

ISSN: 0976-8165

The Criterion

An International Journal in English

Vol. 7, Issue- 2 [April 2016]

7th Year of Open Access

Editor-In-Chief: Dr. Vishwanath Bite



www.the-criterion.com

About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>



ISSN 2278-9529
Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

Hero's Destiny in Fantasy Literature

Dr. B. Vasanthakumar

Assistant Professor

PG & Research Department of English

Pachaiyappa's College

Chennai – 600023

This article identifies, Hero's destiny is a technique being followed to frame fictions. Hero's destiny is the main element generally presented in fantasy Literature. Subsequently, a good fantasy story cannot function without the destiny of a hero. Hero's destiny makes the stories more interesting and exciting, often follows new unexpected storylines and twists in the plot. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings trilogy* is also focuses more on Hero's destiny. Tolkien uses Fordo's destiny as a tool for narration therefore he avoids deviations and formulate the stories into the large scale. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien introduces the protagonist Frodo Baggins an ordinary hobbit with no magical powers, he signifies common person. But he has purpose, that is the destiny of vanquishing the One Ring and brings redemption to the mankind from the evil clutches of Saruman. An American writer John Gust describes in his book *Adventures in Fantasy: Lessons and Activities in Narrative and Descriptive Writing*: he outlines the characteristics of destiny as follows,

This most popular form of fantasy involves a scenario in which the fate of an entire world is in the hands of the hero. It's the classic struggle of good against evil. There is also a sense of a grand destiny, where the main character who is often either the legitimate heir to the throne or an ordinary, simple person somehow saves or restores his or her kingdom. (Gust 14-15)

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings trilogy* revolves around the destiny of Frodo from the beginning. This may be the intention of the author to frame the story to a certain extent. In fiction, Destiny refers to the main character's inevitable involvement in some larger plan. Tolkien portrays Frodo as a chosen one and the saviour of the world. Thus he depicts Frodo as a main character who comes to involve in the larger plan of destroying the Ring and defeating Saruman. At the end Tolkien proves that an insignificant hero with grand destiny can change the fate of the world.

In *The Lord of the Rings trilogy*, defending and defeating Saruman is Frodo's destiny; this theme is exemplified throughout the novel. Though Frodo is destined to play his role, his choice

plays a vital part in fulfilling his destiny. His choice influences his fate therefore he shapes his destiny by his actions. Eid describes in his essay as follows:

One of the most pondered questions in human existence is whether our lives are determined by forces which are beyond our control or by our own free will. It is widely believed that one's own destiny is created by fate. However, some also consider the possibility that one's own choices can determine the reality of one's existence. (Write Work Contributors)

From the development of Frodo's character, readers can understand that Tolkien encourages choice in his stories. When the story progress, Fordo eventually accepts his destiny as his choice and performs his role to fulfill his destiny. Through the narration of Frodo's characteristics, Tolkien informs the readers that he is something special and destined to do great things. Tolkien highlights that Frodo is a chosen one and the hero of the Hobbit race.

Tolkien first presents Frodo as like many heroes, he becomes an orphan as a young boy and is raised and imparted by his uncle Bilbo Baggins. When the story moves on He seems to be quite extraordinary boy with courage and determination sooner he realises his choice and advance through it till the end. Tolkien presents the destined hero Frodo as a common Hobbit like other Hobbits. He is not heroic as many of the people in the fellowship. He is a not brave as Aragorn or powerful like Gandalf but has good heart and great virtues to focus on his mission with determination. In the very beginning of the novel, Tolkien uncovers the secret of Fordo. He presents his peculiarities from the initial development of Fordo's characteristics; therefore readers understand that he is not an ordinary Hobbit and he is something special from others. He indicates his protagonist's potential in many circumstances especially when Fordo voluntarily carries the One Ring to the fires of Mount Doom. As Frodo states that " 'This at least is plain: the evil of the Ring is already at work even in the Company, and the Ring must leave them before it does more harm. I will go alone' " (FOTR 518). At the end of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Frodo chooses to leave his companions and continue the quest with Sam, because he has perceived the Ring has a negative influence on the other members of the Fellowship, so he contemplates that defending and destroying the Ring only his burden.

On the other hand, Tolkien expresses Frodo's unhappiness because of his chosen status. He remains as a marked man and carries huge burden on his shoulders throughout the series. In his mind he wants to live like an ordinary man. His recognition and celebrity status makes him focused on his mission but many a time he feels disturbed and thinks that it is a burden that is imposed on him. Moreover he consoles himself eventually overcomes the cruelty of life and accepts his destiny. He has to move on to fulfill his destiny but in many circumstances he feels unhappy. He becomes so frustrated with his life that he does not seem to live anymore he often yelling at his destiny. His feeling of unhappiness too continues till the heroic journey ends. Gandalf is Frodo's limelight; without his guidance and understanding about The White Wizard's power it is not possible for Frodo to accomplish his mission and Gandalf has made halfway in his destiny. As Gandalf states that " 'This is the Master-ring, the One Ring to rule them all...He greatly desires it – but he must not get it' " (FOTR 70). That moment Frodo exhibits the fears but eventually accepts the challenge and prepares to fulfil his destiny: " 'I feel that as long as the Shire lies behind, safe and comfortable, I shall find wandering more bearable... But I feel very small, and very uprooted, and well – desperate. The Enemy is so strong and terrible' " (FOTR 86). When he lost Gandalf he almost loses his hope. However, nothing is going to change Frodo's destiny and he is not able to escape from it because he is born to vanquish the One Ring.

As the journey progresses, Frodo reaches Mount Doom to accomplish his quest by casting the Ring into the fire. After an extensive combat with the Gollum, Frodo loses his finger with the Ring which falls into the fire. In that moment Frodo accomplishes his destiny. Sauron's power and his empire collapse: "Towers fell and mountains slid; walls crumbled and melted, crashing down...And there was Frodo, pale and worn, and yet himself again; and in his eyes there was peace now, neither strain of will, nor madness, nor any fear. His burden was taken away" (ROTK 270). Tolkien designs that Frodo's destiny is to undergo lot of temptations, tortures and sufferings on his way to accomplish his mission. When Frodo realises his destiny he questions himself why he must be the chosen one. On the other hand, he could not resist the call of his destiny. Ultimately, Frodo's destiny is to finish the One Ring and the One Ring's destiny is to destroy in the hands of Frodo; thus Frodo faces various tests, his abandoned condition, encounters with all sorts of hurdles especially his encounters with dangerous creatures such as the Dragons, Gollum and his final fight against the One Ring. With intention Tolkien has presented the two opposites as opponents to each other. Thus destiny is treated as a tool to

formulate the structure of the series. Apart from Tolkien's skillful demonstration of destiny, he also handles the series with fantastic mythical creatures and characters which show her creative craftsmanship. His use of mythology throughout the series is one of the many ways in which he paints a modern picture of today's ethical concerns.

Works Cited:

Gust, John. *Adventures in Fantasy: Lessons and Activities in Narrative and Descriptive Writing*. Jossey Bass, San Francisco, 2007. Print.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings. Part 1, The Fellowship of the Ring*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982. Print.

---. *The Lord of the Rings. Part 3, The Return of the King*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982. Print.

Write Work Contributors. "Fate and Free Will in Harry Potter." WriteWork.com, 06 February, 2010. Web. 14 Sep. 2016.

Abbreviations:

The Fellowship of the Ring: FOTR

The Return of the King: ROTK