

A Journey to the Reattainment of the Self in *Roverandom*

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Roverandom における自己を再び獲得するまでの旅

Roverandom は、John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892–1973) が1920年代に書いた物語である。1998年、Christina ScullとWayne G. Hammondにより編集・出版された。20世紀を代表するファンタジー作品 *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–55) の「準創造者」であるTolkienが、家庭では自分の子ども達を喜ばせるために奇想天外な物語を作り出すストーリーテラーであったことは、よく知られている。子ども達の就寝時に語られた短い物語の中で、最初にある程度の長さをもった物語として書き下ろされた作品が、*Roverandom* であった。この物語はもともと、Fileyで夏の休暇中に、お気に入りのおもちゃの犬をなくした次男Michaelを慰めるために作り出されたものである。*Roverandom*が自分の子ども達に好評を博したことに気をよくしたTolkienは、次々に子ども達のための物語を作り出し、やがて、ある非常にわくわくさせる楽しい物語が、就寝時に続き物で語られるようになり、1937年に *The Hobbit* として出版されることになるのである。

本論は、*Roverandom*が、*The Lord of the Rings*の序 *The Hobbit*の先行テキストであるという前提に基づき、物語の構成要素を検証するものである。*Roverandom*の編者ScullとHammondは、「Tolkien自身の子ども達に大歓迎された*Roverandom*のような物語が存在しなければ、*The Hobbit*が書かれることはなく、*The Lord of the Rings*も存在していなかったかもしれない」という仮説を提示しているが、共に本来は意識的に子ども向けに語られた物語であった*Roverandom*と*The Hobbit*には、児童文学作品がもつ多様な要素が駆使されている。*Roverandom*の間テキストの要素に関しては既に編者が詳細に検証済みであり、*The Hobbit*に、イギリスの古典的児童文学作品の「子ども時代のレトリック」が適用されていることに関しては、Lois Rostow Kuznetsが分析した先行論文が存在する。したがって、本論では、*Roverandom*における児童文学作品の要素 — 未知の土地への奇想天外な旅、ノンセンス、語り手、安心感を与える結末 — に焦点を当て検証していく。最終的に、主人公が再び出発地点＝到達地点へと辿り着き、以前と全く同じではない自己を獲得する旅が主要な筋であるという点や、作者の「子ども性」が駆使されている物語であるという点など、*The Hobbit*と多くの点で類似している*Roverandom*が、先行テキストとして重要な作品であることを明らかにする。

Introduction

Roverandom was originally written by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892–1973) in the 1920s. It was edited by Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond and published in 1998. It is a well-known fact that J. R. R. Tolkien, one of the greatest ‘sub-creators’¹ in the twentieth century who wrote *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–55), was also one of the most entertaining storytellers at home. He fabricated many totally unexpected short pieces for his own children. John and Priscilla, Tolkien’s first son and only daughter, look back on their father as follows:

John’s[Tolkien’s first son] earliest memories of Ronald as a storyteller go back to Darnley Road during 1924 and 1925: when John was

unable to sleep Ronald would sit upon the bed and tell him wonderful stories, which he never wrote down.²

In the 1920s and 1930s, Tolkien composed some bedtime stories just to entertain his own children. These stories involved remarkable main characters such as Bill Stickers, Timothy Titus, Tom Bombadil, and Roverandom. Some of these stories were orally told at bedtime; others were written down like *Roverandom*, which was a full-length tale.

Like Tom Bombadil, a Dutch doll, Roverandom was Tolkien's second son's toy. In 1925, when the Tolkien family was staying at Filey during their summer holiday, Michael, Tolkien's second son, lost his favourite toy dog at the beach. Therefore, Tolkien composed a story of a toy dog to console his son. All of his children were attracted to the story, *Roverandom*, and Tolkien eagerly continued to compose stories for his children one after another.³ It was during these 'most creative decades of his life'⁴ that Tolkien told his children an exciting and entertaining bedtime story in sequence, which was finally published as *The Hobbit* in 1937.

In the notes on *Roverandom*, the editors (Scull and Hammond) thoroughly explain every 'intertextual allusion' to myth, legend, other children's fiction, and Tolkien's own works such as *The Silmarillion* (1977). In addition, as Scull and Hammond indicate in the introduction, it can be assumed that *Roverandom* is a significant writing, which precedes *The Hobbit*, an introduction to *The Lord of the Rings*.

