be what an earthy father would have been to him. This realization about his god – father is the "Rescue from Without" for Percy to return to the ordinary affairs of life after his supernatural adventures (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 29). This is the final plight in Percy's quest where he is rescued from the bitterness of being to an acceptance of self.

In *The Sea of Monsters* as Percy, Annabeth, Grover and Tyson try to figure a way back to camp after Clarisse's departure; they are captured and taken hostage by Luke to his grand ship Princess Andromeda. This is the final threshold that the heroes must cross before they can get back to the ordinary world. Percy challenges Luke to a duel and just when it appears that Percy is about to lose the duel with Luke and all hope of escape from the ship appear bleak, Chiron arrives with the Party Ponies, his relatives. The external help to cross the final threshold is thus fulfilled by Chiron and the Party Ponies, as they take everyone on board by surprise and rescue all four from Luke and his army of monsters. This gives a safe passage to the questers as they return back to the camp from Princess Andromeda riding on Party Ponies.

**The Crossing of the Return Threshold**

The next stage is "The Crossing of the Return Threshold" (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 29). This stage of the hero's journey is as important as the "The Crossing of the First Threshold" because it symbolizes the transition of the hero's spiritual and psychological regeneration into the real world (29). Campbell writes that "The two worlds, the divine and the human, can be pictured only as distinct from each other - different as life and death, as day and night" (188). When the hero after experiencing the realms of the supernatural and the ordinary; the gods and the mortals; he realizes that they are two distinct worlds and yet mirror images of the other. The challenge for the hero now is to settle into the life of the ordinary, to find a balance between the mundane and the extraordinary.

Through the course of the quest, Percy has matured and grown as an individual. His experiences in the two realms of existence and his meeting with the gods, in particular his father, gives him a broader understanding of how the two realms function

in the greater scheme of things. Percy, who had never known home in the real sense of the word, feels a sense of belonging in Camp Half - Blood but he still feels distanced from the others in Camp Half - Blood because he is to stay in isolation in his father's cabin, eat alone at his table and finds he has no other siblings unlike the other demigods. The complication in Percy's life arises from the fact that he is a son of Poseidon and he was not supposed to exist. He remains a potential threat to the others according to the Great Prophecy and hence he is not openly welcomed by the other demigods. Percy is tasked with the decision of choosing the life of a hero or that of a regular mortal; of living the life of adventures or settling into the mundane (though it would still not be without threats). In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy's confrontation is not with the society but the self that takes the form of predicaments and inner conflicts as he has to choose between the life of a demigod and a regular mortal.

**Master of the Two Worlds**

In "Master of the Two Worlds" Campbell emphasizes on how the hero who had just returned from his quest is able to easily transcend into the other realm without any trial as the hero has earned the "Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division… not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by the virtue of the other" (196). The hero is considered a master of the two worlds through the knowledge and experience gained in the quests.

In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy and the other demigods are able to pass between both realms by virtue of the fact that they are half – bloods. Camp Half - Blood is accessible to the demigods but there are magical borders that prevent any mortal from passing through them. Mount Olympus which is the abode of the gods and is on the

600$^{th}$ floor of the Empire State building in New York is accessible to the demigods via a special elevator. In *The Lightning Thief*, Riordan subverts Campbell's theory by allowing half - bloods easy accessibility between the realms irrespective of whether they have answered to the call of adventure and returned victorious from it or not, which otherwise was a privilege reserved for only those that emerged victorious from accomplishing the near impossible task. In *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*, any half - blood could access Mount Olympus through the elevator on the Empire State Building.

**Freedom to Live**

Finally, Percy chooses to live the life of a hero. Although his father had told him that he had brought him a hero's fate and that a hero's fate is never happy, Percy learns to come to terms with this fate. In Riordan's novel, Percy's life is not tragic per se, but it is also not without challenges and unexpected turn of events. As Percy makes his final decision of choosing between the two worlds, he sits in introspection looking out into the vast sea, the symbol of his inheritance, his father's domain:

> I looked out at Long Island Sound and I remembered my father saying,
>
> *The sea does not like to be restrained.*
>
> I made my decision
>
> I wondered, if Poseidon were watching, would he approve of my choice?
>
> "I'll be back next summer," I promised him. "I'll survive until then.
>
> After all, I am your son." (375)

Percy chooses the freedom to live as a hero. He decides to come back again next summer and embrace more quests and adventures. This marks the last and final stage in Campbell's monomyth structure whereby, "a reconciliation of the individual

consciousness" is effected to "the universal will" (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 206).

Riordan intentionally completes each book in a manner in which the novel does not quite arrive at a resolution. Joseph Campbell's last three stages of his third monomyth structure, viz., "The Crossing of the Final Threshold", "Master of the Two Worlds" and "Freedom to Live" mark the final stages in a hero's journey where the hero returns home with a wealth of knowledge and experience; spiritual and psychological regeneration; and a reconciliation with universal will (29). Apart from the Great Prophecy that links one book to the other, each book comes with a separate quest that belongs to a different hero. The first book was Percy's quest but the entire series revolves around the Great Prophecy which comes to pass only in the fifth book. Thus, the last three stages of the monomyth cannot be applied to *The Sea of Monsters* as the last three stages mark the end of a hero's journey and whereas, in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* the hero's journey had only just begun.

When Riordan wrote *The Lightning Thief,* he had left a sufficient number of unresolved issues and a great number of hints that indicated that the hero's journey was not yet complete. For instance, Luke is revealed as the primary antagonist at the end and it is suggested throughout the series that he was doing Kronos's bidding; the Fates serve as another unresolved instance as they severe the life string but Percy does not die as indicated by the Fates; and the Great prophecy itself had not come to pass. Riordan's pentalogy traces Percy's journey as a hero through all the five books of the series. The first book, *The Lightning Thief* is Percy's quest and is crucial in relation to the introduction and development of the titular hero who is a bildungsroman character. The remaining quests in the succeeding novels, including the Great Prophecy are not Percy's and hence a great deal of Percy's development from a coming of age American

boy to the discovery of his demigod identity occurs through the first quest. The hero, in this case experiences almost all the stages of Campbell's monomyth, though not necessarily in the listed order. *The Sea of Monsters* is Clarisse's quest and Percy's participation in it is unlicensed but it was a necessity because as prophesied by the oracle, Clarisse would have failed the quest without friends. *The Sea of Monsters* ends with Thalia's resurrection, a cliffhanger for the readers.

Camille Hayward summarized the main elements that make up a hero's journey as comprising of a hero, a journey, a test, a conquest and supernatural aids or heralds (Sendak's Heroic Trilogy).Whether a myth belongs to the days of yore or whether it is written to capture contemporary society, a hero's journey contains these fundamental narrative elements and structures. An analysis of the first two novels of Riordan's Olympian series show that Campbell's general formula of the hero's journey fits Riordan's narrative but there are also minor departures from Campbell's structure. These minor departures and inconsistencies become inevitable as firstly, all of the listed stages under each structure can never be applied in full to any given narrative. The myth of Achilles, for instance, never gets to the final stage of the monomyth structure as he is killed in the battlefield. Secondly, with regards to Riordan's novel only the first two books of the series have been taken up for the study whereas the final resolution occurs only in the last book. Finally, Riordan has also subverted and omitted certain parts of the monomyth structure to suit contemporary audiences.

In *The Lightning Thief* for instance, Riordan subverts Campbell's structure by replacing the female divine with a female mortal in "Meeting the Goddess"; in *The Sea of Monsters* there are no "Refusal to the Call" as all the demigods in Camp Half - Blood are always eager for a quest to be given to them (Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28). In "Belly of the Whale", it is not the hero's metaphorical death but the

supposed death of Tyson that Riordan uses to develop Percy's acceptance and bond with Tyson as his half - brother (28). Omission can be seen in "Atonement with the Father" as this is an ongoing process throughout the series and the final atonement occurs in the last book of the pentalogy (28). Similarly, Percy is made aware of his semi - divine inheritance and so the "Apotheosis" is applicable only in the first book (28). "The Ultimate Boon" is another interesting example that can be used to understand Riordan's subversion of Campbell's theory as Percy returns back with no tangible boon (29). He is spared his life by Zeus and that is his ultimate boon. This stage is omitted in *The Sea of Monsters*. Subversions and omissions in the hero's journey are inevitable in most modern stories because a hero's journey can never be definitive. Besides, *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* belong to the Olympian series, following the same order of the structure leaves no room for suspense or plot development. Riordan's subversions and omissions in the archetypal hero's journey thereby reflect changing dynamics in narrativity, shifts in character representation and depicts a more contemporary situation against the backdrop of mythical stories and thereby constituting a deliberate remodeling of some of the monomyth's expectations.

**Riordan's Heroines with a Thousand Faces**

In the opening lines of his practical guide to Campbell's theory, Christopher Vogler wrote that Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* may be one of the most influential books of the twentieth century (3). Campbell's theory of the monomyth has indeed stood the test of time and has become a toolkit for several storytellers, writers and filmmakers over the years. Campbell's influence on popular media and films is indomitable. From *Star Wars* to Marvel studio productions*, Avengers* to *Avatar, Thor, Clash of Titans*, etc the influence is enormous and is only growing over the years and each owes something to Campbell's structure. The widespread popularity of

Campbell's theory can be attributed to the element of universality and romanticism that renders it psychologically appealing to its readers and audiences even today. Campbell's timeless treatment of myths as opposed to a rationalist approach which view myths as necessary to understand the transcendence of civilizations and societies make it an indispensable tool in literature and film.

Campbell's theory can however be challenged on grounds of being androcentric especially for the twenty first century audience. Throughout history, the presence of female characters in the lead have been very rare and the few who are remembered are mostly presented as treacherous, wicked, evil or seductive like Medea and Clytemnestra, Medusa and Helen of Troy or as submissive, obedient damsels in distress that needed rescuing like Andromeda, Sita, Eurydice, Draupadi, etc. In *The Power of Myth*, Campbell addresses this point by stating that "the male usually had the more conspicuous role, just because of the conditions of life. He is out there in the world, and the woman is in the home" (158). Campbell is thus well aware of the male - female dynamics exhibited in his theory and does not deny its inapplicability for the greater part to female characters but states that the implications may be interpreted differently. The choice of the title for his seminal book in itself negates the role of women in the greater scheme of things suggesting in its stead a continuum of gendered heroism and a sexist and binarist approach to his monomyth. By centering the monomyth structure on a male hero, Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* can be seen as a grand narrative of the patriarchal order of society which has predominated myths and folklores all over the world for a very long time.

Riordan, on the other hand, arrays his series in a manner that female characters in his pentalogy like Annabeth Chase and Clarisse La Rue are depicted as capable as their male counterparts to lead quests and are shown to be physically and intellectually

as competent if not better than the other male heroes in the series. Thus, in many ways subverting the traditional and the stereotypical ways in which women have been represented through the ages in myths and folklores. Riordan's female heroines find very little semblance with the meek, gentle, submissive and all sacrificing female archetypes. The two prominent female leads in *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters,* Annabeth and Clarisse respectively are given masculine attributes as much as feminine attributes.

Mary Eagleton in her introduction to "Writing, Reading and Difference" distinguishes between the use of feminine language and masculine language by writers wherein, she writes that the feminine language is inferred to be "subjective, emotional or impressionistic; at least as bitchy or gossip, marked by the inconsequential" while the masculine language is "authoritative, rational, appropriate for serious public platforms" (288). Riordan subverts and reverses such gendered narratives in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians.* Annabeth Chase and Clarisse La Rue, for instance are female characters that do not rely on male counterparts to rescue them but rather proves capable of confronting their monsters, quite literally on their own strength.

