

Watching *The Hobbit* in two European countries: The views of younger audiences and readers in Austria and Portugal

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Abstract:

With regard to the film trilogy *The Hobbit* and its younger audiences and readers, we outline the common points and differences among audiences in Austria and Portugal. Our point of departure is the question: how did younger audiences in Austria and Portugal, crossing north to south, receive the trilogy *The Hobbit*, considering the central points of Tolkien's fairy-tale concept, and the related story-telling traditions in both countries' cultures? We first review Tolkien's literary work and concepts proposing a medievalist's responsive in context of English modernism; secondly, we address Tolkien's concepts in relation to Peter Jackson's film and cinematic adaptation in general, discussing two fundamental concepts: poetics, and myth. Third, this allows us to discuss the conflict between archaic and premodern values in *The Hobbit* (as a literary text), and the global, post-modern and commercial character of movies. Based on these arguments we explore the quantitative data from the Austrian and Portuguese samples, concerning ratings, genre, the relation between readers and non-readers, and engagement in fan activities. Even if *The Hobbit* is not a particular part of literary traditions in both countries, the positions of readers and non-readers seem to correspond to different perspectives, not so much on the movies in general, but on motivations to see it. It can be shown that generational differences hand in hand with those between readers and non-readers are accompanied by sociocultural differences, such as story-telling traditions.

Key words: Tolkien, Peter Jackson's Trilogy *The Hobbit*, Fairy-tale, Film Text, Medievalism, Modernism

I. Tolkien Literary works and Traditions

I.1. Literature versus cinema

Dealing with *The Hobbit* in two European countries immediately confronts us with the dilemma about the status of the literary and cinematographic texts around Tolkien's novels, a situation which began at the end of the 1950s when the writer was asked to consider an adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. According to Andrew Krivak (2003: 10)¹, Tolkien agreed to read Zimmerman's movie synopsis, starting a fruitful correspondence, explaining in common language (and not in hermetic academic words) the relevant concepts of Fairy-tale and Myth as the author conceived and conceptualized them. This happened at a specific historical moment: Tolkien's theory about the relationship between literary poetics and cinematographic poetics came out to a scene of industrialised culture, which remains to the present day² when Peter Jackson shot the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*, and, more recently, *The Hobbit* trilogy.

In 1958, Zimmerman presented a synopsis with a view to producing an animated movie of *Lord of the Rings*; however, Tolkien refused the proposal. To the writer, *The Lord of the Rings* needed to be read as more than a children's story, considering that Zimmerman misunderstood the text and didn't read it as a tale of a journey.³ However, in 1956, Tolkien had already written a letter clarifying his conception of his own work, addressing Michael Straight, editor of the *New Republic*, and clarifying the function of poetics in line with the Aristotelian conception and re-read through the catholic vision⁴: '(...) the history and development of the individual (something out of which he can get good, ultimate good, for himself, or fail to do so), and the history of the world (which depends on his action for its own sake)' (Krivak, 2003:10).

Still, the question remains: would Tolkien have considered the adaptation of his literary work to cinematographic poetics appropriate, and can it be seen to be appropriate against different cultural backgrounds of its viewers or readers?

I.2. Hobbit: Hollywood Blockbuster and Literary adaptation

The question of adaptation of literary poetics to cinematographic poetics, as recognized by film studies, gains even more relevance when the literary poetics, as in the case of Tolkien's books, transport an imaginary world (or, as he writes it, fairy land), with characters, environments and temporalities that do not directly evoke references to the real world.

Arising from the international study around *The Lord of the Rings*, which preceded the current one around *The Hobbit*, Martin Barker (2006) argued for a new dimension of the concept of adaptation, no longer centred around the discussion of fidelity, but rather around the concept of 'visualisation': meaning to make visible on screen fictional characters, lands, etc. which have no correspondence in reality, but are *completely* imagined in the sense that they are fantastic and born under the literary poetic. Barker argued that film studies should incorporate this new concept, as revealed by those interviewed when they

referred to the satisfaction (or not) of visualizing what up to than could only be an imaginary, therefore subjective representation, conceived as a gestalt of meanings and emotions, and not as a mere pictorial staging.

The Hobbit trilogy, and especially the last movie *The Battle of the Five Armies* (2014), was heavily promoted as prequel of *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and as a Hollywood Blockbuster including a cast of Stars. Typically for blockbusters, in recent years, the release was made into a global event with saturation advertising (Kuhn/Westwell, 2012). It was made into a cross-media event, accompanied by a wide range of commercial merchandising products, focusing on the relation between *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*. It also included a variety of pre-release marketing, to create positive consumer awareness even before the movies came to cinemas (Dawis et al., 2014: 56). All these are global commercial strategies and do not take cultural specific 'readings' and meanings into account. Besides that, its character as adaptation of a classic literary work with specific reading traditions did not play an important role in advertising the movies and related events, although it did in discussions among socio-culturally specific (pre-)audiences devoted to Tolkien's work and critics.

The question remains: since for Tolkien literature is not susceptible to being classified by its readers, does Peter Jackson's adaptation of the literary text *The Hobbit* come across point between Tolkien's literary text and Jackson's cinematic text? To better understand this aspect, it is mandatory to pay attention to the writer's conception of literary poetics, and its functions to the readers (whether children or adults), and also to get an overview of Tolkien's literary works and major discussions around them.

1.3. Archaic myths, Role of Fantasy, and Fairy-tales

For Tolkien, men see the world individually different and attribute to the reality surrounding them a mythical connotation related to the vision they have. In other words, language reveals how men perceive their surroundings, a theory that the author confirms in *Mythopeia* (1931)⁵ arguing that it is through myth that people interpret the surrounding environment, so that word and myth are linked since ancient times and thus the myth contains an intrinsic truth. One can assume that such myths are historically and socio-cultural specific – rooted in cultural traditions, such customs including story-telling.

Tolkien presented new languages to create new worlds and, therefore, new temporalities, new geographies, new crops which feed the medieval values of honour, justice and fidelity.⁶ Designing new languages and new terms serves to remind us that dystopian novels are barometers of society's health. Seeing modern societies in bad conditions in a moral sense, it was an aim to create new universal myths deliberated from narrow national ones.

Going back to concept of natural development Tolkien created his fantasy world, but also emphasized universal virtues founded in the religious relationship between creatures (humans) and creator (God). Once a myth is revealed, through language and words, values

are recorded and transmitted, through language and words, from generation to generation (Saint Claire, 2000: 21).

Curry (1997) proposes that three instances can be found within one world⁷ such as the fictional Middle-earth, namely: culture, society and policy; nature and ecology; spirituality and ethics. Those instances constituted Tolkien's response to modernism, a response which was recovered as an icon in the 1960-70s in Western societies, especially in the US and UK (see e.g. De Kloet/Kuipers, 2008: 302). Those instances, established by the writer as universal mythic structures, were represented in the Shire (as a social expression), in Middle-earth (as the continental expression and the impressive nature – sometimes peaceful, sometimes dangerous), by the sea, considered as an ancestral passage point (as a place of divine origin) (Klatau, 2008: 7).