It is not too much to say that *The Lord of the Rings* might not have come into being were it not for stories like *Roverandom*; for their popularity with the Tolkien children, and with Tolkien himself, led at last to a more ambitious work — *The Hobbit* — and so to its sequel.⁵

Because it was consciously written for children, *Roverandom* contains diverse elements of children's fiction. In this respect, *Roverandom* shows an apparent similarity to *The Hobbit*. According to Lois Rostow Kuznets, *The Hobbit* applies 'a rhetoric of childhood' which is employed in the traditional British children's classics such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and *The Princess and Curdie* (1882), or Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908).⁶

In this article, I shall try to examine all the elements of children's fiction employed in *Roverandom* in order to consider if the following presupposition is appropriate as a consequence: *Roverandom* is a preceding work of *The Hobbit*. The whole consideration falls into four in relation to the elements

that are examined of this story — that is, an extraordinary journey to unknown lands, nonsense, narrative voice, and secure ending.

1. An Extraordinary Journey

One day, a little dog, Rover bites an old man's trousers, who picks up Rover's favourite yellow ball at the beach and does not give it back to him. The old man becomes furious at the dog and says, 'Idiot! Go and be a toy!' Rover is turned into a small toy dog because this man is a wizard called Artaxerxes.

After that the most peculiar things began to happen. Rover was only a little dog to begin with, but he suddenly felt very much smaller. The grass seemed to grow monstrously tall and wave far above his head; and a long way away through the grass, like the sun rising through the trees of a forest, he could see the huge yellow ball, where the wizard had thrown it down again. He heard the gate click as the old man went out, but he could not see him. He tried to bark, but only a little tiny noise came out, too small for ordinary people to hear; and I don't suppose even a dog would have noticed it.⁷

The transformation forces Rover to begin an extraordinary journey till he returns to his former state. First, Rover is sent to a toy shop. As a toy dog, Rover has to hold the same pose: 'sit up and beg' till every midnight, after which every toy comes alive. Rover longs to run away because he is not a toy but real. Rover is marked sixpence and sold at a toy shop, and one day a mother buys him for one of her little boys who loves little black and white dogs.⁸ This is how Rover and 'little boy Two' meet each other. The little boy takes Rover to the nursery in his house. While little boy Two is very fond of Rover, the toy dog is occupied with the desire to run away. However, Rover cannot move during the daytime, and because all the doors in the house are locked in the night, he cannot succeed to escape till one day little boy Two puts him in his trouser pocket and takes him to the beach.

There was a handkerchief in the pocket, all crumpled and bundled up, so that Rover was not very deep down, and what with his efforts and the galloping of his master, before long he had managed to poke out his nose and have a sniff round . . . Suddenly, as he was leaning out, a great big bird, all white and grey, went sweeping by just over the heads of the boys, making a noise like a great cat on wings. Rover was so startled that he fell right out of the pocket onto the soft

sand, and no one heard him.⁹ (Ibid pp.9-10)

This escape is the beginning of an extraordinary journey. Rover, who is unable to move and lying on the beach when the tide is coming in, is saved by an old sand-sorcerer, Psamathos Psamathides. Since Psamathos practices magic, Rover is changed into 'a little fairy-dog' and is freed from a begging pose.

. . . he suddenly found he could move.

His size was not changed, but he was no longer a toy. He could move quickly and properly with all his legs, daytime though it still was. He need not beg any more, and he could run over the sands where they were harder; and he could bark — not toy barks, but real sharp little fairy-dog barks equal to his fairy-dog size.¹⁰

As not a motionless toy dog but a free fairy-dog, Rover goes to the moon on the back of a seagull named Mew. Mew flies above 'the silver path across the waters that is the way to places at the edge of the world'.¹¹ Scull and Hammond point out that the idea of this 'silver path' seems to stem from a preceding text:

. . . it bears a striking resemblance to the 'bright moon-path stretching from the dark earth . . . toward the moon' appears in *The Garden behind the Moon* by the American writer and artist Howard Pyle (1895). The principal character in that book walks from the shore along the path of light and visits the Man-in-the-Moon.¹²

In *The Tolkien Family Album* (1992), Priscilla Tolkien mentions that her brother John remembers that 'he was excited to see the full moon rising out of the sea, producing a "moonpath" at his bedtime' when their father tells John and Michael a story during a holiday at Filey.¹³ Therefore, it can be also considered that 'the silver path' is Tolkien's own invention, as Scull and Hammond also indicate.