Annabeth Chase, being the daughter of goddess Athena has inherited her mother's intelligence, reasoning, and strategic abilities. Like every other half blood, she does have ADHD but that does not prevent her from working harder to nurture her strengths. Annabeth is a female war strategist who guides Percy and Grover through their first and second quests. The first instance of Annabeth's strategic skills are revealed in the book when the half bloods play capture the flag in the camp. Annabeth who has better knowledge of Greek mythology is again seen better equipped than either Percy or Grover at tackling all kinds of mythical creatures that they encounter throughout their quest. She is the first to realize that Aunty Em was actually Medusa

who wanted to turn the trio into statues, she advices Percy to look away when Ares assumes his godly form knowing it would disintegrate him and it was again Annabeth who suggested that finding the Golden Fleece may be the solution to saving Grover from the Cyclops Polyphemus and restoring Thalia's tree at the camp. Annabeth is first described by Percy as "a pretty girl, her blonde hair curled up like a princess's" but this does not imply the stereotypical beauty that associated women with qualities of docility, submission and dependence (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 5). In fact, in his next meeting with Annabeth, Percy notices that though she may only have been about his age, she was "a couple of inches taller and a whole lot more athletic looking" (63). He also describes her eyes as "startling gray, like storm clouds; pretty but intimidating, too, as if she were analyzing the best way to take me down in a fight" (63,64). Riordan gives his heroine physical, emotional and intellectual attributes that may challenge conventional and traditional expectations and though Percy is the eponymous hero of the series, by granting Annabeth a role that is more than just being Percy's right - hand woman, Riordan makes a case in point about having female leads for a twenty first century audience.

In a similar manner, Clarisse La Rue also subverts the conventional expectations from a female heroine. Descriptions about Clarisse neither emphasize on her good looks and tenderness of character; nor is she presented as the wicked, scheming, jealous female stereotype. When Percy first meets Clarisse he sees her as "the big girl from the ugly cabin" and continues to describe her friends as "all big and ugly and mean looking like her" (89). She is not appearance conscious and is not sketched as someone who desired to look attractive and girly; rather she is the bullying female who terrorizes a lot of the campers. Percy is in fact ragged and bullied by Clarisse and her friends on his first day at camp when Clarisse catches him by the neck and drags him to the girl's

bathroom to dunk his head into the toilet. Regardless, Clarisse's overbearing attitude also draws the admiration of Percy and the readers at large because she proves to be brave and loyal in the face of danger and fights relentlessly to protect her friends: "Whatever else you could say about Clarisse, she was brave. She was a big girl with cruel eyes like her father's. She looked like she was born to wear Greek battle armor" (Riordan *The Sea of Monsters* 41). When Clarisse is given the quest of finding the Golden Fleece and bringing it to the camp, she accepts it courageously but she also appears to feel awkward and unsure as the quest came from Tantalus about whom everybody in Camp Half - Blood had reservations. Besides, Clarisse had always wanted her father Ares to be proud of her and wanted to prove herself to him because Ares trusted his sons to be more competent than Clarisse: "You're pathetic. I should've let one of my sons take this quest" (154). This is an instance in the book wherein, female strength and agility is compared with that of the male. Clarisse, however, with help from Percy, Annabeth and Grover succeeds in fulfilling the quest by finding the Golden Fleece and bringing it back to the camp. By having Ares, the god of war doubt female caliber in battlefield, Riordan replays age old gendered narratives in his series only in order to subvert it. Riordan blends the traditional and the modern in a manner that the patriarchal and the conventional stereotypical representation of women are altered and subverted to fit the expectations from female leads for a modern audience by inverting conventional notions associated with the female, thus creating in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series heroines with a thousand faces.

### *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters*: Film Adaptations

Film adaptation is not only a complex process but a challenging task because it is a reinterpretation and recreation of an existing text. An adaptation need not

necessarily capture all the nuances of the text but it must be able to translate the internal logic of the original text while still remaining an independent work of art, coherent and convincing to the audience. With source texts like *Harry Potter*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* that have large readership across the world, the challenge is to adapt the source text in a manner that responds to the myriad visions of the "knowing audience" (Hutcheon 120). This section of the chapter will attempt a discussion on the main differences between Riordan's *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* and the adaptation by Chris Columbus and Thor Freudenthal respectively and the subsequent result of the changes brought into the adaptations.

**Chris Columbus**

Chris Joseph Columbus, born on 10 September 1958 is an American producer, director, screenwriter and filmmaker who began his career in Hollywood as a scriptwriter after his script *Gremlins* (1984) caught Steven Spielberg's attention. It was Christmas comedy *Home Alone* (1990) and its sequel *Home Alone: Lost in New York* (1992) which made Columbus a recognisable figure in the industry. After that, Columbus went on to direct several other films. His most acclaimed works being *Mrs Doubtfire* (1993), the adaptation of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) and its sequel *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002), *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (2005) and 3D action comedy *Pixels* (2015). He also produced several films including *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (2010) and *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters* (2013).

**Thor Freudenthal**

Needing a break and yet not wanting to miss out being part of the *Percy Jackson* franchise, director Chris Columbus decided to take the backseat for the sequel to the Percy Jackson film series as an executive producer and gave the director's seat to Thor Freudenthal. Thor Freudenthal born on 20 October 1972 is a German film producer, director, screenwriter, animator and special effects artist. For both Columbus and Freudenthal, Spielberg had been a common source of inspiration. While Columbus got his big break into Hollywood after Spielberg showed an interest in his script, Freudenthal developed an interest in cinema after watching Spielberg's *E.T.*.He is best known for his works *Hotel for Dogs* (2009), *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (2010), *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monster* (2013) and *Words on Bathroom Walls* (2020). Freudenthal is especially known for adaptations of novels that cater to adolescents and young adults.

**Half-Bloods in Lights, Camera and Action: *The Lightning Thief* and *Sea of Monsters***

*The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monsters* are Rick Riordan's first and only novels to be adapted into films so far. An eight episode television series of *The Lightning Thief* is in production since June 2022 which was premiered on December 20, 2023 on Disney +. Chris Columbus and Thor Freudenthal's adaptation of *The Lightning Thief* and *Sea of Monsters* respectively suffered mixed reactions from the audiences and it did not go too well with the author himself as the filmmakers of both adaptations took liberties with the story and made several changes that deviated from the original narrative. Riordan expressed his dissatisfaction with the treatment that was given to his story in both films in several interviews and social media, "I still have not seen the movies…I judge them from having read the scripts because I care most about the story.

I certainly have nothing against the very talented actors. Not their fault. I'm sorry they got dragged into that mess" (ew.com). He is more involved in the Disney+ production after the previous adaptation by 20th Century Fox.

Riordan's characters were in their tweens. Percy and Annabeth were portrayed as twelve year olds in *The Lightning Thief*, but these characters are in their late teenage years in the film. The age difference of the characters in the book and the film has greatly affected the hero's journey and consequently the relations of the characters with each other. When Riordan wrote his Olympian series, the ages of the characters were carefully devised because it was significant for the endgame of the series. In *The Sea of Monsters,* Riordan reveals only portion of the prophecy to Percy and the readers through Annabeth:

> "Percy I don't know the full prophecy, but it warns about a half-blood child of the Big Three – the next one who lives to the age of sixteen. That's the reason Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades swore a pact after World War II not to have any more kids. The next child of the Big Three who reaches sixteen will be a dangerous weapon."
>
> "Why?"
>
> "Because that hero will decide the fate of Olympians. He or she will make a decision that either saves the Age of the Gods, or destroys it."
>
> (167)

The Great Prophecy is mentioned several times in the book series but is fully revealed to Percy only in the fifth book *The Last Olympian*, ""*A half-blood of the eldest gods…shall reach sixteen against all odds…*"" (55). This climactic revelation is revealed to Percy in *Sea of Monsters* in the film version when he consults the Oracle of Delphi, "A half - blood of the eldest gods shall reach twenty against all odds" (00:24:34

– 00:24:40). The film version does not build on the ominosity of the prophecy as in the book but rushes forward with the plot. This leads to the dulling of a very exciting episode in the novel which affects the narrativity dynamics in the film to a great extent.

The age increase of the characters in the film also changes the dynamics between the various characters, another deviation from the way Riordan had intended it to be. The romantic tension between Percy and Annabeth, for instance is developed very gradually by Riordan. The first book develops Percy and Annabeth's friendship as they quest together, in the second book Riordan drops subtle hints about a possible romance between Percy and Annabeth, suggested in lines like, "before I could figure out how to apologize for being such an idiot, she tackled me with a hug, then pulled away just as quickly" or "but I couldn't help thinking that maybe, just maybe, she was a little impressed" (183, 236). Annabeth does not realize her feelings for Percy until the fourth book in the series. On the contrary, Columbus developed romantic tension between Percy and Annabeth from the first film itself. The first such instance occurs in the scene where Annabeth tells Percy, "I definitely have strong feelings for you. Just haven't decided if they are positive or negative yet" (00:38:33- 00:38:40). While changes are inevitable when stories are transferred from one medium to another, some changes can impact the narrative dynamics positively while some can deter the overall tone and progression of the story. Introducing romantic tension between Percy and Annabeth in the first film itself alters the narrative dynamics as the development of the relationship is accelerated, thereby, losing essential detailing of their friendship. While this change indicates the filmmaker's intention to connect with the younger audience, it has in many ways affected the narrative pacing and the source text's intended progression of character relationship in the film adaptation.

Another notable digression from the book is the manner in which Percy discovers the divine powers he inherits from his father. Percy is unaware of his hydrokinetic abilities until he enters Camp Half - Blood. The first incident where Percy's hydrokinetic abilities project is when he defends himself from Clarisse's bullying as she tries to dunk his head in the toilet. Quite unaware of his abilities in water, Percy finds that the entire girls' bathroom is soon flooded but that he didn't have one drop of water on his clothes. After this incident, Percy through all the series is shown to learn to control and maneuver his hydrokinetic skills. The film again, however, rushes this important development in Percy's character. In Percy's introductory scene in *The Lightning Thief* , Percy is shown holding his breath for seven minutes under water thus implying that he had a certain control over water unlike the book where Percy initially struggles to control them (00:04:50 – 00:05:59). This leaves very little room to develop Percy's character. Percy's discovery of his hydrokinetic skills is gradual and is indicative of the discovery of his own identity as a half-blood, the roles and responsibilities that come along with it, the choices he must make and above all, helps to explore his relationship with his father, Poseidon. This essential journey of Percy's discovery, thus, fails to make as much impact in the film adaptation as the book version.

*Sea of Monsters* has also met heavy criticism because it has combined parts of *The Titan's Curse*, the third book in the Olympian series, to the denouement of the film, thus taking away much of the essential plot elements from the original work. There are erroneous representations of myth in the film like the presence of Persephone in Hades during summer. Persephone does not appear in Riordan's *The Lightning Thief,* but in the film she is in the Underworld with Hades when Percy and his friends reach the Underworld. This scene is a blatant flight from the myths as Persephone stays with her

mother Demeter on earth during spring and summer, spending autumn and winter in the Underworld. Since *The Lightning Thief*, occurs just before summer solstice, the myth representation stands in error.