Tolkien left a repository of legends and myths, languages, maps, races, customs – a microcosm, home to concepts like the myth, fantasy, fairy-tale, wonderful, supernatural, sub-creation and sub-creator. In the end, myth remains central in Tolkien's concepts, as a way of ordering the original chaos of creation, the question of continuity or extinction of traditions, the question of divine creation – going beyond national specific myths and traditions to a sheltered place with universal values.

So far, we can conclude that Tolkien's main statement is that language is able to generate worlds and realities that are beyond the real, meaning that his conception of poetics strongly emphasises the concept of the fantastic. This being the case, the first aspect to highlight is that fantasy is associated with imagination and the desire of escaping from reality, referring to higher myth related ideals – which, following Tolkien, belong to the human condition.

1.4. Tolkien's Fairy-tale Concept

Fantasy as genre, evolving from fairy-tales, is the literature of unreal, the invisible, mixed with the influence of ancient cultural specific myths, folklore and mysticism. Todorov (1975) set three requirements of the fantastic genre: the fantastic remains until the end⁸ and follows the rules of the fantastic world, the reader is challenged between a natural and supernatural explanation of events, the main character takes a hesitant attitude, and the reader stays full of expectation until the end. At the outset it is hard to believe the unusual fantasy world, and the need for an attempt to credibility needs to be established that normally uses alleged documents and artefacts or, as advocates Furtado (1980: 28), the fantastic takes place in a hybrid world, not too extraordinary and fantastic, not too every day and familiar in order to emerge a fantastic universal myth in a fictional world. The fantasy (rooted in fairy-tales) is focused on Faërie – a kingdom (as a fictional world) habited by magical and fantastic beings, witches, dwarves, elves, trolls, giants, dragons, ogres and other creatures: a world that has abolished or changed the reality categories of everyday reality – including the burden of everyday routine. As Tolkien argues, fantasy's functions are to allow the recovery, the consolation and *escape* (Tolkien, 1983: 147).⁹

For Tolkien, questioning the truth of literature does not prevent the reader to adhere to the fantastic, as in imagination anything can happen (Tolkien, 1983: 147), but the question of evil and virtue, as more general values, is central. This reference to universal values and myths allows readers to recover, regain lost capacity, and reach a new clearer view of events - a status of recovery. For Tolkien fairy stories and fantastic genre are routed to the origins of human language in a common shared culture, charting ways which transport us to other times - out of time, and to other geographies - out of space (Tolkien, 1983: 147-148).

Tolkien's definition of fairies distinguishes itself from other authors and different European fairy traditions. He is pronouncing, that fairies and the appeal to the fantastic is experienced by all people, either adults or children, given an evidence of literary belief, not understood as a place of exercise or suspension of the will of knowledge, but rather as a pact between the writer and the reader, a pact that allows the reader to take the narrative as truthful, whether it is realistic or fantastic (Tolkien, 1983: 149, similar Coleridge 1921: 6f.). It is always an imagined world, a secondary world taken as truth as long as the author keeps the coherence of the proposed world: human fantasy is able to create unusual and invisible worlds, where the conflicts mandatorily lead the narrative to a happy end¹⁰. Tolkien calls this happy end, the *eucatastrophe*, the moment of the turning point to the happy end¹¹.

Tolkien's arguments clarify the role of fantasy as an escape from reality and, by his means, from modernity. The notion of the archaic is related to people's visions for a better world routed in myths since ancient times. For the readers he sees the main functions in what we call escapism, namely recovery, consolation and escape. While for him the fantastic is closely connected to the poetic literary, it loses its fantastic character and its promoting character of the imaginary when transformed to cinematic formats, since these have to follow one single interpretation of the literary work by director or producer – situated in a specific socio-cultural context.

Tolkien considered the literary poetics should appeal to a primeval myth, rather than the individualized modern world, in order to achieve its applicability. In other words, the transposition of literary to cinematographic poetics compromises the actively imaginary character that the literary text demands from its reader, in contrast with the more forceful imposition taking place in cinematographic poetics (Sousa/Ponte, 2015). Therefore one focus of this paper is the relation between the book and the movies in comparing the ratings and genre attribution between readers and non-readers of the book and according to Tolkien's argument question the role of fantasy for the audiences. But this needs to be understood in the specific socio-cultural contexts and traditions of storytelling.

1.5 Storytelling and Fairy-tale traditions in Austria and Portugal and its audiences

Tolkien's outline of the fantastic genre is routed in the tradition of fairy-tales – he made clear that he understood *The Hobbit* as fairy-tale, but added the construction of a fantastic world, specific language and provided a general myth routed in ancient or medieval values.

The tradition of fairy-tales goes back to ancient times with an oral tradition of story-telling, handing the tales from one generation to the next. Keady (1916, 161-166) draws the tradition back to the sources that influenced Greek heroic myths, and outlines shared and separate traditions for the continents. She gives several examples of tales going back to one (unknown) origin that can be found in cultural-specific variations all over Europe (ibid, 167-203).¹² With such shared myths specific traditions of stories, storytelling and genre expectations formed and canonized especially in the age of forming national states in the 19th century (Zipes 2013, esp. xvi).

Today's Austrian tradition is closely connected to the Germanic traditions¹³ that Tolkien is referring to. Central are the collections of folk stories or folk fairies by Brothers Grimm, Bechstein and (French) Perrault, with an emphasis on moral guidance of the youth, situated in ideal medieval setting. The concept of the fantastic is central with a whole range of fantastic figures, including bad or aggressive ones and magic artifacts and animals. A happy ending is mandatory, rewarding 'good' behavior and attitudes. The German 'Märchen' (little stories) refer to a tradition of short folk stories with an easy-to-understand plot, which very early became adapted for a child audience.

Even if these traditions are known and relevant in Portugal too, a distinct socio-cultural kind of story-telling and set of stories evolved, more connected to courtly traditions than to folk stories. The meaning of 'Conto de Fada' (story of fairies) is more connected to positive fantastic figures, such as helping elves. The stories neither focus on moral statements nor on promoting values as is the case in the Germanic tradition. Portuguese 'Fada' (with Saramago in Portuguese language and Gabriel Garcia Marquéz in Spanish language) are more closely connected to the concept of fantastic realism (a specific genre belonging to Portuguese and Spanish language spread in Iberia and South America), and draw more often on a connection to Christianity than the typical Austrian ones. In this tradition fairies became popular with adult readers and were only much later adapted for children.

Fantastic stories such as *Hobbit*, in the context outlined by Tolkien, are much closer to the Austrian and German tradition, than to the Portuguese, since the former include a whole range of positive and negative figures and are based on the concept of fantastic, while the latter ones include mainly positive figures and fantastic realism. Also addressing children as audiences has a longer and more widespread tradition in Austria than it has in Portugal.