At first, Rover, who demands to return to a real dog, longs to meet other dogs when Mew tells him about 'the Isle of Dogs' (the Isle of Lost Dogs) and bone-trees. However, Mew does not take Rover to the island.

'No! We are not going there just now! You see, you can't be called exactly a dog, though you are no longer quite a toy.'¹⁴

At this moment, Rover is a 'nameless thing'; in other words, he does not know what he is. Rover has lost his identity; thus, he needs to go up to the

moon, as Psamathos says, to reattain his own self.

Rover's extraordinary journey to unknown lands is similar to the one described in the Menippean adventurous stories such as Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land-Baby* (1863), and Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871).¹⁵ The dog's original name Rover means 'a wanderer'. Rover starts wandering according to the meaning of his name. When his name is changed into 'Roverandom', his journey becomes 'random': where he should go is chosen without thinking in advance what is going to happen. After going up to the moon, Roverandom should go down into the depth of the sea in order to return to a real dog.

Changing his name is caused by the encounter with two other dogs whose names are also 'Rover': the moon-dog and the mer-dog. Not to be confused with these dogs, Rover needs to be called 'Roverandom', which finally becomes his new name. Roverandom makes friends with both the moon-dog and the mer-dog, who are quite similar to himself. Roverandom's shape is transfigured to play with these friends. He has acquired a pair of wings to fly in the sky with the moon-dog.¹⁶ Also, he is given a fishy tail, webby feet, and mackintosh-like coat deep in the sea to swim with the mer-dog.¹⁷ The two dogs in the moon and the sea represent the 'mirror-image' with which people tend to identify themselves at the beginning of their lives. Roverandom's transformation seems to indicate the identification with his mirror-image as a little dog.¹⁸ However, after he detaches from others who are similar to himself during his extraordinary journey, Roverandom realises that he needs another different existence to re-attain his self.

2. Nonsense: arbitrariness and wordplay

Roverandom needs to wander because of the arbitrary change of his name and his innate self, just as Alice, who is fated to wander in Wonderland or the world in the Looking-glass. Alice's loss of identity, which is concerned to signification, is quite similar to Roverandom's. Rosemary Jackson explains nonsense as 'non-signification'. In the unknown lands where Alice experiences 'semiotic chaos', language systems in the known world do not work. As every name is easily changed its meaning, everything is unstable. Although the only stable thing should be her own name, Alice loses its meaning because of Humpty Dumpty, 'the master of signifier'.¹⁹ When Alice tells him her own name, Humpty Dumpty declares that names are nothing if they have no meaning:

"My name is Alice, but —"

“It’s a stupid name enough!” Humpty Dumpty interrupted impatiently. “What does it mean?”

“Must a name mean something?” Alice asked doubtfully.

“Of course it must,” Humpty Dumpty said with a short laugh:

“my name means the shape I am — and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost.”²⁰

Alice gets confused in the fantastic worlds because there are more powerful controllers who are able to change the meaning of every name or transform her own self. Likewise, Roverandom also loses his identity because of the controllers who arbitrarily change his name or his self: the mighty wizards such as Artaxerxes, Psamathos, or the Man-in-the-Moon. In the beginning, he is changed into a toy dog because he infuriates Artaxerxes, and then his name is changed because the Man-in-the-Moon feels that it must be confusing if there are two Rovers at the same time. Psamathos transforms a toy dog into an animated toy dog like a fairy, who is able to start a journey to return to a real dog. In this story, Roverandom is controlled by the masters of signifier. Like Alice who loses her identity in the nonsense world, Roverandom loses his identity and enters into the world of nonsense.

Roverandom is apparently full of nonsensical wordplay, which makes the whole story humorous. Nonsense is employed as the following two ways: encyclopaedic farrago and characterisation.

Encyclopaedic farrago, the method of piling up to emphasise extraordinariness, is often applied as an element of laughter.²¹ In *Roverandom*, the names of the things in unknown lands are piled up to cause humorous effect. For example, all the newspapers for the people living in the sea, which are carried by Mew to the Man-in-the-Moon everyday, are listed as follows:

. . . bundles of newspapers: *The Illustrated Weekly Weed*, *Ocean Notions*, *The Mer-mail*, *The Conch*, and *The Morning Splash*.²²

When Artaxerxes, who becomes PAM (Pacific and Atlantic Magician) after his marriage with the mer-king’s beautiful daughter, decides to retire and leave the land undersea, he is busy cleaning up his workshops.