Despite its deviation from the original plot, the film adaptation shows several stages of Campbell's monomyth which goes on to prove that Campbell's monomyth structure is applicable, appropriate and an indispensable toolkit for narratives and stories that revolve especially around myths and fantasy (not out ruling its applicability to other genres). *The Lion King, Hunger Games, Twilight, Frozen* and *Wednesday* are few examples of popular films that use the monomyth pattern. The film adaptations are clearly directed towards the teenage audience so there are several representative elements that have been modernized in a manner to fit the young audience. The filmmakers chose to use songs like "Highway to Hell" performed by AC/DC, "Poker Face" by Lady Gaga and "My Songs Know What You Did in the Dark (Light Em Up)" by Fall Out Boy to connect with the young audience.

**Conclusion**

Riordan carefully assimilated and constructed Greek gods, mythical characters, architectures, commerce, fashion and lingo to reflect contemporary American lifestyle and culture. By constructing Greek myths in the liking of modern day America, Riordan reawakens and reconnects the young readers to ancient Greek. He has been able to effectively merge education with entertainment. It is also very likely that most of the formative learning about Greek myths are introduced to children and even adults through some entertainment media, most popular among them being films. George Kovacs writes, "We must acknowledge that students are most likely to have had their first exposure to the ancient world through some expression of current media" (Kovacs

7). Gods like Poseidon become unforgettable and relatable characters as he is described wearing "leather sandals, khaki Bermuda shorts, and a Tommy Bahama shirt with coconuts and parrots all over it" giving the Greek god of sea and water a beach-like persona which reflect his nature and domain (Riordan *The Lightning Thief* 340). Ares is described as "dressed in red muscle shirt and black jeans and a black leather duster, with a hunting knife strapped to his thigh" giving the Greek god of war the appearance of a biker come straight out of an American gangster film (225). Riordan also situates Mount Olympus on the 600th floor of the Empire State Building and the entrance to Hades through Hollywood which are America's most popular places. Apart from using realistic settings, Riordan also uses the teenage American lingo and makes references to several American products that reflect American popular culture.

*Percy Jackson and the Olympians* reveal the close knitted relationship between Classical Greek myths and modern society. Buildings and places are named after Greek gods, brands and logos freely borrow lines from Greek culture and English literature itself is steeped in the Greek classical. The relationship between the Classic and the Modern is ever evolving and inseparable. Riordan's work sheds light on how mythical structures are applicable even in modern scenarios and is reminiscent of novels like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Narnia Series*, *The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter,* and several other children's literature that revolve around quests of children and young adults. Riordan's narrative of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians,* in this essence can be said to have the remaking of a modern myth where the ancient is reconnected to the modern.

# Chapter 5

## Narrativity of Fantasy: Adapting Literary Fantasy into Filmic Fantasy

## Introduction

"But someday you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again." (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 9)

"In the cinema, what you see is not always what you think you are seeing. That giant ape on top of the skyscraper is not really an ape, nor is the skyscraper a skyscraper." (Smith 22)

Fantasy as a genre is not merely one of the main sources of entertainment today but it is also studied in various academic disciplines like literature, film studies, cultural studies, history, medieval studies, comparative studies, folkloristic, etc though not very long ago, the fantasy genre was not held in the highest regards in academic circles and was simply brushed aside as a form of storytelling meant primarily for children. It is almost very difficult to trace the evolution of fantasy from the beginning but its roots lie in folklores, fairy stories, myths and legends of the ancient days. The most popular classical literature and children stories/fables have elements of fantasy in them like *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, *Aesop's Fables, Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, *Arthurian Romances*, *Panchantantra*, etc. These works of fiction laid down the foundation for the typical hero's journey which was to inspire many writers for centuries and was to become the central theme of fantasy fictions.

Although fantasy also finds its roots in children's literature, it is to be noted that children's books written before the later part of nineteenth century were didactic in nature. According to David L. Russell children's stories "tended to offer what adults believed was good for children, not necessarily what children themselves wanted or

enjoyed" (10). In her book *Children's Literature: A Very Short Introduction*, Kimberly Reynolds reiterates Russell in the following words: "what adults deem 'suitable' does not always correspond to what children enjoy or are curious to read" (14). As a matter of fact, even to this day books written for children continue to be subject to censorship for elements of explicit sexual contents, moral ambiguities, grammatical incorrectness, use of inappropriate language and behaviour, etc. Perhaps the stricture constraining children's stories could be attributed to the desire to mould and shape the younger minds by inculcating values and behaviours to foster better ideals, outlook and approach towards life. For these very reasons, Reynolds discusses how children's literature down the ages has been referred to by critics as "literature of acculturation" and "literature of contestation" simultaneously (96). Literature of acculturation refers to literature that "inducts its readers into the norms, values, and systems of the societies in which they are growing up" while literature of contestation refers to literature that offers "alternate views and providing the kind of information and approaches that can inspire new ways of thinking about the world and how it could be shaped in other, potentially, better ways" (96). For the larger part of its history, children's literature mostly served pedagogical purposes that aimed to disseminate moral codes of conduct, social behaviours, religious ideals, qualities of charity, good temperance, obedience, etc. Very rarely were children's literature written for the sole purpose of enjoyment and leisure reading. The twenty first century children's literature which also includes literature written for young adults serve both as "literature of acculturation" and "literature of contestation" (96). The juvenile readers are encouraged to read their stories by simultaneously peeling the layers of meanings in the narratives as contemporary children's tales tend to be less didactic and more secular in its approach.

The first fantasy written specifically for children began with Hans Christian Anderson and Lewis Carroll's books which removed elements of didacticism from their works making the narrative enjoyable for children to read. After Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), several other books of fantasy that focussed on children and the younger readers began to be published like Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio* (1882), L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1890), James. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1904), etc. These books were also enjoyed by adult readers who were able to decipher the social, political and cultural allusions that were layered into the narrative. It was however J. R. R. Tolkien's publication of *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55) that ushered in the era of modern fantasy into the mainstream. In the recent decades, a bend in the traditional structure of fantasy story telling may be observed to suit the modern and contemporary setting. Modern fantasy writers like J. K. Rowling, Rick Riordan, Stephen King, Saksham Garg to name a few have moved away from the traditional medieval setting to a more modern set up where the plot unfolds in familiar places under relatable circumstances for the readers.

One of the essential characteristics of fantasy literature is the creation of a secondary world by the author where supernatural and paranormal activities, use of magic and the existence of magical creatures are a normal phenomenon. The fantasy genre does not depend on logic, science or technology to explain the paranormal or the unusual. Such events may be prescribed to magic or may be left unexplained altogether as the readers' "willing suspension of disbelief" and/or "secondary belief" will be presumed to take precedence (Roberts 208, Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 12). Apart from the secondary world that most fantasy writers situate their stories in, the use of magic, sorcery, witchcraft and wizardry is common to all fantasy stories. Most fantasies also have a great prophesy that is integral to the development of the entire story and more

often than not, is the driving force behind the hero's adventures. The existence of mythical creatures like dragons, goblins, Cyclops, centaurs, gnomes, hippocampus, mermaid, etc acquire greater value as they become symbolic of certain traits or qualities. It is difficult to define fantasy precisely but one can agree that the fantasy genre evokes a sense of mystery and wonder, uses alternate realties and is usually set in a secondary world; though the possibility of the characters shuttling between the primary and the secondary world is also not ruled out. Elise Kraatila describes fantasy as the creative side of fictional world-making that casts the relations between fiction and reality conspicuously creating in the process an interpretative, imaginative and creative theory-building (ix). According to John Aquino, fantasy literature refers to "writings, usually fictions that posit an imaginary other world" (7). Authors of the fantasy genre need to create a sense of logic and rationality, relation between fiction and reality, within the boundaries of his/her story world and should be able to convince the readers of the existence of such a world as Lewis Carroll, for instance, was able to achieve in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, J. R. R. Tolkien in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* and J. K. Rowling in *Harry Potter*.

The history of adaptation of films from literary text is as old as the history of films itself. Though film adaptations were not entirely accepted as a novel idea, filmmakers found themselves running out of stories to feed the voracious appetite of the audiences for film viewing. Some of the first films to be adapted belong to the fantasy genre like Georges Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon* which was adapted from Jules Verne sci-fi fantastical fiction *From the Earth to the Moon.* Contradictorily, in spite of the many fantasy films that were made, the filmic genre continued to remain only in the periphery of popular filmic genres, perhaps because of the technological limitations it suffered in projecting the unrealistic and the supernatural. From the 1980s onwards,

however, fantasy film genre gained steady but definite popularity amongst the audiences as new camera and editing technologies began to dominate modern cinematography. Fantasy films have increased exponentially over the past few decades as the advancement of technology in filmmaking have made the adaptations of fantasy easier and more realistic. The authors of modern fantasy created secondary worlds that were meticulously detailed, with vast scopes for the expansion of these imaginary worlds. The overwhelming success and acceptance by fan base of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* film adaptations in 2001 was the beginning of launching several fantasy film franchises by filmmakers, which in just a few years would extend to fantastic series in Over-the-top (OTT) platforms.

## Application of Theories and Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to study the popularity of modern fantasy as a literary genre and its equal popularity as a filmic genre. It will also examine how fantasy as a genre communicate to the readers and the audiences (verbally and visually) the many supernatural and out-of-the-world, larger-than-life situations and characters that are created by the authors and executed using cinematic technologies by filmmakers. The relationship shared between literary genre and filmic genre will also be explored to determine the creation of a secondary world through the willing suspension of disbelief/ secondary belief to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of how readers and audiences react and respond to such experiences.  Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation and Robert Stam's concept of adaptations as translations will be applied to study literary and filmic fantasy genres. The works of C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Ring* series and Rick Riordan's *Percy*

*Jackson and the Olympians* series and their adaptations will be used as references to gain better perspective into this study.

## The Evolution of Modern Fantasy: Literary Fantasy and Filmic Fantasy

Fantasy ignites the imagination. It makes what is otherwise considered impossible, improbable, intangible, absurd and ridiculous seem possible, tangible, credible and normal. It recreates the ordinary and the mundane, the everyday world into one with limitless possibilities offering dimensions of newer realities. But fantasy, though it colours the imagination also projects the compelling, dangerous and even dark realities of life. Fantasy is a serious literary and filmic genre that offers in its vibrancy dark truths and horrifying realities usually found shrouded in metaphors, allegories, signs and symbols. Fantasy literature, according to Aquino "was in no way 'realistic' until modern times" though he does mention Aristophanes, Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson as writers who did deal with the fantastic and the fanciful to a certain measure (7). And although the fantasy genre incorporates one of the oldest ways of storytelling, it struggled for the longest time to carve a niche for itself in serious academia and literary circles. Contestation over the acceptance of modern fantasy as a serious genre continue to persist amongst literary and film critics but most agree that the post war era started a fresh episode for fantasy writers and the post *Star War* era for fantasy filmmakers.

## Literary Fantasy

Richard Matthews defines literary fantasy as "a distinct literary genre" that, he continues, "may best be thought of as a fiction that elicits wonder through elements of the supernatural or impossible. It consciously breaks free from mundane reality" (2). In medieval literature and until the end of the Renaissance, literary narratives were

dominated by elements of fantasy as they were supposed to strengthen the entire message in any given text. With the dawn of the Age of Reason, mainstream literary narratives witnessed a paradigm shift as authors explored realities that were grounded on historical, socio-cultural, political, psychological and scientific truths as opposed to the creation of secondary realities. But the rise and development of the novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, gradually led many authors exploring newer styles of narratives and experimenting with various genres one of which was the fantasy genre. Gradually, fantasy began to use elements of horror, gothic, science and satire which led to its evolution into modern fantasy.