II. *The Hobbit* an archaic world in a modern context – Adaption in Society

The Hobbit was written in the context of the birthing polemic, a new cultural and social age, and in context of cultural modernism. This socio-cultural context can be seen in English modernism as expressed by Bloomsbury movement opposed to the Inklings, defenders of medievalism, to which Tolkien belonged to. Both sides contribute to the discussion about literature versus film, but above all, allow us to first draft the readers and the viewers of our sample, in the 21th century.

II. 1. *Modernity*

As completion of the romanticism, modernity emerges in the second half of the nineteenth century and it is assumed as a taste of the unfinished, a break with ideologies and theories of imitation of academicism.¹⁴ Le Goff (2003) agrees that modernity is the result of the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution and the Enlightenment, however, he prefers to emphasize the paradigm shift reporting to the early eighteenth century, promoted by *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. That is, taking as departing point, the concept of perfection applied to the concept of progress, modernity focuses the question of relative truth which is thus linked to time. Truth and time joint this way and, extended with the concept of beauty, altogether prove to be relative and epochal (Le Goff, 2003:385).

With Baudelaire (2004), modernity is an aesthetic attitude that assumes the union between art and life – art is dedicated to the world¹⁵. The aim of art is to understand this connection, without involving the concept of progress. With modernism, art becomes a trans-historical category. In this regard, we can say that Tolkien does not deviate from the concept of ‘new’ Baudelaire proposed.

From a political point of view, modernity was marked by the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 – as one definition. Although Britain remained deeply Victorian, a new political paradigm emerged: European civilization watched a break in the line of developments that had taken place since the Renaissance.

It is generally agreed that modernity meant a new condition of the human mind, a condition that art also explores (Bradbury/McFarlane, 1991: 22). One striking feature of modernity is a lack of consensus: modernism spells in the plural – all modernisms are a modernism.¹⁶

English modernism comes by way of literary and artistic criticism¹⁷ and becomes a process that extends to social structures. Supported by the British Empire idea, English modernism is strongly founded in British homeland concept, understood as the people, a language and a territory within which Tolkien was born in South Africa, in a family of employees of British banks.

Having, as tutor, a Catholic priest, Tolkien sees modernism as the junction of all the heresies, the place of controversy between faith and reason and between Church and State. Assimilating the modern content, modernism literature was inserted in modernism. Within

this sociocultural environment, Tolkien took a unique position seeing modernity as great fallacious narrative around industrialization.

For Tolkien, who had seen the scourge of First World War, where he fought and saw almost all his friends and colleagues die, it was crucial to write about these scenes in his interpretation. Tolkien always considers modernism as a place and time of nationalist and racist ideological wars, governed by the logic of unbridled profit, leading to an exaltation of science, technology and a new logic regarding man and nature, as parts of a drive which turned out to be the scourge of the cradle of the World Wars.

11.2. Tolkien and Medievalism versus Bloomsbury and Modernism

The First World War and the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 printed a backdrop of social and human breakdown: reality and men presented fragmented in time of enhancement of technological progress that extols the cities. Tolkien objected medievalism to modernity and English modernist movement; he had his own understanding how to interpret this movement and presents answers to a moment marked by both technological development, and the devastation and chaos caused by totalitarian regimes and two world wars. As we will focus, Tolkien's work seems to find an appropriate place among readers each time human values appears to be under a strong threat – as we will show it was the case in the sixties and seventies in the US and UK.

Anglo-Saxon modernism is dominated by the thoughts of Bloomsbury along with strong French influences, and with German and later several American intellectuals. London is seen as the capital of an Empire and a safe harbour for scientific positivism and economic liberalism. It was also important as a basis for artistic production and sociologically changing audiences. Art aims to respond to the alleged need for a new art fragmentary.¹⁸ Against this background, novels can be understood as a conscious rejection of Victorianism and its aesthetic terms, a revolt against the hegemony of realistic mimicry, a new world – most likely but much later, *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley.

Tolkien's answer to modernism is a retreat to medievalism: the proposal of a pre-modern universe, built from elements of Greco-Roman paganism, Celtic (Breton or Gaelic), Germanic (Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian) and, above all, the values of medieval Christendom. The (fictional) universe proposed by Tolkien appears riddled with nostalgia and wrapped in remembrance of a world in which evil powers are active, leading to corruption, betrayal and ambition. In the universe of Middle-earth, the writer shows how malevolent the parameters that echo modernism are. Accordingly these are rejected by Tolkien in a symbolic form.¹⁹

11.3. The response to Tolkien's works in the 1960-70s

The socio-cultural movements that marked the 60s and 70s of last century, found in the work of Tolkien an expression of the values²⁰ they wanted to claim – Tolkien's texts took on a new glow, especially in the US and UK. During that time Tolkien's legendary world was

raised as a banner of cultural struggle connected to hope for improvement. The fantastic genre texts by Tolkien, acclimatised in rural areas, became the object of worship by the hippie movement.

The reading of these 60s and 70s movements focuses on the Shire as a place of calm, comfort and tidiness of small hobbit houses as clean and comfortable dens, enjoying harmonious songs, making gorgeous food and especially appreciating sitting in the garden, enjoying the nice weather while smoking pipes filled with special grass. According to Jane Ciabattari (2014), it is reasonable to believe that references to the specific nature of the Shire were read as suggestions of hallucinogens. Thus, for the generation of the 60s the texts became a point of identification, even if written by a fervent catholic and conservative Professor of Oxford. Additionally the universe (re)created by Tolkien makes clear apologia for a medieval and simple lifestyle that comes in sharp opposition with the frenetic movement of the modern city. Tolkien contrasted the cosmopolitan rhythm of the metropolis with the calm of the countryside, and seems to anticipate the battle against pollution by focusing on stone, wood, (personified) trees, and the very communal lifestyle of the little hobbits that appear to be an anticipation of the desire to life in free communities that broke out in the 1960s and 1970s.

The fantastic universe created by Tolkien had yet another another point of identification for the counterculture movement of the 1960s. In a society driven by increasing industrialization, especially in the United States as the post-war boom, the social movements focussed on different values, such as social and civil rights for minorities and opposition to the Vietnam War. The medievalist universe of Tolkien presented an alternative concept, which seemed to meet this call for a simple life and anti-materialistic ideals. The fact that the text fits in the fantastic genre provided an easier point of entry.

II. 4. *Some socio-cultural contexts: Austria and Portugal*

Since those social movements in the US passed, the book has become less popular in the 1980s and 1990s. With the release of the *Lord of the Rings* movie series in the new century, it regained its popularity, even in countries where it had not been part of the literary tradition or social movements, such as Austria and Portugal. Both countries are deeply rooted in Catholic tradition with the majority today being Catholic (74% in Austria, 81% in Portugal, see CIA 2016). In the 1960-70s, the cultural and societal situation was very different between the two countries, and also compared with the situation in the UK or US, the centres of social and youth movements.