He went into the workshops and collected all his paraphernalia, insignia, symbols, memoranda, books of recipes, arcane, apparatus, and bags and bottles of miscellaneous spells. He burned all that would burn in his waterproof forge; and the rest he tipped into the back-garden. Extra-ordinary things took place there afterwards: all the flowers went mad, and the vegetables were monstrous, and the

fishes that ate them were turned into sea-worms, sea-cats, sea-cows, sea-lions, sea-tigers, sea-devils, porpoises, dugongs, cephalopods, manatees, and calamities, or merely poisoned; and phantasms, visions, bewilderments, illusions, and hallucinations sprouted so thick that nobody had any peace in the palace at all . . . ²³

Among the characters in *Roverandom*, two sorcerers, Psamathos and Artaxerxes, are characterised with the art of nonsense. As mentioned above, Scull and Hammond examine all the intertextual aspects in *Roverandom*. For example, the sand-sorcerer Psamathos Psamathides is derived from the sand-fairy Psammead in Edith Nesbit's *Five Children and It* (1902) as the editors point out.²⁴ Both inhabit in the sand. In addition, their appearance shows a slight similarity: both have long ears and look 'monstrous'.²⁵

However, the nonsensical politeness about the pronunciation Psamathos requires of *Roverandom* is Tolkien's original joke. Although the P of Ps is usually silent in the proper English pronunciation, Psamathos strongly argues that every letter of his name should be pronounced:

'Do you know who I am?' he asked. 'I am Psamathos Psamathides, the chief of all the Psamathists!' He said this several times very proudly, pronouncing every letter, and with every P he blew a cloud of sand down his nose.

Rover was nearly buried in it, and he sat there looking so frightened and so unhappy . . . ²⁶

Therefore, when *Roverandom* visits Psamathos again after he comes back from the moon, he seriously asks the sorcerer to send him back home with the correct pronunciation:

Poor Rover was spluttering because he was trying to get in a very polite 'Mr P-samashos'. Eventually he did. 'P-P-Please, Mr P-P-P-samathos,' he said, most touchingly.

'P-Please p-pardon me, but I have met him [the little boy] again; and I shouldn't run away now; and really I belong to him, don't I? So I ought to go back to him.'²⁷

Although Psamathos says, 'Stuff and nonsense', he is moved with the dog's seriousness and tries to change him into the proper size as a real dog. However, the spell Artaxerxes has recited is too strong to be broken by any other wizards. Thus, *Roverandom* needs to go undersea on the back of a whale named Uin to visit Artaxerxes.²⁸

Artaxerxes is described as a more childish character than Psamathos;

thus, he is more similar to the inhabitants in Wonderland or the world in the Looking-glass in the *Alice* books. Although he is regarded as an important wizard undersea because of his marriage, Artaxerxes is not very powerful. When the Sea-serpent causes the trouble, the mer-folk accuse him of his lack of ability as a wizard, shouting, 'Stop this nonsense! STOP THIS NONSENSE! STOP THIS NONSENSE!'²⁹ Artaxerxes tries to shut the Sea-serpent in the cave and succeeds in giving him a nightmare. However, the wizard is threatened by the Sea-serpent, who says to him, 'Stop this NONSENSE! . . . I shall COME OUT; and I shall eat him[Artaxerxes] first'.³⁰ Thus, Artaxerxes gives up his status. His pride is so hurt at this moment that he is so pleased with Roverandom's politeness.

. . . he [Roverandom] came up to the old fellow and said: 'Please, Mr Artaxerxes —'

'Well?' said the wizard, quite kindly (he was so glad not to be called PAM, and he had not heard a 'Mister' for weeks). 'Well? What is it, little dog?'³¹

Finally, Artaxerxes agrees to give Roverandom back his own size as a real dog. However, he realises that he has lost his bag in which he puts all the items he needs to break the spell. Artaxerxes, who is unable to do anything but make an excuse, is interrupted and saved by his clever wife. Mrs Artaxerxes has picked up his bag for him before leaving the land at the bottom of the sea.

'Ridiculous nonsense!' said Mrs Artaxerxes. 'Nice kind wizard, indeed! There is no nice or kind or wizard about it, if you don't give the little dog back his shape and size at once . . . I quite forgot to save the antidote when I was clearing up down below! I used to keep it in a little black bag hanging on the door in my workshop . . . He went on saying 'dear, dear, dear me!' and shaking his head and beard; and he never noticed that Roverandom was not taking any notice, and the whale was winking. Mrs Artaxerxes had got up and gone to her luggage, and now she was laughing and holding out an old black bag in her hand.