While most of the works on fantasy were targeted towards the younger audiences, there were some which were enjoyed by adults as well, owing to the layers of meaning that lay beneath the surface text which eventually led to a confused reception of the genre. In furtherance of the statement, though most children's literature and the fantasy genre tend to be coherently interlinked, Łaszkiewicz may be quoted who writes that fantasy genre is not entirely "a product of childish fancy" and that the fantasy genre often "displays layers of symbols and allusions that can be comprehended only by a more experienced and mature audience" (105). Lewis Carroll's *Alice Adventures in Wonderland*, Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio*, L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and James M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, for instance had abandoned the element of didacticism that persisted in children's books through the early nineteenth century and "committed to quality writing for children – as opposed to moral lessons" (Russell 10). Books on fantasy also helped shape adult fantasy as it was built on strong imaginative literary experiences using motifs and devices that not only allowed readers to escape the harsh realities of life for a while but were also serious commentaries on society. In this context, Richard Matthews explains that the children who grew up

reading fantasy literature experienced, "a fruitful continuum that has led many younger readers into adult fantasy" (18). It was however the publication of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954 - 1955) that the proper birth of the modern fantasy genre is said to have taken place which also established it as a serious and significant literary mode. Modern fantasy no longer was a genre that was aimed to cater only to the young nor was the length of its story limited. Most modern fantasy writers added prequels and sequels to their story, explaining their history and genealogy, elaborated by sketches and maps, adding explanatory notes to expand their narratives. In the last seventy years or so, modern fantasy has evolved into a gigantic popular genre that has been adapted by several media platforms. Fantasy has become one of the primary genres that have occupied a comfortable top niche in the entertainment industry and though still treated with scepticism, academic circles have become more open and acceptable of the genre for the multiple contexts and worldviews the genre offers.

**Filmic Fantasy**

Fantasy film is not a recent phenomenon. One of the first filmmakers associated with the making of fantasy films is Alice Guy whose film *The Cabbage Garden* made in 1896 is believed to have introduced narratives in motion pictures and is regarded the first fantasy film in film history. Georges Méliès is another prominent name who used trick photography, illusion and elaborate sets to create elements of fantasy in his films. He is credited with popularising the use of special effects in films and is said to have contributed to the narrative and technical developments in filmmaking. *Le voyage dans la lune* (*A Trip to the Moon*, 1902) and *The Impossible Journey* (1904) are among two of his most remembered early science fiction films (classified as a sub genre of

fantasy). As longer feature films began to be made, filmmakers started experimenting with various genres of which fantasy involving the supernatural and tales of evil, horror and science fiction appeared such as *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sun* (1916), *Das Kabinett des Doktor Caligari* (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, 1920), *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924), *Metropolis* (1927), *Nosferatu* (1927). In its initial years, fantasy grew more prominently into the horror and science fiction genres.

The synchronization of sound in films in 1927 was accompanied by innovations in special effects creating new possibilities for the making of fantasy films. The confluence of sound, music, special effects and Technicolor in films during the early decades of the twentieth century resulted in the adaptation of children's fantasy *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) into a popular musical, the first of its kind. Disney films also furthered the adaptation of children's classics with its hallmark combination of music and fantasy animation films like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Pinocchio* (1940) and *Alice in Wonderland* (1951) which became precursors of popular modern day Disney animated film musicals like *The Lion King* (1994), *Frozen* (2013) *Coco* (2017), *The Lion King II* (2019), *Frozen II* (2021), *The Little Mermaid* (2023), etc.

It is almost impossible to trace the evolution of filmic fantasy without the mention of George Lucas' contributions. Lucas' *Star Wars* (1977) is widely credited with revolutionizing the filmic fantasy genre because it not only created one of the most successful film franchises but cemented its position in popular culture. *Star Wars* greatly influenced Hollywood's narratives that focused on deep meaningful stories with dramatic conflicts to a film that used sprawling special effects in films to advance the story. Besides *Star Wars* there were also several other fantasy films in the 1980s and 1990s which were quite popular amongst the audiences: *Time Bandit* (1981)*, Clash of*

*the Titans* (1981)*, The Princess Bride* (1987)*, Edward Scissorhands* (1990), and *Star Wars: Episode 1-The Phantom Menace* (1999).

But it was in 2001 when the release of two of the most influential fantasy films of all time changed the face of filmic fantasy altogether. The two films released only months apart were *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.* The development of visual effects (VFX) and Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) furthered the popularity of filmic fantasy genre as it led to the possibility of exploring space adventures, magic, and supernaturalism in a more realist manner than earlier films. Ted Friedman observes that the blockbuster fantasy films of the 2000s was a result of the development of Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) which made the virtual seem real as it allowed directors "to create unnatural landscapes, spectacular battles, and inhuman characters, all of which can be blended seamlessly (or close to it) into the footage of real actors shot on physical sets" (5). Owing to such technological developments filmic fantasies from the 2000s onward till the present have witnessed enormous artistic and commercial successes. Ever since the making of the first motion pictures, film industry has grown exponentially in a matter of just hundred years. It has grown its roots in almost every country in every continent; it is art and entertainment but it is also education and commerce.

**Adapting Modern Fantasy into Filmic Fantasy**

In *J. R. R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*, Tom. A. Shippey wrote, "The dominant literary mode of the twentieth century has been the fantastic" (vii). Richard Matthews also wrote in *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination* that "By the start of the twentieth century, fantasy was an established mode for serious adult literature" (20). This can be said to be true even for the filmic mode. According to the highest grossing

movies of all time worldwide released by Box Office Mojo by IMDpPro updated on 23 January 2023, the list is dominated by films like *Avatar, Avengers, Star Wars, Spider Man, The Lion King, Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* all of which are fantastical in nature (*Box Office Mojo*). This heightened interest in fantasy is perhaps a result of the filmic adaptations of fantasy books like *The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter*, *The Chronicles of Narnia, Game of Thrones,* etc in recent years which became box office successes. These books sold millions of copies, were translated into several languages worldwide and were hugely popular amongst the reading public. Most modern fantasy writers developed a coherent narrative over a period of time that enabled them to minutely detail their work comprising of series which usually ended in cliffhangers making it possible for the writers to add sequels to their works. J. R. R. Tolkien's publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937 and its sequel which appeared almost two decades later in three volumes established modern fantasy genre as a serious and a significant literary mode. About half a century later, history repeated itself with the release of Peter Jackson's adaptation of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* and Christopher Columbus' adaptation of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 2001 which turned the course and scope of filmic fantasy as an influential and a popular genre not only amongst children but adult audiences as well.

Most of the popular fantasy films made in the 2000s were adapted from novels that were best sellers and written much earlier like the novels of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, George R. R. Martin and J. K. Rowling. These fantasy writers had created their own story worlds – a universe for their creations. Fantasy fiction, unlike realist fiction does not require logic. Anything is possible within the realms of the secondary world which may or may not be explained by magic. It invites the readers and the audiences

into a "willing suspension of disbelief" or "secondary belief" to escape the ordinary realities of life, even if it is only for a while (Roberts 208, Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 12).

One of the primary reasons for the growing popularity of filmic fantasy is the advancement of computer technology. Filmmakers, film theorists and film scholars are forced to keep pace with this technological evolution which has in about hundred years after its inception, completely changed the way films were earlier made. Most contemporary films are reliant on visual effects (VFX) and Computer-Generated Imageries (CGI) irrespective of the genre. There is a common misconception that VFX and CGIs are mostly used in films belonging to the sci-fi, horror, fantasy genre or films that are action packed and has fight sequences, war scenes or fast paced car chase scenes and the like. On the contrary, however, the fact is that most films irrespective of the genre use VFX and CGIs to fill in the mise-en-scenè of any given shot varying from period dramas to the sci-fi genre. Films can prove to be very expensive which can put limitations on creative realisation of the filmmakers. VFX and CGIs are, therefore often employed by filmmakers because it not only proves to be cost efficient in the long run but helps in realising the filmmakers' creative vision to its full potential. In *Forrest Gump* (1994), for instance CGI has been used in the scene at Washington Monument where the crowd of protesters were actually multiplied using CGI. Martin Scorsese's film *The Irishman* (2019) can be cited as another example where CGI technology has been used to de-age the actors Robert De Niro, Al Pacino and Joe Pesci who needed to look younger in certain scenes as the story went back and forth in time. Thus, the use of VFX and CGIs has become an essential tool for every contemporary filmmaker. On the other hand, films like *Jurassic Park* (1993), *Avatar* (2009), *Gravity* (2013), *Avengers:*

*End Game* (2019), *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) to name a few are films whose cinematographic success may be said to be largely reliant on VFX and CGI technology.

In recent times, there has been a marked rise in the production of the fantasy genre and apart from reasons that range from an increase in younger audiences to an increased desire amongst the readers to watch their favourite creatures and characters in the imaginary world being created into fictional realism, the possibility of adapting literary fantasy has been made possible by the advanced camera and film technologies. C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* that takes place in an alternate universe, J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth and Rick Riordan's Greek gods living in contemporary America have all been adapted into films. Certain scenes, characters and places recreated by the filmmakers from these books have become permanently etched in the memories of the audiences and the readers in the same manner as one cannot imagine a Hogwarts different from the one Chris Columbus had created or an Iron Throne that is different from the one that was used in David Benioff and D. B. Weiss's adaptation of *Game of Thrones.*

**Lewis, Tolkien and Riordan's Approach to Fantasy**

Coleridge's willing suspension of disbelief requires a deliberate suspension of logical reasoning and rationality for the sake of literary enjoyment. Tolkien who was influenced by Coleridge's concept of the willing suspension of disbelief elaborated that a voluntary suspension of logical and critical examination is successful only as long as the reader continue to consciously believe in the tale because "The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are out in the Primary World again, looking at the abortive Secondary World from outside" (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 12). For Tolkien, a work of fantasy should not make the reader conscious, rather it should put the reader in "the enchanted state: Secondary Belief"

(12). Lewis, on the other hand distinguishes between the role of imagination which he called "the organ of meaning", and reason "the organ of truth" in fantasy writing (Downing 19). Imagination is not merely mental images but the creation of meaning through similes and metaphors. Though Lewis and Tolkien belonged to the same literary circle and greatly supported and influenced each other's writings, they did disagree and had certain dissimilar view points as writers on artistic process and their approach to fairy tales and fantasy literature. David C. Downing sums up the difference between the two writers in the following words: "Tolkien was committed to the *independence* of his created secondary world from our primary world.… Tolkien studiously avoids any literary or historical references that would draw readers' attention away from his fictive world and make them think of our own" but Lewis "delighted in stressing the *interdependence* of his created secondary worlds and our primary world. This emphasis on the interpenetration of our real world with the fictive world of Narnia allowed Lewis to write with Christian undertones without feeling that he had undermined the integrity of his art" (150).

Rick Riordan, a contemporary fantasy writer has more in common with J. K. Rowling than with J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis. Though Riordan was introduced to a world of fantasy when Riordan first read Tolkien's book, his style and approach has taken a departure from the Tolkienian style of fantasy writing. In his introduction to *Demigods and Monsters: Your Favourite Authors on Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Olympian Series*, Riordan explains that the symbols and meanings that readers derive from reading his works belong solely to the readers and he has nothing to do with its interpretation. He believes that an author's job is to tell the story and the reader's job to find meanings in the story (10). Riordan's style of merging Greco-Roman myths into contemporary America, using colloquial language with several

humorous incidents and dialogues make his stories not only relatable and enjoyable but also educational.