In Austria social movements were less important and less powerful than in other Western countries in this period (see Dolezal/Hutter 2007). The economic changes after the Second World War, with a shift from agricultural to industrial and service sector led to a new middle class, which increasingly became relevant in the 1960s. The students protests in 1965 and 1968 were mainly directed against residues of national socialist ideology and particular persons in education, politics and society. But, differently from Germany or

France, it was influenced by catholic and liberal as well as socialist or marxist groups, united by a call for democratic participation (Pelinka 1998). The shift to left-wing orientations together with the traditional dominance of two parties in Austria led to a dominance of the socialist party throughout the 1970s with Bruno Kreisky (SPÖ) as chancellor for 13 years. He created a Austrian version of state regulated social welfare. At the same time, the 1970s were a time of fundamental reforms in law, political system and an opening towards Europe, which did not evoke protests but acceptance. The successful referendum against the use of nuclear power in 1976 (with the plant in Zwentendorf already built) is one of the examples of grassroots political participation (Gottweis 1997). In the context of the left-wing one-party government, social movements remained political weak as did youth cultural influences. Youth movements were more often included in societal structures, often rooted in traditions, and not like in the USA. Due to the neutrality of Austria, also foreign affairs were merely criticised. Since the ideological direction and context of social movements in Austria in the 1960s and 1970s are totally different from the US or UK, a retreat to archaic myths was much less relevant, and therefore the works of Tolkien did not take the same position as in other youth cultures – with the result, that these are not as much a common cultural heritage.

In Portugal the 1960s and 1970s were years of fundamental cultural, societal and political changes. Under Salazar's dictatorship up to 1970, socio-political movements were strictly prohibited, and society was controlled through censorship. Even if some organisations were tolerated, they were limited and controlled (IBP 2012: 80). To prevent both democratic and communist student activities, important student organisations were closed –resulting in a protest demonstration in March 1962, which was suppressed by the police. In this way social movements were suppressed and only active underground. The duration of decolonization wars in Africa led to increasing disenchantment and hostility of the people against the state authorities – all kept down by the authoritarian system, with political imprisonments and other forms of repression. After Salazar's death in 1970, with Caetano as head of state, hopes for changes rose, but the colonial war continued and, after a short period of more freedom, again censorship was in force, political prisoners were not freed and elections were controlled (Birmingham 2003, 183-185). Finally the Carnation Revolution in 1974, leading to a democratic constitution and free elections in 1975, was mainly carried by left-wing oriented groups and commanders of the armed forces – in the beginning much more than by civil society and social movements (IBP 2012: 80; Gallagher 1983: 191-193). Very soon by the end of the 1970s social movements emerged, most of them left-wing oriented. For the young Portuguese Democracy at the same time the integration of almost a million people coming from the former colonies²¹ (FAO 2016), was an important issue in these years. So at the time Tolkien's books became important for youth movements in other countries, in Portugal only very few underground social movements could be found, with very limited impact. With the struggle for freedom and democracy and the unending decolonialisation wars, other issues and utopias were much

more relevant.

Since neither the role of social movements nor their reception of *Hobbit* in the 1960s and 1970s play an important role in Austria or Portugal, the book was not widely read in these countries by such youth movements. Therefore it is not part of a common shared literary heritage, but was more likely read by people of certain interest in the genre or in Tolkien's work. With the advent of the *Lord of the Rings* movies, the books became widely known and it seems like young people started reading them in both countries – we will show later, however, that this is not the case in our samples.

II.5. Returning to Tolkien in a global and post-modern social-cultural epoch

The 'visualisation' (see Barker concept's mentioned above) of Tolkien's literary works appears in a new socio-cultural context of the new millennium. In the *Lord of the Rings* the cinematographic adaptation proposes a narrative structure close to the original literary poetics – nevertheless with a 21st century interpretation. In *The Hobbit*, also produced and directed by Peter Jackson, the audience is confronted with deep changes of the plot, the introduction of new characters and narrative changes. Either way, both in the book and in the adaptation, *The Hobbit* is presented according to the narrative pact, the willing suspension of disbelief as mentioned by Tolkien and Coleridge (see above), while the audience is influenced by new paradigms, if not already by modernity, then now by 'hyper-modernity'.²² Even after the equalisations brought about by commercialisation and globalisation, the socio-cultural context of storytelling and fairy or fantasy genre remains specific in Austria and Portugal with the audiences, as we will discuss.

III. Austrian and Portuguese Data

As indicated in to our outline, we want to focus on these particular elements of fantasy and the role of the fantastic, when discussing the results for the samples in Austria and Portugal. Besides overall ratings of the movies, the answers allow us to explore the genre classification and the role of fantasy indicated by respondents in both countries with regard to *The Hobbit*. Additionally, we want to discuss the relevance of motivations to see the movies and the engagement in certain fan activities, as a result of engagement with the movies and the fantastic world. As a result, we want to focus on the few questions from the questionnaire which are most relevant for the role of the fantastic, the adaption for cinema and the role of and engagement with Tolkien's fantastic world. In order to address the relation between the literary and cinematic fantastic, we differentiated between readers and non-readers of the book, which turned out to be related to a generational dividing line. As we'll see, at the same time age, having read the book and different literary traditions and (as hypothesis) sociocultural aspects are important for different aspects of both.

III.1. *Austrian and Portuguese Sample*

A little more than a decade after his first worldwide research on *The Lord of The Rings*, Martin Barker, along with Matt Hills and Ernest Mathijs, led the new international study about *The Hobbit* trilogy. *The World Hobbit Project* brought together researchers from 46 countries across all continents. The survey planned for the audience of this trilogy was translated to 34 languages. Within this project a large number of questionnaires (36,109) were collected – addressing (among other things – see the Appendix to the Introduction for the full questionnaire): ratings of the movies, the meanings of genre, involvement in fan activities and (of particular interest in this paper) the relation between Tolkien’s book and the movies, and the role of fantasy.

The questionnaire consisted of standardized closed and open-ended questions. For a first discussion and due to aspects of compatibility between the both countries we focus on those closed questions relevant for our argument. The sub-samples contain 851 for Portugal, and 706 for Austria. While the samples are comparable with regard to age and gender, both have a bias towards younger individuals with higher education. Also, it should be noted that the number of higher educated in the Portuguese sample is much higher than in the Austrian. It can be assumed that this is due to cultural differences in the understanding of university students. While in Austria students having a BA would most likely not say that they have a university degree, this is the case in Portugal, where a BA is more widely accepted as university degree than in Austria. This explanation seems to be plausible, since the shares of different occupations – including students – are quite similar in the two countries as well as in the overall sample (with about 50% students).