'Now stop wagging your beard, and get to business!' she said. But when Artaxerxes saw the bag, he was too surprised for a moment to do anything but look at it with his old mouth wide open.³²

Thus, Roverandom is finally given back his own shape and size. Correctly, he is a bit bigger than before because he has grown up during his journey the past several months. Roverandom is not a puppy anymore but 'a

strong young dog'.³³

3. Narrative Voice

The plot of *Roverandom* is made progress by 'the implied author as friend and guide' who is so reliable according to Wayne Booth. The author implied is involved in the story as both the characters and the narrator. Both the characters' reactions to the main character and the narrator's commentary function to lead the reader from the beginning to the end.³⁴

Four adult characters in *Roverandom* — Psamathos, Artaxerxes, the Man-in-the-Moon, and Mrs Artaxerxes — have a role to make this story progress as a friendly guide for implied child readers. All of them are mighty and convey a parental existence for *Roverandom*, with whom child readers tend to identify themselves in the story. Psamathos, who changes Rover into a fairy-dog moving freely, and the mer-lady, Mrs Artaxerxes, who persuades Artaxerxes to break his spell on the dog, are apparently helpers for *Roverandom*. The Man-in-the-Moon appears to be a protector for young children or animals. Two little dogs, *Roverandom* and Rover in the moon, are saved by the Man-in-the-Moon when they are chased by the White Dragon. Also, he protects children as a dream-composer.³⁵ It is in his garden that *Roverandom* sees little boy Two again. Although Artaxerxes, who turns Rover into a toy dog, seems to be an antagonist, he finally helps the dog by returning him back to what he has been. Therefore, it can be argued that all these characters function to help *Roverandom* to reattain his own self and reach the goal.

In *Roverandom*, the author himself appears as one of the characters: the father of little boy Two.

. . . they came down into the cove specially to look for him [Rover], as soon as little boy Two found he was lost. Their father was with them this time; and when they had looked and looked till the sun began to get low and tea-timish, he took them back home and would not stay any longer: he knew too many queer things about that place.³⁶

Adding to the fact that this scene describes the real happening in Filey during summer holiday in 1925,³⁷ the final sentence tells the reader that this father is nobody but the author himself who knows every single thing in this story as a storyteller.

The direct appearance of the author himself in the scene in the story shows a similarity to that in *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) by Alan Alexander Milne. In the beginning of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, the author appears as the

storytelling father of Christopher Robin:

“What about a story?” said Christopher Robin.

“*What* about a story?” I said.

“Could you very sweetly tell Winnie-the-Pooh one?”

“I suppose I could,” I said. “What sort of stories does he like?”

. . . Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself under the name of Sanders.

(“*What does ‘under the name’ mean?*” asked Christopher Robin. “*It means he had the name over the door in gold letters and lived under it.*”³⁸

In the first chapter, the narrator in the first person is equal to the author. In addition, after that the narrator becomes the third person, the narrator’s voice, like the dialogue printed in italics above, sometimes intrudes in the story.

As Barbara Wall argues, Milne’s *Pooh* books resemble Tolkien’s *The Hobbit* in the respect of the narrator’s voice. Although both employ ‘a nineteenth-century manner, allowing teller-surrogate and observer-listener roles for adult readers’, their works are on the contrary approbated as skilfully-written children’s fiction.³⁹

Kuznets points out that the ‘obtrusive narrator’ in *The Hobbit* applies the art of ‘talking to children’, which is usually employed in British classics for children.⁴⁰ The narrator of *The Hobbit* often intrudes to comment on the story and guide the reader. Although Tolkien tries to remove the narrative voice telling the story directly to child readers before publication, there are apparently many that still remained like the underlined part in the following passage:⁴¹

This is a story of how a Baggins had an adventure, and found himself doing and saying things altogether unexpected. He may have lost the neighbours’ respect, but he gained — well, you will see whether he gained anything in the end. (emphasis added)⁴²

In this sense, the narrator in *Roverandom* has the similar role to the one in *The Hobbit*. Therefore, it can be accorded as fiction self-consciously written for children. For example, the narrator in the first person often intrudes like the underlined part of the following quotation:

Then he [Artaxerxes] put the ball in his pocket, just to tease the dog, and turned away. I am sorry to say that Rover immediately bit

his trousers, and tore out quite a piece. Perhaps he also tore out a piece of the wizard. Anyway the old man suddenly turned round very angry . . . So small had he[Rover] become that I am sure, if a cat had come along just then, she would have thought Rover was a mouse, and would have eaten him. Tinker would. Tinker was the large black cat that lied in the same house. (emphasis added)⁴³

The narrator comments on unresolved mystery or unknown facts for readers, who are expected to question such parts. Hence, it can be argued that the whole story, which has been actually told to child audiences, is written on the assumption that readers are children; thus, the narrative voice in *Roverandom* is apparently addressed to child readers.

4. Secure Ending: ‘There and Back Again’

Adding to narrative voice, the fact that *Roverandom* is ‘a circular narrative’ with a secure ending, just like *The Hobbit*, appears to function to relieve child readers. The extraordinary journey Rover experiences has a certain goal, that is, little boy Two. The relationship between Rover and little boy Two is reminiscent of a close relationship between a child and a toy as the ‘transitional object’ suggested by D. W. Winnicott. In Winnicott’s words, to be a loving object for a child, the transitional object needs ‘to show it has vitality or reality of its own.’⁴⁴ Since Rover is originally a real dog, he is ‘so real-looking’⁴⁵ and attractive for little boy Two.

The little boy takes Rover to the nursery in his house and treats him as if he were a real dog.

Rover would have liked the little boy, if he had not been too angry to listen to what he was saying to him. The little boy barked at him in the best dog-language he could manage (he was rather good at it) . . .⁴⁶

Although their encounter seems to be one-way at this moment, Rover sees little boy Two again in the garden in the moon where children visit in their dreams composed by the Man-in-the-Moon.

. . . he heard a voice he knew.

‘There’s my little dog!’ it said. ‘There’s my little dog! I always thought he was real. Fancy him being here, when I’ve looked and looked all over the sands and called and whistled every day for him!’

As soon as Roverandom heard that voice, he sat up and begged.

'My little begging dog!' said little boy Two (of course); and he ran up and patted him. 'Where have you been to?'⁴⁷

Roverandom and the little boy play a game together with a yellow ball, the dog's favourite, and enjoy their reunion. After he has learned all about the dog's adventure, little boy Two decides to call him 'Roverandom' because he thinks that it is a wonderful name. The boy says to Roverandom, 'And don't forget that you still belong to me!'⁴⁸

In this garden, little boy Two and Rover verify that they are peerless to each other. Because they have never forgotten each other, little boy Two and Roverandom dream of each other. Since dreams are the passage to the unconscious and wish-fulfilments,⁴⁹ the boy finds his lost dog in his dream, with whom he shares the unconscious, just as children do with their favourite toys as transitional objects.⁵⁰

Moreover, when Little boy Two gives Rover another name and says that 'Roverandom' is his own dog, the final goal is situated. Little boy Two becomes the very goal for Roverandom, which is not the same as the dog called Rover any more. The little boy is the person to whom Roverandom returns at the end of his journey.

Roverandom cannot help thinking of the little boy after they see each other again in the dream. When he thinks of little boy Two, Roverandom calls him 'my little boy'. Roverandom asked the Man-in-the-Moon if he is able to see the little boy again.

'Do dreams come true?' he asked.

'Some of mine do,' said the old man. 'Some, but not all; and seldom any of them straight away, or quite like they were in dreaming them. But why do you want to know about dreams?'

'I was only wondering,' said Roverandom.

'About that little boy,' said the Man.⁵¹

'All the Man-in-the-Moon's dreams don't come true,'⁵² however, the little boy's dream comes true. Roverandom unconsciously returns to little boy Two. When Roverandom reaches his house, the starting point of his journey, he sees little boy Two playing with the dog's favourite yellow ball.

And so at last, weeks or months since the tale began (he could not have told you which), he got back to his own garden gate. And there was the little boy playing on the lawn with the yellow ball! And the dream had come true, just as he had never expected!!

'There's Roverandom!!!' cried little boy Two with a shout.⁵³

This scene as the end of the journey is reminiscent of the one in the final chapter of *The Hobbit* in which Bilbo Baggins gets to his 'Hobbit Hole' at the end of his long journey.