Tolkien and Lewis's fantasy worlds were created on models of literary medieval sources and structures while Riordan borrowed extensively from the ancient classics of Greek and Roman literature, Tolkien and Lewis created for their readers a world outside the reaches of the real world while Riordan's story revolves around the tangible world. Tolkien not only created extensive history, intricate maps and birthed new creatures to inhabit his secondary world but even invented language(s) with phonetics and spellings. Lewis, on the other hand created an anthropomorphic world that is connected to our world through a portal. This secondary world is a parallel world to ours which appropriates Lewis' views on spirituality. The seven books in the *Chronicles of Narnia* give the readers a fairly comprehensive idea about the topography and the various countries surrounding Narnia. C. S. Lewis drew an outline of Narnia history which had 2,555 Narnian years that corresponded to fifty-two Earth years. Riordan, unlike Tolkien and Lewis brings the supernatural to our world where the gods are as flawed as humans, families broken, where the characters are social misfits. Riordan introduced his readers not only to classical myths but also provided a link between the ancient world and the modern world. It is a commentary on the contemporary issues and values of modern society.

Regardless of the differences and/or similarities in approach, Tolkien, Lewis and Riordan's mythopoeia and world-building are shaped out of the primary world, to provide an escape from the grim realities of life through the readers' willing suspension of disbelief and/or secondary belief that offers a happy ending, a "eucatastrophe", which according to Tolkien is the highest function of fantasy stories (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 12).

**High Fantasy: Creating Narnia, Middle-Earth and Camp Half-Blood**

The fantasy genre, according to David L. Russell, can be classified based on the "predominant type of enchantment" since fantasy as a genre tell tales "of the impossible" that "contradict the laws of the natural world" (190, 191). Russell identifies six primary sub genres of fantasy, depending on the "predominant type of enchantment" as he called it:

i) Animal Fantasy: As indicated by the title classification, animal fantasies are those tales that have talking animals. These types of tales are anthropomorphic in nature. The animals in these stories are given human characteristics and attributes. They have feelings like humans and live in houses with furniture and books, they wear clothes and own businesses and properties. These are usually the first kind of fantasy stories that very young children are introduced to and have been found, in a general manner of speaking, to be a favourite amongst little children. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrice Potter, *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White, *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss are examples of a few animal fantasy popular amongst children.

ii) Toy fantasy: Much like animal fantasy, toy fantasy instead of animals revolves around toys, their lives and adventures. Russell points out distinct differences between the two types of fantasy. In the first one, he identifies that frequent theme in toy fantasy is "the desire of the toys to become human" as is evident in toy stories like Collodi's *Pinocchio* and the second distinct difference is that the toys are depicted as "contented with their lot, happy to interact with each other or with a loving child caretaker" as it is in A. A. Milne's *Winne-the-Pooh* (193).

iii) Eccentric characters and tall tales: This category of fantasy stories are set in the real world wherein there is at least one character that is eccentric in nature and also possess some sort of magical or out-of-the-world abilities. Roald Dahl is one such

writer who introduced the eccentric and the magical into the real world of his tales. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *James and the Giant Peach* may be cited as examples of tall tales with central characters displaying eccentric behaviours.

iv) Enchanted journeys and magical lands: This category of fantasy genre uses journeys as its main motif. These journeys often take the characters to magical places where there are limitless possibilities for plot variations. Usually, the characters encounter unimagined magical creatures that are enchanting and at the same time may also be dangerous. These type of fantasy tales usually begin in the real world, i.e., the primary world and is transported to the magical world (secondary world) by means of some portal where the adventure takes place. Famous examples of this type of fantasy tales are Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, etc.

v) Supernatural and time fantasy: These types of tales occur in the primary world and their predominant types of enchantments are ghosts and witches. According to Russell, the purpose of these tales is not to "dramatize and glamorize the blood and horror" but to leave things to the imagination of the readers (198). Examples of such stories are *Georgie and the Robbers* by Robert Bright, *The Ghost of Thomas Kempe* by Penelope Lively, *Tom's Midnight Garden* by Philippa Pearce, etc.

vi) Science fiction and space fantasy: Seemingly the most popular fantasy sub genre especially in modern times, it has a large fan base - literary as well as filmic. The science fiction and the space fantasy sub genre uses what Russell called "speculative writing" as it writes about future possibilities on earth and elsewhere in the universe or about alien invasions and the like (198). The first recognised novel that belongs to this category is Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* (1818) followed by Jules Verne's *From Earth to the Moon* (1865) and *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1869 – 1870). Today,

this sub category of the fantasy genre is perhaps the most experimented with by writers and filmmakers owing to the emerging technological advancements in every field from industrial robots and artificial intelligence to space explorations giving the writers and the filmmakers limitless possibilities to imaginatively and creatively construct futuristic concepts of space and time travel, alien invasion, the age of domination by artificial intelligence, parallel universe, etc.

vii) High fantasy: *The Lord of the Rings, The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* can be classified as high fantasy. High fantasy is thus named because of the epic stature of its structure, characters, themes and narrative. World - building is evidently found in high fantasies as its authors create a coherent secondary world with its own history, geography, language and ethnography. The central component of high fantasy is the hero's quest which usually is the quest for identity though the call for adventure may initially be denied by the hero. The hero's quest has been discussed by theorists like Vladimir Propp and Joseph Campbell who outlined the hero's journey as comprising of various stages before they attain their ultimate purpose. Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings*, the Pevensie siblings in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Percy Jackson in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* are all called to a quest but they are not honoured as heroes immediately.

David L. Russell discusses three ways in which the primary and secondary worlds are treated in high fantasies. The first type is set in an entirely secondary world where the primary world is non - existent, the second type shuttles between the primary world and the secondary world where the characters transport between the parallel worlds through a portal and the third type take place in the primary world, usually under the threat of some dark forces which can be seen and experienced only by very few in the real world (197). *The Lord of the Rings* corresponds to the first type as Tolkien sets

Middle - earth, his secondary world in an imaginary place and time; *The Chronicles of Narnia* corresponds to the second type as the characters are transported between the two worlds through different portals; and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* belong to the third type where the events are set in the primary world but only few people in the real world are privy to the existence of another world within this world.

The plot and world - building in high fantasy is more intricate as they meticulously detail history, geography, language and ethnography with the central theme being the battle between good and evil. The final victory of good over evil, the turn of happy events completes the eucatastrophe of fantasy tales. Most high fantasies are lengthy and episodic in nature, spinning off sequels and prequels to the text, which also inadvertently launched many fantasy film franchises.

**From World - Building to Visual Creations**

When the first motion pictures were projected by the Lumière brothers in 1895, the emphasis was on recording the real world. The initial fascination was a result of the simple fact that cameras could capture real movements but between 1895 and 1915, films evolved dramatically from motion pictures with no narrative structure to becoming a language, a culture and an industry. The initial years of film era evolved into a medium of storytelling that captured the admiration of the audiences. Many filmmakers began borrowing materials from literature, especially from mythologies and classic literature to fuel this newfound form of art. Georges Méliès *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) is an adaptation of Jules Verne's novel *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) and its sequel *Around the Moon* (1870). D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) which is considered by many film scholars as the first narrative feature film was an adaptation of Thomas Dixon Jr's 1905 novel *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux*

*Klan.* In India, the first film to be made was *Raja Harishchandra* (1913) by Dadasaheb Phalke which was also an adaptation based on Hindu mythology. Further, the 1920s and 1930s in film history witnessed a remarkable increase in adaptations and one of the main reasons have been cited to be the introduction of sound in 1927 which allowed "movies to more carefully recreate literary and theatrical dialogue, character psychology, and plot complexity found in novels" (Corrigan 35).

Film adaptations continue to be one of the most common and popular sources for filmmakers. William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and the Greco - Roman mythology to this day are favourite literary sources for film adaptations. From classic literature to Marvel comics, filmmakers have explored every literary field. The advancement in camera and editing technologies in recent times, have further given rise to increased film adaptations especially the fantasy genre. Advanced animation technologies, Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) and Visual Effects (VFX) give audiences a more realistic feel of the secondary world. Lewis's Narnian adventures filled with talking animals like Centaurs, dwarves, minotaur, satyrs, beavers, etc, Tolkien's Middle-earth filled with Hobbits, Orcs, dwarves, Elves, Ents and Trolls and Riordan's Greco-Roman gods and the many mythical creatures; the topography of their secondary world stretching from Narnia to Aslan's country, the Shire to Mordor and from Mount Olympus to Hades; and the many battles fought in between, require an enormous amount of effort, ingenuity, expense, creativity and skill to execute into visuals that which has been meticulously described in words. Lewis and Tolkien never wanted their works adapted into films as Tolkien imagined that "Men dressed up as talking animals may achieve buffoonery or mimicry, but they do not achieve Fantasy" but new camera technologies have opened new possibilities to visualize and bring to screen the impossible in the most realistic manner (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 16).

Owing to technological developments, filmic fantasies from the 2000s onwards till the present have witnessed enormous artistic and commercial success. Several books on fantasy were/are being adapted into films/ series and made into franchises. Some of the most popular fantasy films adapted during the 2000s and the two decades following are *Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings, Twilight, Game of Thrones, The Chronicles of Narnia, Percy Jackson and the Olympians.* All of these fantasy films have been extended into franchises which testify the popularity and demand of the audiences for this genre.

**Reading Film Adaptations**

It is given that each reader's imaginative visualisations of a literary text will vary from each other but the difference in individual visualisation is always greater in fantasy fictions than realist fictions. Adapting fantasy genres are taxing for the filmmakers as they strive to visually create a world that exists only in the imaginations of the readers, and making the adaptation as credible and appealing to the expectations of the audiences and the author is a challenging task.

Linda Hutcheon asserts that for an adaptation to be considered successful, "it must be so for both knowing and unknowing audience" (121). Knowing audience simply means the group of audience that have read the source text and so has knowledge of it while an unknowing audience comprises the section of audience that has not read the adapted text. A knowing audience watches an adaptation with expectations as their memory oscillates between the pages of the books to the visuals on screen. An unknowing audience, on the other hand watches a film with the purpose of deriving pleasure and would treat it the same way as one would any treat any other film. Since the audience invariably comprises both the knowing and the unknowing

audiences, the filmmaker must be able to recreate the source text in a way that the adaptation retains the soul of the text while giving it an autonomous existence at the same time. A knowing audience has demands and expectations and they allow their memory to guide them as they watch the film, becoming, in the process conscious critics who are constantly weighing the text and the scenes in their minds. Watching a known text can/may affect an audience's judgement in significant ways. Knowing audiences can gain and lose from watching film adaptations; the audience may suffer utter disappointment in the way the filmmakers have adapted the text as is evident from this comment posted by "The Guardian" about *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, "I read *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* before I saw the film, and got really angry with the film, because it didn't stick to the story. The person who recommended the book to me agreed, but my friend who hadn't read the book, really enjoyed it. So really, that film adaptation ruined the film for me, because I had the book fresh in my mind when I saw it and kept on thinking about how different it was" (*Do Adaptations Ruin the Book for you*). But at times, a film can also alter one's prior imagination of the source text as Hutcheon points out, "What is intriguing is that, afterward, we often come to see the prior adapted work very differently as we compare it to the result of the adapter's creative and interpretive act" (121). Peter Jackson's version of the Hobbits, and Middle - earth or the wardrobe and the White Witch in Narnia chronicles have been permanently carved onto our memories through the visual world of films. But in many ways, Chris Columbus's and Thor Freudenthal's version of the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series failed to reach the knowing audience on such creative levels because they tampered too much with the core elements of the text as discussed in the previous chapter. Often times, a filmmaker through his/her creative genius is able to adapt a source text, give its world an autonomous existence and

ultimately colonize the imaginations of the audiences through camera, lights and settings. An audience, for instance responded to *Harry Potter* film franchise saying, "I reread the books and really enjoyed them, but I can only imagine Harry looking like Daniel Radcliffe" (*Do Adaptations Ruin the Book for You*).