Table 1: Sample characteristics, overall sample, Austria and Portugal subsamples

	Overall	Austria	Portugal
N	36,109	706	851
Male	52.9	59.5	48.9
Female	47.1	40.5	51.1
Age -25	58.5	46.8	57.7
Age 26-35	23.8	34.6	22.0
Age 36-45	10.0	11.9	11.9
Age 46-	7.8	6.7	8.5
Lower Education (until ISCED 3)	44.6	50.1	32.7
Higher Education (ISCED 3+)	55.4	49.8	67.3

III.2. Relation to the book, Genre and Role of Fantasy

The overall ratings of the movies are similar between the overall sample and in the two countries, but in Portugal it was rated slightly higher than in Austria. While in Austria 63% rated with ‘excellent’/‘good’, in Portugal about 77% rated accordingly – even more than in the overall sample (72%). Even if there is no significant correlation with age, there is a tendency for younger respondents, both in Austria and Portugal, to rate more positively than older ones, which is not the case in the overall sample. This overall rating is associated with the central role of Tolkien’s work for readers of the book, but more often with genre choices and the role of fantasy for specific groups of respondents – age plays a different role in these dimensions, as we want so show.

Having read the book – overall ratings

First we can see that most respondents have read the book in both sub-samples, even if the numbers differ: while in Austria almost 75% had either read the book or were still reading, in Portugal this makes up only about 50% – with corresponding numbers of non-readers. The number of repeat-readers is much higher in Austria (40%) than in Portugal (20%) (see **Table 2**). For both samples a tendency can be found, that especially those who read the book more than once are aged 26 and older, while the non-readers are more likely younger (up to 25): a tendency that is similar in the two countries, but stronger in Austria than in Portugal, where the share of repeat-readers increases for those older than 46 (see **Table 3**).

Table 2: Having read the *Hobbit* Book (percentages)

Hobbit book			
	Overall	AT	PT
Had it read to me	1.7	0.8	0.6
Read once	27.2	31.0	29.6
Read more than once	44.8	40.4	20.6
Still reading	3.1	2.7	3.5
Not read at all	13.1	18.1	28.8
Planning to read	10.1	6.9	17.5

Table 3: Having read the *Hobbit* Book more than once, by age groups (percentages)

	Up to 25	26-45	46-55	56-
Austria	34	40	40	55
Portugal	19	20	31	40

But even the few respondents in the oldest age group (only 12 in Austria and 21 in Portugal) were born in the late 1950s and therefore most likely not connected to the US social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. This is because of their age, inasmuch as, as we have

shown above, in their youth such youth cultures had no particular impact in Austria or Portugal. But it also makes clear that only a few younger respondents started reading the book after having watched the *Lord of the Rings* movies. Even if this relation between age and reading the book is to be understood as a tendency, it gives some more ideas about the relation between having read the book, rating the movies and generational aspects.

As mentioned earlier, the movies were rated by a majority as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’, with a tendency for younger viewers to rate it slightly higher. Starting from this overall rating, differences between readers and non-readers can be found as a tendency: readers rated the movies less highly than non-readers (see **Table 4**) – a tendency that can be found in both countries’ samples, but more obviously in the Portuguese.²³

Table 4: Overall Rating of movies, by Readers and Non-Readers (percentages)

Overall Rating					
	Overall	Austria		Portugal	
		readers	non-readers	readers	non-readers
Excellent	35.2	25.1	33.3	38.3	42.6
Good	37.1	35.3	35.0	33.3	43.6
Average	17.5	26.8	23.7	18.6	14.2
Poor	7.8	9.6	6.2	8.3	1.5
Awful	2.4	3.0	1.6	1.5	1.0

Motivation

Comparing motivations to see the movies, differences emerge between readers and non-readers (see **Table 5**). Here significant associations can be found in both samples: Readers especially mentioned ‘love Tolkien’s work’²⁴ and ‘having read the book’²⁵ as motivation to watch the movies. Beside this, differences can be found between readers in the two countries: interestingly, it shows that readers in Austria are much more likely to be connected to a community, while in Portugal this is the case for non-readers. And, remarkably, both readers and non-readers in Portugal were much more attracted by the build-up around the movies than in Austria.

For non-readers other motivations are relevant: they especially highlight an interest in new films in general.²⁶ For Austria also the ‘build-up about the movie’ is significantly associated with the non-readers, while not in Portugal.²⁷ In both countries non-readers mentioned more often their love of Jackson’s movies and fantasy films than did readers, and additionally in Austria special features are a relevant motivation to watch the movies. **Table 5** illustrates the overall differences between readers and non-readers in the two countries.

Table 5: Motivations to see the movies, by Readers and Non-Readers (percentages)

Motivation to see the movies					
	Overall	Austria		Portugal	
		readers	non-readers	readers	non-readers
I wanted to experience their special features	12.6	15.5	26.6	12.9	17.8
I am connected to a community that has been waiting	33.8	41.8	30.0	18.8	26.6
I love Tolkien's work as a whole	70.3	79.0	39.5	83.4	37.6
I like to see big new films when they come out	13.5	10.0	23.7	5.3	22.8
I wanted to be part of an international experience	4.6	6.0	9.0	1.3	3.3
I love fantasy films generally	44.7	41.0	47.5	46.0	55.1
There was such a build-up, I had to see it	7.5	4.4	17.5	13.8	28.2
I was dragged along	5.3	5,1	20.3	2.6	12.2
I knew the book, and had to see what the films would be like	52.3	72.4	4.0	71.3	6.6
I love Peter Jackson's films	26.4	25.9	28.2	25.8	30.2
No special reason	1.2	0.4	0.6	0.0	2.0
An actor that I particularly like was in then	25.1	19.3	16.4	14.2	17.3

Genre

Two questions addressed the genre of the movies, so respondents could choose up to three options which for them best described the movies, and additionally up to three that, in their point of view, did not fit for the movies. With regard to the chosen or excluded genre categories no significant differences between readers and non-readers could be found. With regard to these questions socio-cultural differences appear to be more important.

Overall the movies were most likely (over 60%) seen as World of Fantasy and Part of Tolkien's legend world. 'Stunning locations' were more mentioned (over 29%) than the movies being a literary adaption (20 and 29%). While in Austria 'World of fantasy' was chosen more often, in Portugal it was 'Tolkien's legend world'; at the same time the reference to the literary adaptation is more important in Portugal (see **Table 6**) – even if the number of readers is lower in Portugal than in Austria.

Table 6: Top 4 answers kind of movies for Austria and Portugal (percentages)

Kind of Movie			
	Overall	Austria	Portugal
World of fantasy	63	77	62
Tolkien legend world	62	60	67
Stunning locations	28	32	29
Literary adaption	25	20	29

Accordingly differences between the two countries can be found with regard to the genre-categories that respondents choose for *not* describing the movies: while respondents from both countries agree that it is not a ‘children’s story’ (64 and 68%), in Austria it is most definitely not a ‘coming of age story’ (59%) nor a ‘family film’ (32%), while in Portugal more often it was judged not to be a ‘fairy-tale’ (47%) (see **Table 7**). The second can be understood with regard to socio-cultural specific meanings and traditions of fairy-tales in both countries, as outlined above. While the Austrian tradition includes negative and aggressive characters in a fantastic world, the Portuguese is dominated by positive figures such as elves, following the tradition of fantastic realism. Following the arguments above, for Austrians Hobbits and Orcs more likely fit into a fairy tradition, while in Portugal these might be seen as monsters and therefore are displaced into a fairy-tale.