As all things come to an end, even this story, a day came at last when they [Bilbo and Gandalf] were in sight of the country where Bilbo had been born and bred, where the shapes of the land and of the trees were as well known to him as his hands and toes . . . they crossed the bridge and passed the mill by the river and came right back to Bilbo's own door.⁵⁴

Apparently, both *Roverandom* and *The Hobbit* are the stories based on the same plot: 'There and Back Again'. Both protagonists, Roverandom and Bilbo have their own home and their innate self to which they should re-attain. After a long journey full of vicissitudes, protagonists return where they have once belonged. Such a secure ending makes the whole story circular and unified; however, it is extraordinary or unexpected. Protagonists, who have the goal of their journeys, are able to return where they have been. However, the self they reattain in the end is not the same as the one they had in the beginning.

When Bilbo Baggins finally returns to the Shire, he improvises his poetry and Gandalf points out the fact that Bilbo has changed: 'Something is the matter with you! You are not the hobbit that you were.'⁵⁵ Roverandom is not the same dog as when he was called 'Rover'. Like his changed name, he himself is changed: he has grown up. Little boy Two says to his grandmother when he finds Roverandom, 'Here's my little begging dog come back large and real!!!'⁵⁶

Just as Bilbo has the hobbit-hole of Bag-End where he needs to return, the wandering dog, Roverandom has little boy Two to whom he should return. Rover, who is changed into a toy dog and then a fairy-dog, needs to become a wanderer as 'Roverandom', in order to reattain his lost self — in other words, to reach the starting point which is equal to the goal. The goal is represented as this dog's yellow ball and the garden of his house where he plays with his favourite ball. During the journey, little boy Two is added to the final goal Roverandom, who is not Rover any more, reaches. The journey Roverandom experiences is as arbitrary as the new name this dog is given. However, this 'random' adventure story becomes coherent because of the little boy with whom Roverandom identifies himself. Even though the journey seems to be random, the protagonist has the final goal to reach. Therefore, when Roverandom gets to the goal represented as little boy Two in the garden of the dog's house, it is proved that *Roverandom* is a circular narrative with a secure ending.

Conclusion

Even though Tolkien himself claims that he is not interested in writing for children⁵⁷, he is apparently a gifted children's writer. As has been exemplified through the discussion in this article, it seems to be explored that every diverse art of storytelling employed in *Roverandom* is as a consequence addressed to child audiences: an extraordinary journey led and protected by the power of magic, the pleasure of nonsensical wordplay, the narrator as a guide, and a security suggested by a circular narrative. Such 'a rhetoric of childhood' in Kuznets' words is later employed in another narrative, *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* (1937), though it is rather an 'adults' children's book' as Peter Hunt points out.⁵⁸

It can be argued that this short narrative having only five chapters is significant because it is the first successfully completed work for children by Tolkien.⁵⁹ The fact that this work succeeds to amuse his own children proves Tolkien to be one of the children's writers, whose imagination is more effectively stimulated when they compose stories in which their childness becomes active⁶⁰ whether consciously or unconsciously. The success of *Roverandom* leads this storytelling father to compose another bedtime story. Thus, Tolkien finally writes down *The Hobbit*, which is an introduction to his masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*.

Notes

- 1 In his essay "On Fairy-Stories"(1964), Tolkien says that successful story-makers can be called 'sub-creators', who are able to make readers believe their 'sub-creation.' (*Tree and Leaf*, 2001, pp. 36-38)
- 2 Tolkien, John & Priscilla. *The Tolkien Family Album*, 1992, p. 48.
- 3 Carpenter, Humphrey. *J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography*, 2000, pp. 164-66.
- 4 White, Michael. *Tolkien: A Biography*, 2001, p. 146.
- 5 Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel. *Roverandom* Eds. Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond 2002 xviii.
- 6 Kuznets, Lois Rostow. "The Hobbit Is Rooted in the Tradition of Classic British Children's Novels", *Readings on J. R. R. Tolkien*, Ed. Katie de Koster 2000 p.31.
- 7 Tolkein, *Roverandom*, p. 4.
- 8 *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.
- 9 *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.
- 10 *Ibid*, p. 12.
- 11 *Ibid*, p. 8.
- 12 *Ibid*, p. 94 n. 12.
- 13 Tolkien, John & Priscilla, *Family Album*, p. 49.
- 14 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 20.
- 15 Frye, Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, 1990, pp. 309-10. Mikhail Mikhailovich