For an unknowing audience on the other hand, the form and originality are their prime concern as Hutcheon puts it "For unknowing audiences, adaptations have a way of upending sacrosanct elements like priority and originality" (122). The adaptations of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* have been successful as films because it brought before the unknowing audiences an unusual storyline with unexpected turn of events, plenty of action and realistic visualizations of the primary and secondary world with alternate realities. But for the knowing audience, adaptations of *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* from the Narnia series and *The Lightning Thief* and *Sea of Monsters* from the Percy Jackson series did not strike a chord for it failed to bring the experiences and expectations of the readers to the screens.

Film adaptations and novels use two different mediums to communicate with the consumers. When a novelist portrays a character or describes a landscape the readers imagine certain physical traits of the character or a certain shade of the colour of trees which will be at variance from reader to reader. A film, on the other hand may limit imagination as the audience consumes what another has created. It works in reverse because unlike the reader that moves from the printed words to visualizing images, the audience moves from consuming the visuals on screen to the printed words from which the visuals were constructed. This transference of art from the verbal medium to the visual and aural medium can be examined from certain passages and scenes in C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan's *The Chronicles of Narnia,*

*The Lord of the Rings* and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* respectively with its adaptations.

In Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* the wooden wardrobe functions as an object that teleports the Pevensie children to Narnia. The book begins and ends with the wardrobe. The Pevensies discover the wardrobe for the first time when they play hide and seek but it only captures Lucy's attention, ""Nothing there!" said Peter, and they all trooped out again – all except Lucy. She stayed behind because she thought it would be worthwhile trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked. To her surprise it opened quite easily, and two mothballs dropped out" (13). Lewis' description is simple and dramatic but he leaves the wardrobe to the imagination of his readers. Adamson, on the other hand, magnifies the presence of the wardrobe in the room by using a long shot of an empty room which shows a large piece of furniture shrouded in a long white linen cloth. The long camera shot of the furniture, Lucy walking towards it, the change of camera viewpoint as it shifts from Lucy to the top of the furniture which captures the fall of the cloth as she pulls it down in slow motion create a sense of mystery in the audience before the magical wardrobe is revealed (00:11:16 – 00:12:06) . Lewis ends his novel with the Pevensie siblings tumbling out of the wardrobe and Professor Kirke's reassurance to the children about another adventure in Narnia, "Once a King in Narnia, always a King in Narnia. But don't go trying to use the same route twice. Indeed, don't try there at all. It'll happen when you're not looking for it" (203). Adamson's adaptation, on the other hand ends as Lucy and the Professor walk away from the wardrobe with their backs turned to it; the wardrobe door opens ajar and light is shown emitting out of it and the loud and grandiose roar of Aslan is heard from within (02:13:06 – 02:13:20). The last scene shows the wooden wardrobe standing tall and mysterious. Both the book and the

film end in a cliffhanger preparing both the readers and the audiences for another

Narnian adventure. The ending of the film, albeit different from the source text has been

able to translate to both the knowing and the unknowing audiences that the story of

Narnia has not ended with the return of the Pevensie siblings to Professor Kirke's

house. The success of the film can be measured by how Adamson has been able to retell

Lewis's story to the audiences without distorting the Narnian chronicles, given the fact

that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is the second book in the *The Chronicles of

Narnia* but the first film in the Narnia film franchise.



Fig 1. "Lucy (Georgie Henley) discovers the wardrobe in the 2005 film in *The

Chronicles of  Narnia.*" https://pin.it/4rYnqaD. Accessed on 02.01.2023

        In *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* Tolkien describes the

setting of Bilbo Baggins' "eleventy-first birthday": "The tents began to go up. There

was a specially large pavilion, so big that the tree that grew in the field was right inside

it, and stood proudly near one end, at the head of the chief table. Lanterns were hung on

all its branches" (26). Tolkien's description does not detail the colour or size of the tent,

or what kind of tree it was that grew in the field. Besides calling it the chief table, he

does not elaborate on whether the table was a wooden one and what items were laid on

the table. Even the kind of lantern is not specified. Any reader of this passage will

imaginatively reconstruct this scene based on one's experience, culture, personality and

level of creative imagination. A film, by contrast must choose to fill in the details

meticulously. The director's choice of the colour of the tent, size of the field, the kind

of tree, table and lantern to be used as mise-en-scène will dictate the minds of the

audience when they watch it. Besides the details of the mise-en-scène, the two lined

passage will be executed by adding characters, music, sound effects, dialogues,

different shots and lighting which will be edited into a scene and when the film is

completed, these factors will make all the difference.



Fig 2. "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)."

https://pin.it/2GMZMsP. Accessed on 02.01.2023.

Additionally, in this scene and for the purpose of emphasising the birthday

occasion, Jackson added a huge white cake with 111 lighted candles on it and the

description of the fireworks that Tolkien meticulously described is displayed as one of

the main attractions for the party goers in the film. Tolkien details that the fireworks

were not only brought by Gandalf but "designed and made by him; and the special

effects, set pieces, and flights of rockets were let off by him" (27). Jackson, on the other

hand builds on the excitement of having fireworks at the party by taking shots of little

Hobbits as well as the older Hobbits clapping and celebrating the fireworks that go up in the sky. Another clever method employed by Jackson is the introduction of Merry and Pippin (who will play pivotal roles in the succeeding books and films) in the birthday scene and using the two characters to display Gandalf's "red-golden dragon" firework that is described as "terribly life-like" which when fired up "passes like an express train, turned a somersault, and burst over Bywater with a deafening explosion" (27, 28). Merry and Pippin were known to be close friends who were also very mischievous. This playful, mischievous trait of the two characters are explored throughout the film by Jackson but this scene brings to the audience the first instance of the kind of childlike mischief Merry and Pippin were likely to get into by making them steal the biggest firecracker from Gandalf's wagon, thus simultaneously putting into action what Tolkien had only described in words – the "red-golden dragon" forming a dragon like figure before busting into sparks of light in the dark sky (27).

Literal fidelity to the source text therefore is virtually impossible as filmmaking is a process that includes more than just ink and paper and it is in this regard that film adaptations are understood as interpretation and translation subject to gain and loss as is the nature of any work of translation and/ or interpretation. While adapting from one medium to another, there are several changes that are made. Plot changes are also a common practise in film adaptations but in doing so, every filmmaker tries to contain the soul of the source text into the adaptation. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*' two adaptations, *The Lightning Thief* and *Sea of Monsters* serve as examples wherein the filmmakers initiated changes in the plot and character presentation but in the process lost the soul of the text. The film was not able to reach the audience the way the book had. Unlike Adamson's *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* and Jackson's all three adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings* series, Columbus's and Freudenthal's Camp Half-

Blood does not resonate the Greco-Roman myth in a modern American setting themed fantasy film the way Narnia, Middle-earth or Hogwarts did.

As previously discussed in chapter four at some length, some of the major changes the filmmakers made was making the characters older than they were in Riordan's books. The book series begin with the main characters aged between 11 to 12 years. Riordan builds each of these characters into maturity through the book series but by making the characters more matured in the film, much of the essence of the book appears to have been lost. For instance, in the book, Percy does not realise the full extent of how powerful he is until the end of the book series. It is a gradual journey wherein each adventure is a self discovery but in the film, Percy owing to the fact that he is depicted as 15/16 year old attains maturity much early on and is shown to be in almost full control of his powers in the film. The romantic tension between Percy and Annabeth is also developed much later by Riordan in his books and it progresses along with their friendship over time but because the film introduces the characters in their mid teens, the romantic tension between the two characters begin in the first film itself, which again, in many ways rush the full development of the characters as it leaves out many essential elements of their friendship.

The film, *Sea of Monsters* is a combination of two book series: *The Sea of Monsters* (Book II) and *Last Olympian* (Book V). The merging of the two storylines and plots makes the film not only complicated and confusing but it fails to give credit to the characters and the climax of the story. It is in the second part of *The Sea of Monsters* that Percy first confronts Luke Castellan as the traitor. Percy appears to be losing to Luke and manages to escape only because Chiron comes with his Centaurs to rescue Percy and his friends. Luke and the rebelling demigods take years to put Kronos back together which are developed throughout the five books but in the film version,

Kronos is brought back by Luke by the end of *Sea of Monsters.* Kronos is destroyed in a

scene that lasts lesser than ten minutes. This alteration of the plotline proves

anticlimactic for the entire saga, disturbs character building and blots the overall

development of the Olympian series. The filmmakers patched the two books together

and in the process lost more than it could have gained. Rick Riordan himself expressed

his disappointment of the adaptation at various occasions and in his social media

platforms as well, which gave him all the more reason to be actively involved in the

latest filming of the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* television series by Disney+ to

be released on 20 December 2023.



Fig 3. "Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters." https://pin.it/1JAw1cd. Accessed on

02.11.2023.

**Conclusion**

The fantasy genre had been widely misunderstood for the longest period of time

as a genre meant only for children and young adults, and hence was not considered

serious enough for academic and scholarly pursuits. In the last two hundred years

particularly, this diversified genre has been slowly gaining greater acceptance amongst

literary circles. Today, it is not only a popular choice amongst juvenile readers but adults enjoy it in equal measure. Fantasy is beginning to be introduced to a certain extent in the academic syllabi of schools, colleges and universities globally. Modern fantasy is no longer didactic or instructive. Its sole purpose is not giving moral lessons to children. It is a means of entertainment and education, information, knowledge and recreation for children and adults alike in our contemporary world. To further this point, Richard Matthews may be quoted who wrote that "global culture" had a great impact in fantasy writing as "radical, iconoclastic writers forged challenging new shapes for fantasy" (32). This "challenging new shapes" of modern fantasy writing gained greater momentum with the widespread acceptance of modern fantasy film (32).

This widespread acceptance of modern fantasy film adaptation is testified by its influence on popular culture, increased fan following of the adapted books, fantasy film franchises and transmedia adaptations such as video games, comic books, web fan pages, etc all based on the filmic interpretation of the source text. Catapulted by its huge successes and high reputation especially after 2001, filmic fantasy adaptations have become one of the main strategies of modern Hollywood companies. The virtual possibility of entering a realm of existence that offers an escape from the mundane and the monotonous, coupled with technological advancements in camera and editing techniques have made the secondary world and its alternate reality a desirable destination for many audiences. The desire for an audience to watch an adaptation emerge from the desire to experience their imaginations visually, to watch their private imaginations and mental constructions of the story pieced together by another creative mind. With successful fantasy adaptations like *Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings, The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Game of Thrones*, the filmmakers have permanently etched the various magical creatures and characters, the historical, geographical and

architectural settings of the fantastical world in the minds of the audience but in the case of lesser successful adaptations, the issue is not infidelity to the text per se but it usually lies in a lack of creativity and credulity to the source text; a failure to give the adaptation an autonomous existence (Hutcheon 20). Adaptations must be accompanied by creation and reinvention; interpretation and appropriation which resonates with the author's created world and must be rooted in the ideas and inventions of the story.