Table 7: Top 4 answers NOT kind of movies for Austria and Portugal (percentages)

NOT Kind of Movie			
	Overall	Austria	Portugal
Children’s story	61	68	64
Coming of age	37	59	21
Fairytale	29	29	47
Family film	15	32	10

There are associations between the chosen genre and the overall rating of the movies in both countries: overall those who saw it as a children’s story tend to rate it less highly – even more so in Austria than in Portugal.²⁸ While in Austria those who see it as part of Tolkien’s legend world did significantly²⁹ rate it higher, in Portugal this is a less-strong tendency (see **Table 8**).³⁰

The Role of Fantasy

With regard to the role of fantasy indicated by respondents in the two countries, answers vary. The most common answers are: ‘enriching imagination’, ‘a way of escaping’ and ‘creating alternative worlds’; these related to the functions that Tolkien argued are central to fairytales and to his own literary work. For Portuguese, enriching imagination is much

more important than for Austrians, who are more likely choose the other two options (see **Table 9**). Interestingly there are no correlations with socio-demographic characteristics,

Table 8: Rating for those who chose specific character of movies)

Overall Rating			
	Excellent/ Good	Average	Poor/ Awful
Sample Austria (AT)	63	26	11
Sample Portugal (PT)	77	17	6
Tolkien legend World AT	75	20	5
Tolkien legend World PT	81	16	3
Children's story AT	38	41	21
Children's story PT	43	50	6

neither with genre choices and overall ratings of the movies, nor between readers and non-readers. It seems that the answers, like the ones regarding the genre, more likely refer to different literary traditions related to fairy-tales and fantasy in Austria and Portugal as argued above.

Table 9: Role of Fantasy films (percentages)

Fantasy Films			
	Overall	AT	PT
They are a way of enriching the imagination	67.7	51.6	70.0
They are a way of experiencing and exploring emotions	29.9	23.4	32.7
They are a source of hopes and dreams for changing the world	34.7	32.2	29.4
They are a way of escaping	54.1	59.3	49.5
They are a form of shared entertainment	25.4	33.1	27.3
They allow us to explore different attitudes and ideas	29.1	21.8	27.8
They are a way of creating alternative worlds	45.8	58.8	44.7
Non particular role	2.1	4.0	0.9

III.3. Engagement in Fan activities

Regarding fan activities and interest in debates about the production of the movies, age differences are more important than those between the two countries or between readers and non-readers.

Debates about the movies and their production are only slightly important for most respondents from Austria (61.5%) than the bare majority from Portugal (50.6%) – but considerably more than in the overall sample (43%). A first look at the age shows that for those 16-25 these debates are more important than for those older than 26, which can

readily be explained by their assumed closer connection to popular and youth culture on one hand, and by their greater time-resources on the other. As **Table 10** illustrates, this interest is much higher in Portugal than in Austria.

At the same time readers are more interested in such debates than non-readers in both samples (although these differences are stronger in Austria (see **Table 10**)). Keeping in mind that the share of readers is higher in the older age groups (see **Table 3**), these differences require explanation. By splitting the data between readers and non-readers by age (see **Table 11**), it can be seen that age seems to be the more important factor here, at least in Austria³¹, while in Portugal it is only a tendency.³²

Table 10: Interest in debates about the movies (percentages)

Very/ Extremely interested in debates				
Among:				
	Readers	Non-Readers	Age up to 25	Age 26 or older
Austria	25	8	14	4
Portugal	26	17	28	13

Table 11: Interest in debates about the movies – readers and age (percentages)

Readers and Non Readers very/ Extremely interested in debates				
Among:				
	Age up to 25		Age 26 or older	
	Readers	Non-Readers	Readers	Non-Readers
Austria	36	11	16	4
Portugal	35	21	15	11

Engagement in fan-activities differs in certain respects between the two countries. Overall, Austrian respondents are more likely involved in such activities than Portuguese, but both are lower than in the overall sample. The most striking differences can be seen in discussing the movies (‘Seriously debating the films’), with about 50% for Austria and only 14% for Portugal (see **Table 12**). It can be seen that Portuguese respondents are more likely to choose ‘comment online’ or ‘buy merchandise’, while Austrians more often indicate ‘produce fan art’ or ‘visit filming locations’ – which has to be not least a question of financial resources.

In both countries, age is an important factor for engagement in fan-activities, which are practised only by a few. About 40% in Austria and 60% in Portugal are not involved in any. While the younger (up to 25) can be seen as most active, those 26-45 at least are involved in some activities, while for those 46-55 these are only a few. These differences can

be illustrated by the numbers for those who chose the option ‘None of these’ (see **Table 13**) – a choice which correlates in both samples with age.³³ Most striking are these age differences for producing fan art, collecting merchandise, gaming and producing fan videos – marked as activities of younger respondents. Nevertheless, across all generations at least

Table 12: Engagement in Fan Activities (percentages)

Fan Activities			
	Overall	Austria	Portugal
Producing fan art	7.7	5.4	1.9
Blogging	8.3	3.5	4.0
Role-playing	10.2	6.7	5.9
Writing fan fiction	6.8	3.7	1.9
Collecting merchandise	21.7	13.3	15.2
Seriously debating the films	45.3	50.4	13.7
Commenting online	30.3	14.9	18.7
Gaming	23.7	19.3	18.3
Making fan videos	2.1	1.1	0.5
Visiting filming locations	4.9	4.1	0.9
None of these	33.3	40.2	59.6

some respondents are involved in discussing the movies and commenting about it online, with comparable numbers for all age groups up to 55. Indeed, fan activities are overall less important in Portugal than in Austria. Since there are no significant associations with fan activities and having read the book, readers and non-readers take part the same activities. Age here appears to be more important factor.

Table 13: No Fan-Activities (None of these) in Age groups (Percentage)

	Up to 25	26-45	46-55	56-
Austria	29	48	57	75
Portugal	52	68	78	72

IV. Discussion

Overall our evidence illustrates that for certain answers and ratings respectively, different factors, such as age and various sociocultural aspects, are of particular importance, as outlined in the beginning of our paper.

The discussion of the two countries’ results illustrates socio-culturally related differences, which are bound together regarding age differences, which turn out to be to some degree connected with the differences between readers and non-readers. First the younger generation (under 26) rated the movies higher, in both sub-samples (but not in the overall sample). This first overall rating is also related with having read the book, since

readers of all age groups tend to rate it less good than non-readers. These differences are connected with different motivations to see the movies: While readers went to cinema because of having read the book and for the love of Tolkien's work, non-readers mentioned interest in new movies in general and the 'build up' about the movies. But also differences between the two countries can be seen, since in Austrian readers chose to see the movies because of belonging to a certain community, while in Portugal this was much more the case for non-readers.