- Bakhtin suggests fourteen features of the genre called the Menippean satire in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984) and includes 'dreams or journeys to unknown lands' as one of them. (1999 pp. 112-19)
- 16 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 24.
- 17 *Ibid*, p. 64.
- 18 About children's identification themselves with the 'mirror-image' is explained in detail in Jacques Lacan's *Écrits* (1966)
- 19 Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, 1993, pp. 141-42.
- 20 Carroll, Lewis. *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*. Ed. Martin Gardner. 1970 p. 263.
- 21 The method called 'encyclopaedic farrago' is usually employed in the Menippean satire to ridicule the intellectual disease of piling up 'a vast mass of erudition on every subject', which is explained in detail in Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1990, pp. 309-12)
- 22 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 52. According to Scull and Hammond, *The Illustrated Weekly Weed* denotes *The Illustrated London News*. (p. 109. n. 52)
- 23 *Ibid*, p. 81.
- 24 *Ibid*, pp. 94-95. n. 11.
- 25 The appearance of Psammead and Psamathos is described in detail in the first chapter of Edith Nesbit's *Five Children and It* and Tolkien's *Roverandom* respectively. Psammead has 'ears like a bat's ears' (1996, p. 11) and Psamathos has 'long ears'. (1998, p. 11) Scull and Hammond point out that Psamathos' long ears are described as 'horns' till the final draft and this description is also derived from Psammead's eyes which are on the horns like a snail's. (*Ibid*, p. 95 n. 11)
- 26 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 13.
- 27 *Ibid*, p. 56.
- 28 *Ibid*, pp. 57-58.
- 29 *Ibid*, p. 78.
- 30 *Ibid*, p. 79.
- 31 *Ibid*, p. 80.
- 32 *Ibid*, pp. 84-85.
- 33 *Ibid*, pp. 85-86.
- 34 Booth, Wayne, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 1991, pp. 264-66.
- 35 The Man-in-the-Moon who composes dreams is similar to the Big Friendly Giant in Roald Dahl's *The BFG* (1982), who collects every sort of dreams and mixes them up to blow good dreams into children's bedrooms.
- 36 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 15.
- 37 According to 'Introduction' of *Roverandom*, Tolkien looked for a lost toy dog with his second son, whose heart was broken, at the beach in Filey. (ix-x)
- 38 Milne, Alan Alexander, *Winni-the-Pooh*, 1980, p. 2.
- 39 Wall, Barbara, *The Narrator's Voice: The Dilemma of Children's Fiction*, 1991, p. 178.
- 40 Kuznets, "Rooted in the Tradition", pp. 54-55.
- 41 Wall, *Narrator's Voice*, p. 186.
- 42 Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel, *The Hobbit: There and Back Again*, 1999, pp. 3-4.
- 43 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 4.
- 44 Winnicott, D. W. *Playing and Reality*, 1971, p. 5.
- 45 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 5.
- 46 *Ibid*, p. 7.

- 47 *Ibid*, p. 44.
- 48 *Ibid*, p. 45.
- 49 In his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), Sigmund Freud explains dreams as the passage to the unconscious and the wish-fulfillments.
- 50 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, pp. 2-5.
- 51 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 46.
- 52 *Ibid*, p. 87.
- 53 *Ibid*, p. 88.
- 54 Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, pp. 276-7.
- 55 *Ibid*, p. 277.
- 56 Tolkien, *Roverandom*, p. 88.
- 57 Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien*, pp. 182-83.
- 58 Hunt, Peter, *Children's Literature*, 2001, p. 173. Hunt points out that the main aspects of *The Hobbit* such as 'male, rural, with a circular narrative and a secure ending' appeal to adults, though it is apparently a children's fiction.
- 59 Although Tolkien wrote down *Roverandom* first, he brought it to the publisher after *The Hobbit* was published and gained popularity. Since the editor in Unwin Ltd. was not so interested in *Roverandom*, this story was kept unpublished for long years.
- 60 Hollidale, Peter, *Signs of Childness in Children's Books*, 1997, p. 70. In Hollidale's claim, 'childness', which denotes 'child quality' should be distinguished from 'childishness'. According to Hollidale, in an effective text addressed to children, writer's 'childness' is alive: It seems likely that people choose to write for children, or find that their books are children's books, because these origins and continuities of self excite their imagination more strongly than they do for other writers, and release an appropriate aesthetic of literary method. Probably they find their many adult readers among people like themselves, with comparable mature interests and needs. (*Ibid*)

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