**Chapter 6**

**Conclusion**

"Things need not have happened to be true. Tales and dreams are the shadow-truths that will endure when mere facts are dust and ashes, and forgotten." (Gaiman 21)

In the context of the topic of this research and through the process of reading several books and journals, comparing source texts and adaptations, gleaning through multitude of views and reviews, attempting both subjective and objective interrogations into the dynamics of narrativity in literary texts and their film adaptations, the discussions and considerations formulated in the process have percolated to give multiplicity of meanings and possibilities to the mise-en-scène of this study. The complexities of meanings and the underlying pragmatics of storytelling, the changing styles of narrativity in the age of media narratives, translating the magical and the mystical to bring credibility to the absurd onto the screen, situating elements of fantasy and their relevance in contemporary narrativity (literary and filmic) examined mainly through the lens of the modern fantasy writers C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, Rick Riordan and the theoretical approaches of Vladimir Propp, Gerard Genette, Joseph Campbell, Marie Laure - Ryan, Linda Hutcheon and Robert Stam to narrativity, fantasy and film adaptations have garnered newer interpretations of the fantasy genre and its potential functionality in subsequent future. The fantasy books selected for the purview of this study were initially written for children: C. S. Lewis decided to write for children during the war when some children evacuees from London took shelter in his house; J. R. R. Tolkien would invent stories to tell his children and *The Hobbit* was one these, Rick Riordan created Percy Jackson during

his bed time story sessions with his son when he had run out of Greek myths to tell him. Regardless, and in spite of the circumstances under which each of the author's stories germinated, these children's tales have long proved its worth and surpassed its popularity not only amongst the young readers but amongst the matured readers as well. The chapters in this study stand as independent entity/ies each enquiring into the works of a particular author, their film adaptations and the dynamics of narrativity to further probe the essence, acceptability and relatability of modern fantasy amongst readers and/ or audience(s) in achieving its "eucatastrophic" ends within the realistic realms of being (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 22).

**Chapters at a Glance: Summation and Analysis**

With the aim to carry out a comprehensive and an exhaustive study of the functionality of narrativity in modern literary and filmic fantasy in reference to the works of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R Tolkien and Rick Riordan, each chapter in the study is given an autonomous existence wherein the focus is on one select author at a time. The fifth chapter is a culmination of the select author's individual approaches to modern fantasy and the contributions and influence it has wielded in the development and popular acceptance of it in the twenty - first century. Having stated thus, a summation and an analysis of the chapters will give a fair standpoint to the reading of the entire study.

While there are limitless possibilities in which a text may be translated in due course of adaptation from one medium to another, "Narrative Adaptation of Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings* into a Twenty-First Century Cinematic Saga" focussed specifically on the cinematic recreation of Tolkien's invented languages, his created maps of Middle-earth, his many imagined races and creatures that populate Middle-

earth and its impact on readers and audience(s) in general. Tolkien's Middle-earth has redefined high fantasy for modern readers and has set a benchmark for fantasy writers which very few have been able to surpass to this day. Tolkien wanted his readers to be completely absorbed into the fictional world he was creating. He wanted his "sub-creation" to pass off as real and true for his readers and hence Tolkien lent much devotion to detailing the backstory of Middle-earth (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 15).

To that effect, Peter Jackson recreated Tolkien's Middle-earth by carefully using his maps and languages on screen thereby evoking a sense of the real in the audience. The visual representations on screen retains the attention and the interest of the audience as they begin to follow the various locations and places that keep recurring in the film giving Middle-earth and the various races and creatures belonging to it a credible existence. Jackson intersperses the many Tolkienian languages in between dialogues and scenes. The languages spoken on screen become instantly intelligible to the audience as they are supported by subtitles. Jackson gives life to Tolkien's language on screen which must have been otherwise only rehearsed in the minds of readers that too limited only to readers who had knowledge at least of the basics of philology and phonetics.

The dimensions of narrativity as discussed by Marie Laure-Ryan, viz., spatial, temporal, mental, pragmatic and formal were also discussed in the chapter. Although the spatial dimension is rarely of focal interest and is mostly used to develop the mood and setting of the narrative, in Tolkien's work, the detailed and immersive descriptions of Middle-earth contribute to the essence and importance of the spatial dimension of narrativity. In the film, Jackson visually depicts the spatial dimension of Middle-earth by using several cinematic techniques like panning, zooming, extreme long shots, shot reverse

shot sequence, etc to realistically depict Middle-earth to the audience. The temporal dimension, which focuses on the chronological aspects and time related elements in a given narrative have been found integral to the reading of *The Lord of the Rings* – the book and the film. *The Lord of the Rings* spans about 6000 years and albeit set in the Third Age, Tolkien uses cyclical themes and historical timelines from the First and the Second Age which adds to the temporal depth and dimension in the book. Jackson adapts this complex temporal dimension of the source text by condensing and compressing several sections of the book in order to adhere to the timeline for cinematic pacing. Consequently, the mental dimension of narrativity focuses on the thoughts, emotions, and perspectives of characters. Technological advancements in cinematography has made the adaptation of even the most unrealistic and outlandish imaginations a plausible reality and hence, the film adaptation has been able to creatively reconstruct Tolkien's imagined places and provide the audience(s) extensive access to the characters' inner lives, thoughts and motivations. The formal and pragmatic dimension of narrativity, on the other hand helps understand the cause and effect relationship between the narrative events that lead to its final closure. Tolkien created a twenty first century saga through the temporal-spatial order and the historical and geographical dimensions he created for his secondary world. The study shows how Tolkien's book had influences outside the literary world-songs, merchandises, video games, Tolkien fan clubs and websites. Peter Jackson's successful adaptation has given it a "cultural after-life" by bringing Tolkien's complex narrative to the screen and giving his "sub creation" a tangible and realistic existence (Rosebury 219, Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 15).

In continuance of the study, in "*The Chronicles of Narnia*: Analysis of Narrative Structure in Select Narnian Books and Film Adaptations", eighteen functions in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, twelve in *Prince Caspian* and six in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* have been identified while each of the three texts and the film adaptations shared six of the seven spheres of action. The Proppian analysis has been found apt and effective to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the narrative structuring of the select Narnian texts and film adaptations which also makes an exhaustive comparative reading of the two mediums of storytelling not only simpler but also compendious. The universality of the theme of victory of good over evil, which is common in most folktales and myths make the Proppian analysis a popular and handy toolkit amongst narratologists, literary and film critics and its relevance extends to the fantasy, sci-fi, horror and crime fiction as well, though it has its limitations with realist novels, non-fiction, documentaries and contemporary narratives. The Proppian analysis illustrates the way in which multiple narrative structures can be used to tell a single story. Although the narrative structure is different in the book and the film, the essence of the story remains intact, highlighting the importance of rearranging narratives in films to create a cinematic experience while meeting audience's expectations.

Apart from the Proppian analysis, detailed examination of the beginnings of the books and the films revealed differences in the approach of the filmmakers from the author in the creation of Narniaverse. C. S. Lewis used an omniscient narrator in a classic fairytale fashion to tell his story, while the filmmakers incorporated the Second World War as a backdrop to begin their stories. Lewis's Narnian series is deeply rooted in Christianity, evident through the symbols and metaphors he employed in his work but what often goes

unnoticed is how his works are a commentary on war torn England and its impact upon children. Andrew Adamson and Michael Apted aimed to reflect the political climate of Lewis's England and designed the opening scenes accordingly aligning with this perspective thus challenging the popular notion of fantasy as modes of escapism for the readers and the audience(s). Fantasy, as a literary and filmic genre is more than routes of escapism. It serves as mediums to explore complex human emotions, themes and socio-political conditions through the myriad fantastical elements recreated by the artists for this purpose. Just as the story of Narnia goes beyond the adventures of the four Pevensies into the magical land of Narnia, works of fantasy allows readers and audience(s) to examine real life issues, challenge societal norms and question the conflicting world views while also igniting one's imagination through spectrums of magic and fantasy.

In pursuance of encompassing within the gamut of this study the dynamics of narrativity in modern literary and filmic fantasy, contemporary writer Rick Riordan and his popular half-blood fantasy series was taken up to gain a better perspective into the transition of the genre into technology driven metropolitanism of the twenty first century reader/audience. "Riordan's Narrative of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* and its Film Adaptation: (Re) Connecting Modern America to Greek Mythology" is an attempt to make a close examination of how Greek mythology has been situated in Modern America by Riordan and the applicability of Campbell's monomyth to the narrative structure. Campbell's monomyth relays the existence of shared archetypes and the universal nature of themes in folk stories and myths from across the world down the ages. In stating thus, the universal motif of the hero's journey is recurrent in modern literature and contemporary writers have ceaselessly borrowed from the archives of past mythologies and folk stories to

embed them within their narratives. Many heroes and monsters have reincarnated into modern literature and have been given myriad metaphorical and symbolic meanings; these ancient and mythical reincarnations have been given a new life as they are made to exist in a technologically centred modern society. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series is one such instance where ancient Greek mythologies have been revived into contemporary America.

The hero in both books pass through the three stages of the monomyth as enumerated by Campbell but several instances of subversion and omission of the Greek myths and traditional role of heroes by the author have also been identified; patterned that way intentionally by the author perhaps in order to suit the taste and expectations of the young contemporary audience he was writing for. By the same logic, Riordan makes his young half-bloods subvert the normal adult responsibilities and power and rather makes them take up impossible quests that take them to unimagined adventures throughout the stories.

The close reading of the two books by Riordan show that Campbell's fundamental narrative structure and elements in a hero's quest remain consistent irrespective of the setting, age and culture in which the story occurs. Apart from a few minor departures, the general Campbell formula is as applicable to this modern myth as it would be to any ancient myth. Christopher Vogler called *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* the most popular book of the twentieth century (3). The widespread popularity of the monomyth theory can be attributed to the element of universality and romanticism that renders it psychologically appealing to its readers even today.

Concurrently, an analysis of the film adaptations of *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series was also attempted. Granted that only the first and the second books of the series have been adapted into films but Riordan overtly expressed his dissatisfaction with the film adaptation in several interviews and on his X handle (formerly called Twitter). The dissatisfaction was caused by the fact that Chris Columbus, the director of *The Lightning Thief* and Thor Freudenthal, the director of *Sea of Monsters* had taken considerable liberties with the original stories, so much so that the original plot appeared to be loose, inconsistent and confused. The filmmakers made the film to reach out to the teenage and coming of age young audience and though it may not have translated as well as expected into films, Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* have seamlessly blended the narratives of classical Greek myths into modern American narratives in a manner that connects the young readers to ancient Greek.

Since the select authors for the study have been modern fantasy writers, the fifth chapter "Narrativity of Fantasy: Adapting Literary Fantasy into Filmic Fantasy" was an enquiry into the popularity of the literary and the filmic fantasy. The works of the select authors, viz., J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis and Rick Riordan and their individual approaches towards fantasy literature and how it translated onto the screen was studied to arrive at an understanding at the responses and reactions of readers and/or audiences in general. Linda Hutcheon and Robert Stam's concept of film adaptations, among others were used to further the expanse of the study.