Regarding genre classification, we can see that sociocultural differences seem to be more important than those regarding book-reading and age. In both countries the movies were seen most likely as World of Fantasy and Tolkien's legendary world, not so often as literary adaptation. Respondents from both countries agree that it is not a children's story, but since in Portugal the movies do not fit into the fairy tradition (also Tolkien is referring to) they were not regarded as a fairy-tale – which is much less the case in Austria. Aspects of genre also are associated with the overall ratings, since those who see them as a children's story did rate the movies lower, and those for whom it is part of Tolkien's legendary world rated them higher.

These questions of genre classification did not show differences between readers and non-readers. Since the reasons cannot be explored with the questionnaire data, we propose (as a hypothesis) that the respondents did differentiate between the genre of the book and the genre of the movies. Overall the different answers in the two countries most likely did refer to culturally specific genre traditions and expectations towards the movies.

The role of fantasy, according to respondent's answers, is seen as enriching imagination, as a way of escaping and as a way of creating alternative worlds – with different ranking in the two sub-samples. Nevertheless, these answers refer to Tolkien's arguments on the role or function of fairy-tales and fantasy, but again differences do not occur between readers and non-readers, but align more with sociocultural differences in both countries. The answers refer to the outlined fairy-tale traditions: while for Austrians escapism and creating new world are more important, for Portuguese it is the enrichment of imagination.

For the interest in debates about the production of the movies both, having read the book and age are relevant. Overall most respondents are slightly interested in those. Readers are much more interested in such debates, and also among the younger audiences (up to 25). Both factors are connected, but we could suggest that age turns out to be the more important factor at least in Austria, while in Portugal this is only a tendency.

Only small numbers for both countries are involved in fan activities anyway – much lower than in the overall sample. Here again age differences are more important than those between readers and non-readers. Younger respondents are more likely involved in creating fan art and videos, gaming and collecting merchandise products. Discussing the movies and commenting online are of certain relevance for the older generations. While in Austria

discussions are more common, in Portugal commenting online and gaming are practised more often – the second for the younger generation.

V. Conclusion

Even if *The Hobbit* book is not a particular part of literary traditions in both countries, the positions of readers and non-readers correspond to different perspectives in certain dimensions, while age and sociocultural aspects appear to be more important in other ones. Having read the book is an important motivation for seeing the movies for readers, they did rate them lower than non-readers. Even if the share of readers is higher among those older than 25, age appears to be the major dividing line.

Sociocultural aspects turned out to be most relevant for (positive and negative) genre classification. Due to the mentioned different cultural traditions of fairy-tales, genre classifications and role of fantasy differ between the two countries in general – not differentiated regarding age or readers. We suggest that the impact of genre choices on the overall ratings of the movies, maybe connected with specific (individual and cultural) expectations toward a genre – but this cannot be answered with the data available to us here. But this argument can be supported with corresponding results for the role of fantasy, where again differences between the two countries are more important than those between readers/ non-readers and age.

Age differences are of some relevance for the interest in debates about the production of the movies and fan activities. Even if having read the book also influences both, age seems to be more important especially for the interest in debates, while for discussing the movies both seem to be interwoven, since people over 26, including the older readers, are active here too.

While socio-cultural aspects are of certain relevance for classifying the movies regarding genre and the role of fantasy, having read the book has influence on the overall rating and in connection with age also on fan activities and even less on following debates about the movies.

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Notes:

¹ 'In 1958, J.R.R. Tolkien was approached by Forrest Ackerman and an American film company to consider a screen adaptation of his novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien wasn't convinced that Hollywood would understand the complexity of his story about a mythological time when humans shared the earth with hobbits, elves, and dwarves, and how the fate of these races would come down to the success or failure of a journey to destroy a Ring that gave limitless power to its bearer. But Tolkien needed the money, so he agreed to look at Morton Grady Zimmerman's movie synopsis' (Krivak, 2003:10).

² The problematic concerning both (literary and audio visual) poetics is still remaining. Tolkien's emblematic novel was adapted several times, either for radio, for TV or even, in 1978, for cinema as an animated movie directed by Ralph Bakshi (IMDB, 2016).

³ 'Zimmerman envisioned an animated production of *The Lord of the Rings*, and recast the story as a simplistic, childish fantasy. Tolkien wrote a long, scathing letter to Ackerman, dismissing the 'careless and reckless' film treatment for showing 'no evident signs of any appreciation of what (the book) is all about. Environment, character, mood, timeframe – these and other elements were 'entirely rewritten'. The storyline became nothing more than flat scenes of magic, 'screams, and rather meaningless slashings'. Yet, where it failed most, Tolkien insisted, was in Zimmerman's lack of desire – or perhaps inability – 'to represent the heart of the tale: the journey narrative, in which a single path must be taken at great personal cost for the sake of a greater good.' (Krivak, 2003:10).

⁴ 'In all of this, the one aspect of Tolkien interest that has received the most attention since the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* is religion. Tolkien often went to great lengths – especially in his letters – to explain how the novel 'is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first, but consciously in the revision,' (...)' (Krivak, 2003:10).

⁵ This term was used by Tolkien as the title of a poem written after a discussion on the night of 19 September 1931, at Magdalen College, Oxford, with C. S. Lewis and Hugo Dyson (1896-1975). Lewis said that myths were 'lies breathed through silver'. Tolkien's text explained and defended creative myth-making, the discussion was recorded in the book *The Inklings* by Humphrey Carpenter. Tolkien's poem presents a dedication to C.S. Lewis 'To one who said that myths were lies and therefore worthless, even though' 'breathed through silver' (see in *Mythopoeia* (1931) <http://home.ccil.org/~cowan/mythopoeia.html>)

⁶ The new languages Tolkien presented were perfect and were also the subject of academic discussions and critical reflections, as emphasized Hephzibah Anderson (2015): 'Authors regularly create worlds that are so fully realised they come with their own topography, history and mythology. Yet nothing is the piquant the language, which is why some writers go step further and create their own.' (Anderson 2015).

⁷ Curry (1997) is reporting on *The Lord of the Rings*, but it is clear that the statement is also valid to *The Hobbit* given that the context and characters are present in both novels.

⁸ Or, in other words, as Eric Rabkin (1976) observes, fantastic subverts rules as we know them but is not allowed to subvert its own rules, it is imperative to respect and be loyal to the rules created, as primordial condition to the reader believe in the impossible present to him.

⁹ Which also refer to some basic uses and gratifications using *media*, still discussed today.

¹⁰ The happy ending is mandatory in a fairy tale, which proposes the reader a circular voyage to a wonderful and magic world, during which the hero is challenged by certain events in his duty to establish the lost order (Propp: 1978: 108).

¹¹ A term deriving from Greek: *eu* for good, and *katastrephein* for catastrophe, meaning therefore a good change or the sudden joyful turn of the events; the anticipation of the happy end induces, in the reader, an escape from everyday life. The notion of fantasy is connected with people's wish for something better, more complete in the form of a unified reality – a place of gratifications with clear values and heroic figures.

¹² But she includes only selected publications and traditions, namely English, Welsh, French, German, Norwegian, Danish, US-American and Austrian (this time including references to Slavonia, Bohemia, Moravia and Hungary) rarely Spanish and Italian. (ibid)

¹³ Only very few references to the other parts of former Austria-Hungary Monarchy remained.

¹⁴ Le Goff considers Henri Lefebvre as the theorist of modernity (Le Goff, 2003:385) and stresses the distinction that Lefebvre makes between modernity and modernism. Modernism is understood as the social and cultural representation of modernity. Thus, modernity and modernism are not separable or conceivable one without the other.

¹⁵ In 1863, in his essay 'The Painter of Modern Life,' Baudelaire puts the traditional reflection on art as timeless and returns to the transient eternal condition, conveyed no longer the past, not the present, but at the moment at the same time which is aware of the transience of the moment that will be in another instant, thus enabling the epochal building tradition, as can be seen in its classical definition: '(...). Modernity is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, half of art whose other half is the eternal and unchangeable. There was a modernity for each painter and unchangeable. There was a modernity for each old painter; most beautiful pictures that were in previous times are coated clothing of his time. Are perfectly harmonious because the fact, the hairstyle and the same gesture, gaze and smile (each season has its size, its look and even your smile) form a whole of a full vitality' (Baudelaire 2004: 21 -22).

¹⁶ Modernism refers to a set of cultural movements, schools and styles that emerged in the first half of the twentieth century and covered various cultural areas such as literature, architecture, painting, design, sculpture, theatre and music. The scientific and technological developments that led to the development of modern communications, the new means of transport such as railways or maritime trade, led to the affirmation of the middle class and the merchant bourgeoisie, general enrichment of industrial sector and large financial successes. The early twentieth century brought profound political and cultural changes that interfered with the awareness of the technological field, along with the way the world and man himself came to be viewed. The literature as represented by the Bloomsbury group has to convene to a 'faster' writing and leave the representation of reality behind.

¹⁷ See Bradbury: '(...). Bloomsbury was famously Francophile; it was the source of the crucial Post-Impressionist exhibition of 1910 organized by Roger Fry, and also of what was so clearly needed, an aesthetics of modern form – for which it went to gallic and germanic sources, but also to Ruskin, Pater, and, for its broader aesthetic attitude, the spirit of Cambridge philopfers like E.G. Moore. As for the later stages of Imagism, between 1912 and 1915, these had a considerable American contingent (Pound, Eliot, H.D., John Guld Fletcher) and a deep debt to French sources' (Bradbury, 1991:176).

¹⁸ This art could be seen in itself as fragmentary, so looking for a language that figured the sense of chaos, while also philosophy sought to reflect on a reality that is taken as a continuous flow of sensations that away a metaphysical still Plato's influences (separating the real from the ideal, the world loved the world of ideas – archetypes).

¹⁹ The symbolic is used here in the meaning of Paul Ricoeur, emphasising that the symbolic realizes the real transfiguration of power that is provided by the construction of linguistic models (as is the case of metaphor and narrative), which, although devoid of denotation and reference, include assignable references to the definition of reality. This 'unreality' is the condition not only of a (re-)description of the experience, as well as a transfiguration of the world in which we live, meaning, that one's individual world is one articulated by language networks, cultural and temporal experience (Ricoeur 1969).

²⁰ Jane Ciabattari argues: 'The rock world has always had a strong connection with the movements of counterculture, also inspired by Tolkien. In the 1960s, the Beatles floated the idea of making a

version of 'The Lord of the Rings' - with Paul in the role of Frodo, Ringo as Sam, George as Gandalf and Gollum as John - but the project never took off. The song 'The Gnome', Pink Floyd, 1967, describes a universe Led Zeppelin made several references to books. In the song 'Ramble on', Robert Plant sings about a woman 'known in Mordor' that had been stolen by Gollum. There are references also in 'Misty Mountain Hop' and 'The Battle of Evermore'. The song 'The Wizard', Black Sabbath, is an ode to Gandalf. The song 'Stagnation', Genesis also shows great influence of Middle Earth. Rush already composed 'Rivendell', in homage to the land of the Elves. The song 'The Necromancer' talks about Sauron. (Ciabattari 2014)

²¹ Population increased from 8.9 million in 1973 to 9.6 in 1978 (FAO 2016).

²² Hypermodernity' is the term coined by the French philosopher Gilles Lipovetsky to define the current condition of human society. The term 'hypermodernity' as idea of exacerbation of modernity emerged in the mid-1970s and came to prominence in 2004 thanks to the study of French authors and the book 'The hypermodern times' by Lipovetsky in collaboration with Sébastien Charles. Modernity was conceptualized as surpassing the modern versions of the traditional sectors through technical progress, industrialization and exploitation of the individual. As noted by Sébastien Charles: 'Hypermodernity: a liberal society, characterized by movement, fluidity, flexibility; indifferent as never before to the great structuring principles of modernity, which had to adapt to the pace of the hypermodern and not disappear' (Lipovetsky, 2004: 26). He suggests the term 'hypermodern' because there is a new phase of modernity, which was the post to hyper'. Postmodernity has been no more than a transitional stage, a time of short duration' (Lipovetsky, 2004: 58). Hypermodernity is characterized by an excess of culture, ever more. All things become intense and urgent. Movement is constant and changes occur at an almost schizophrenic pace determining a time marked by the ephemeral, in which flexibility and fluidity appear as attempts to keep up with this speed. Hypermarketisation, hyperconsumption, hypertextuality, hyperbody: everything is raised to the power of the more, the greater. Hypermodernity reveals the paradox of contemporary society: the culture of excess and moderation: 'What defines hypermodernity is not exclusively self-criticism of knowledge and modern institutions, it is also revisited memory, the remobilization of traditional beliefs, individualistic hybridization of past and present and no longer just the deconstruction of traditions, but the re-employment of them without institutional imposition, their eternal rearrangement according to the principle of the sovereign individual' (Lipovetsky, 2004: 98). The appreciation of the past is a phenomenon more hypermodern than postmodern: museums, commemorative obsessions, heritage preservation, tourism democratization, the enhancement of the 'legitimate or authentic.' In hypermodern society, the market model and its operational criteria managed to get to the preservation of historical heritage, we see the emergence of cultural capitalism and the commodification of culture.

²³ Not significant: Cramer-V for AT: 0.128 (p=0.001) for PT: 0.145 (p=0,000).

²⁴ Cramer-V for AT: 0.429 for PT: 0.530 (both p=0.000).

²⁵ Cramer-V for AT: 0.649 for PT: 0.682 (both p=0.000).

²⁶ Cramer-V for AT: 0.224 for PT: 0.297 (both p=0.000).

²⁷ Cramer-V for AT: 0.296 for PT: 0.198 (both p=0.000).

²⁸ No significant correlations.

²⁹ Cramer-V: 0.356 (p=0.000).

³⁰ Cramer-V: 0.191 (p=0.000).

³³ Cramer-V for AT: 0.267 (p=0.000); for PT :0.222 (p=0.000)..