Folk stories and fantasy literature incorporate the oldest style to storytelling but it struggled for the longest time to be taken seriously in academia and literary circles. Contestation over the acceptance of modern fantasy as a serious genre persists even to this

day, although most critics and scholars have arrived at a common consensus wherein Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* series and George Lucas's *Star Wars* is said to have changed the trajectory of modern literary and filmic fantasy. The release of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* in 2001 set revolutionary standards for future fantasy filmmakers. The advancement in camera and computer technology resulted in better application and development of Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) and Visual Effects (VFX). Having stated thus, there has been a marked increase in the use of CGI and VFXs in the past two decades. It is an essential tool for every contemporary filmmaker and is used in almost every film irrespective of the genre.

Today, J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis and Rick Riordan feature as prominent names amongst modern fantasy writers and their film adaptations have secured them a celebrated position in literary circles and amongst contemporary audiences. All the same, their approaches to fantasy writing stand at variance from each other. Tolkien believed that works of fantasy should liberate the readers from the conscious state of being in the real world and allow themselves to be transported to the "enchanted state: Secondary Belief" (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 12). This was precisely the reason why Tolkien wrote meticulously, reviewing each work over and over again until he was satisfied that the secondary world he invented in his writings were as realistic and credible as the primary world in which his readers resided. On the contrary and albeit a great influence upon each other's writings, C. S. Lewis had a completely different approach to fantasy writing from J. R. Tolkien. Lewis's writings greatly reflected his Christian beliefs. He believed that the secondary world was not separate from the primary world but is co-dependent and can be

visited through portals and magic. This is why his Narnia, unlike Tolkien's Middle-earth, is linked to our world and the Pevensie siblings are transported to Narnia through portals and magic. Rick Riordan, on the other hand, is more contemporary in his approach. He merges the classic with the modern in his narratives. Furthermore, he believes in the creation of the magical, the unrealistic and the supernatural within the primary world. In his writings, therefore, he comments on contemporary issues faced by American youths and presents the ancient gods and goddesses as flawed as humankind, where the gods and goddesses are also as dependent on humankind as we are on them. Irrespective of the similarities and/or differences in approach of the select writer, they have given shape to modern fantasy writings through their works. Categorically, the writings of Tolkien, Lewis and Riordan belong to the high fantasy genre as their plots are intricate and episodic, spinning off prequels and sequels; and have meticulous detailing of landscapes and history.

Apropos to the works of the select authors is the consideration of fantasy film adaptations within the ambit of the study. Fantasy film adaptations may have spurt into popularity with technological advancements especially post 2001, but it has been in cinematic history since inception. In spite of the popularity of film adaptations, there still exists dissention amongst adaptation critics about the fidelity of the film to the source text. To take a stand, Robert Stam suggests that a work of adaptation should be examined as "translation" (62). Linda Hutcheon further discusses how the "knowing and unknowing audience" react to film adaptations (121). According to her, an adaptation can be considered successful if it appeals to both categories of audiences for then it would mean that the director has successfully adapted the source text. In practise, literal fidelity to the source text is virtually impossible. What the pen describes may not be replicated by

cameras but when a film is able to retain the essence of the source text, it may be said that it has successfully adapted the film.

**Appraisal and Rationalisation of the Study**

The nature of narratives is deeply seeded in culture and civilisation. Narratives mirror the beliefs, values and experiences of humanity. Narrativity is so intrinsic to human experiences that it would be considered "problematic" only in cultures in which it were absent or "programmatically refused" (White 5). Narrativity then, serves as the bridge between knowing and telling / telling and showing impelling the translation of the human experiences and knowledge, beliefs and practises into a form that can be shared and understood by others. It enables the communication of more than just information and facts – it is a vital tool to experience shared universal emotions, beliefs, perspectives, fears and victories. In having stated thus, the study ascribes to the continuum of narrativity that exists along fantasy stories. Fantasy literature ranges from abstract and imaginative tales to highly structured narratives like epic high fantasies that prioritise world-building and creativity. This continuum showcases the diversity within the genre and how they can vary in their story telling approaches.

The Narnian tales, the Middle-earth narratives and Rick Riordan blending Greek myth with modern American culture have unique settings and characters, style and approaches. Regardless, *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, *The Lord of the Rings* series and *Percy Jackson and the Olympian* series share narrative continuity. *The Chronicles of Narnia* set in the magical world of Narnia accessed through portals like wardrobes and paintings, present anthropomorphic and mythical characters, young children as heroes that save the day and the story develops with a distinct blend of magic and unpredictable

adventures. It is the archetypal hero's journey for the young protagonists and the recurring motif in each of the books in the series is victory of good over evil. *The Lord of the Rings* series, which was written for more matured readers, uses more complex and intricate narrative in comparison. Unlike the Narnian tales or Riordan's *Percy Jackson* heroes, Tolkien's characters are grownups. Frodo is fifty years of age when he is burdened with the task of destroying the Ring making him a matured and seasoned character. As opposed to this, Jackson chose a younger Frodo likely in his late teenage years or early twenties in order to make him more relatable to the younger audience, who were the target audience for the film. Tolkien's narrative follow the traditional heroic arcs and often intertwine multiple storylines. The central motif is the hero's quest to destroy the One Ring which also celebrates the victory of good over evil. Riordan's *Percy Jackson* stories reach out to the modern young readers. Albeit Riordan maintains a narrative structure that confine to the definition of the hero's journey, he prioritises humour and character dynamics. His approach is casual and colloquial, resulting in his stories being less complex than either of the two writers. Regardless, Riordan also tells the hero's tales; his story also relates the eventual victory of good over evil. Each author has a unique approach to his story but the continuum of narrativity in their tales are imperative to the overall narrative structure of all the stories in question, irrespective of the socio-cultural and historical contexts in which they were written. Additionally, Riordan has more female characters in the lead as compared to Tolkien and Lewis. It indicates the shift of storytelling from a more male centric, patriarchal pattering of narratives to a more inclusive and diverse method of storytelling in contemporary literature.

While the continuum of narrativity in fantasy literature reflects the centrality of the storytelling dynamics and the universality and timelessness of the hero's journey in fantasy literature, the dynamics of narrativity is essential and implicit to understand the transposition of literary narratives to filmic adaptations. Stories by nature tend to be inherently polysemous and when the stories are retold using different mediums, in our instance books to films, the potential of deriving newer interpretations increase and take on new dimensions. The cinematic techniques used to tell stories have no doubt given a tangible existence to imagined situations and locales, but it has also, in certain instances, is believed to have compromised the imagination and popular consciousness of the masses by permanently etching the created images onto the audience's minds. For instance, the Hobbit homes in *The Lord of the Rings* series, the Iron Throne in *The Game of Thrones*, Hogwarts in *Harry Potter* series have conquered the popular imagination of the audiences into acceptance of the filmmakers' re-creation as accepted realities. The change in narrativity as storytelling shifts from books to films is an absolute necessity because both medium offer unique tools and techniques of storytelling and each explore a different facet of narrativity. From a narrative perspective, Lewis chose an omniscient narrator to tell his Narnia stories which gives the readers access to multiple thoughts and emotions of the characters thereby giving the readers better insights into the personalities and experiences of the characters. The film depended mostly on third person visual narratives with limited access to the character's inner thoughts and experiences. In *The Lord of the Rings* Jackson does not detail the backstory of Middle-earth but rather focuses of preserving the key elements of the story by opting for micro storytelling techniques perfected with the use of choice camera angles and movements, lightings, mise-en-scène, etc. The filmmakers of

*Percy Jackson and the Olympians* emphasised on popular culture to draw the attention of the younger audience. Riordan's colloquial and contemporary approach of presenting ancient Greek myths in Modern America has been translated in the film by using several known brands, songs and gadgets not mentioned by the author to suit the temperance of the film.

The general argument being, the change in narrativity is inevitable as it shifts from one medium to the other. Film adaptations tend to give nuanced or altered interpretations as compared to the source texts as inner thoughts conveyed through narratives may either suffer limited expression or apt representation depending on the filmmakers' vision and perspective, choice of dialogues, use of camera techniques to capture emotions, moods and feelings. Films further may either expand or condense aspects of the story; elaborate on incidents subtly mentioned in the source text or may altogether omit incidents painstakingly detailed by the author from the adaptation in order to fit standard film run time. The use of sound and music also profoundly impacts the emotional resonance of a scene with the possibility of altering and manipulating audience's response to any given scene. A shift in storytelling medium is a complex process; especially when the transfer is from print to screen and more often than not adaptations project the filmmakers' vision and perception of the source text. Regardless, after the analysis of the select source texts and the film adaptation for the study it may be concluded that in film adaptation it is not so much about how faithfully a story is adapted but more importantly how the story is translated and artistically conveyed in the new medium. The translation process requires crucial decisions to be taken about character portrayal, mise-en-scène, use of sound, music

and lighting and above all, how to create a cinematic experience that resonates with the "knowing and the unknowing audience" (Hutcheon 121).

Additionally, and as against popular opinion the fantasy genre serves more than a means of escapism. It serves deeper purposes like mirroring realities; it is a social and political commentary on the author's contemporary scenarios; it gives courage to the readers and the audiences to grow courageous and resilient in the face of troubles, to believe in the ultimate triumph of good over evil. In fantasy tales that centre on children protagonists, it emboldens the young readers/ audiences into believing that they too can be heroes and that they too can make a difference in the world. They instil core moral and ethical values by immersing them in these imaginative worlds where these values are explored and demonstrated by the characters through their adventures. Fantasy also performs the important function of educating while entertaining. Narnia for instance, is deeply seeded in Christian beliefs; Middle-earth draws inspiration from medieval literature and philology; Riordan's stories are ingrained in Greek mythology. The readers and the audience are exposed to complex ideas, culture, ideologies; mythologies and folklores which develop newer meanings in varying contexts. Fantasy literature therefore, becomes the crossroad where imagination and reality, infotainment and serious academia intersect.

## Conclusive elements

Narratives are fundamental to human communication. It helps to understand how stories are constructed and conveyed to its readers and audience and the varying degree of meanings they acquire over time. The relevance of folklores and mythologies in contemporary scenario provide insight into the universality of human emotions and experiences that transcend historical, cultural, social and lingual boundaries. In the light of

the study, the writings of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Rick Riordan have been found to hold significant relevance in modern times in spite of differing approaches. In the present context, the convergence of books and film adaptations offer greater opportunities for innovative narrative techniques that transcend traditional boundaries of imagination and storytelling. This generates scope for researching into the conflux of media platforms in modern times (books, films, social media, virtual games and the artificial intelligence) as storytelling techniques continue to evolve and adapt to advancements in technology, media platforms and the ever changing socio-cultural contexts. Accordingly, studies on how narratives can be translated into digital formats for educational purposes, for instance adapting literary works to films in order to engage attention and enhance teaching-learning dynamics can also be probed into. And apropos to the dynamics of narrativity is the sophistication of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the subsequent potential of the AI to generate narratives and adapt them across different art forms (literary, visual and performing art) and media platforms. This inarguably raises questions about authenticity and creativity, the role of human imagination, experience and expression that are integral to storytelling. This creates possibilities to probe into the future potentialities of the AI and the role of human authors in generating/creating stories.

The polysemous nature of stories and their narratives will continue to find relevance and meaning; humankind will continue to built their Wonderland where things are never the way they are in our world; humankind will continue to dream of a world that is full of possibilities and not certainties; because in spite of the ever changing and ever evolving socio-cultural milieu the act of telling stories have remained constant. And regardless of the changing dynamics of narrativity and the constant adapting to newer techniques of

storytelling, humankind will continue to tell each other stories about what ifs and what is,

what was and what will be because stories will continue to connect the past to the present,

dreams to reality, and history to its people for generations and generations to come.

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