

Chapter 1 - Introduction

It is significant that English folk tradition has preserved manifold legends in which fairy people are actively involved. In the legends these beings happen to dwell or appear in certain environment. It is remarkable that while being influenced by local folklore English literary tradition has accumulated various works in which fairy beings are engaged as well. In the literary works these creatures stay or make themselves visible in proper environment too. Under the circumstances, it is reasonable to admit that as in literary so folk traditions settings are similar and that the portrayal of environment in the legends in which fairy people live or come into sight coincides with the one in literary works.

In fact, it is not easy to decide to what degree the assumption is objective. Therefore, in the second chapter I shall pay attention to settings in English literary tradition that portray environment in which fairy beings dwell or appear. In this connection, I shall refer to William Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's epic fantasy novel *The Lord of the Rings*. First, I shall give a brief outline of both works and then I shall examine settings and the types of fairy people in them. In the third chapter I shall consider typical locations in which the beings stay or make themselves visible in English folk belief. In the fourth chapter I shall regard typical representatives of fairy people and their characteristics in English folk belief. In chapter five I shall look at main distinctive features of legends as types of narratives in folk tradition. Then in chapter six I shall compare settings in which fairy people remain or appear in oral and literary traditions of England. Finally, in the seventh chapter I shall draw a conclusion. In the conclusion I shall illustrate to what degree the assumption that settings in English folk and literary traditions are similar.

Chapter 2 - Settings in Which Fairy People Dwell or Appear in English Literary Tradition

On the one hand, William Shakespeare's (1564-1616) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1598) beside depicting the preparation for the marriage of Theseus, Duke of Athens, to Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons and the celebration of their marriage; the love story of Lysander and Hermia and of Demetrius who loves Hermia, and the case of Helena who is in love with Demetrius; and an effort of a group of Athenian workmen to prepare a play, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, based on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* the playwright also introduces fairy people to the audience and portrays some disagreement between Oberon and Titania, King and Queen of the Fairies. In the play fairy people appear in certain environment. In their soliloquies the beings refer to various surroundings in which they may remain or make themselves visible.

On the other hand, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's (1892-1973) *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-1955) narrates a story of a quest. Young Frodo Baggins and his companions undertake the quest because of the Ring which the character receives from the elderly cousin Bilbo in a village in the Shire. It happens that Sauron, the Dark Lord, comes to possess almost all the Rings of Power beside the One Ring that rules them all. With the help of the Rings Sauron intends to govern Middle-earth. In order to defeat the plan of the Dark Lord Frodo leaves home. Together with his fellows he character makes a dangerous journey across Middle-earth to the Cracks of Doom for the sake of destroying the Ring. In the first part of the novel *The Fellowship of the Ring* the author portrays environment in which fairy people dwell and appear.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the environment is marked by a wood which is situated in the vicinity of Athens. Shakespeare lets a Fairy talk to another fairy creature,

Robin Goodfellow. The Fairy is presented as a spirit. In her soliloquy the creature mentions various locations which she is used to visit. Accordingly, she says the following:

Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through brier.
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire:
I do wander everywhere
Swifter than the moon's sphere (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.2-8).

As we see, the Fairy refers to different types of environment. The being does not describe hills, dales and parks over which she travels. However, she refers to them in a verse. The verse has a simple structure. We may easily imagine the surroundings which the creature passes by. The reference to "the moon's sphere" (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.8) has some connection with night and makes the environment look romantic.

A little later King of Fairies, Oberon, who is accompanied by his train of fairy beings meets the Queen of Fairies, Titania, who is followed by her train of fairy people. The encounter occurs in the wood by moonlight. In her soliloquy the Queen refers to the following surroundings:

And never since the middle summer's spring
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margin of the sea
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our spot (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.82-87).

Similar to the Fairy whose soliloquy we have heard before, Titania does not describe hills, dales, forests and meadows. On the other hand, she mentions "[a] paved fountain" (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.84), "[a] rushy brook" (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.84) and "[...] [some] beached margin of the sea" (Shakespeare 2002: II.i. 85). Due to the adjectives the character

uses to portray the fountain and the brook, the surroundings appear romantic. By the end of her soliloquy Titania speaks about festivities with dances which fairies hold on hills, in dales, forests or meadows. In another monologue she describes the festivities as “moonlight revels” (Shakespeare II.i.141). The noun “moonlight” (Shakespeare II.i.141) creates a romantic atmosphere around the revels which the fairies hold in hills, dales, forests and meadows.

In his turn Oberon describes a river bank on which Titania likes to sleep. The character depicts the environment as such:

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite overcanopies with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine.
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lulled in the flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamelled skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.249-256).

In his soliloquy the King of Fairies makes references to flowers and bushes that grow on the river bank. Due to the plants the environment looks beautiful. The adjectives “wild” (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.249) and “luscious” (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.251) and the present participle “nodding” (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.250) which Oberon uses to portray the plants create a romantic atmosphere around the place. The noun “delight” (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.254) implies enjoyment. The description of sleeping Titania “lulled by the flowers” (Shakespeare 2002: II.i.254) gives to the romantic atmosphere certain sensuality. At the same time the reference to a snake sounds menacing.

In one of the episodes Titania participates in a roundel with fairies. As the creatures are singing the Queen gives tasks to her fairies. The character tells them to fight “with rermice for their leathern wings [t]o make [...] [her] small elves coats” (Shakespeare 2002:

II.ii.4-5). The adjective “small” (Shakespeare 2002: II.ii.5) in the utterance implies little size of the fairies. Beside being small the creatures seem to have ambiguous nature. Titania, for instance, falling in love with a mortal man shows her feelings. At the same time, as the Fairy who talks to Robin Goodfellow, the Queen believes herself to be a spirit (cf. Shakespeare 2002: III.ii.146).

Accordingly, while paying attention to the settings in which the fairy people dwell or appear in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* we observe various peculiarities. Little creatures have their King and Queen. The fairies are spirits who have human feelings. Therefore, their nature is ambiguous. In the play the beings occur in the wood by moonlight. They are accustomed to hold revels with songs and dances on hills and in dales, parks and meadows. They may stay close to fountains, brooks, margins of the sea and river banks. The descriptions of the locations in which the fairies remain or make themselves visible look sensual and romantic. The places are covered with flowers and bushes. However, some snakes that might happen in those surroundings add to the flowery, romantic and sensual atmosphere a sense of menacing danger.

In *The Fellowship of the Ring* in the chapter called “Lothlórien” we see Frodo in the company of Merry, Sam and Pipin, Aragorn, Boromir, Gimli and Legolas approaching the fairy realm, Lórien. The realm, as Aragon says, is supposed to represent “the heart of Elvendom on earth” (Tolkien 2003: 462). It appears that woods in Lórien are special because there grow particular trees in them. Legolas describes the woods and the trees in the following way:

There lie the woods of Lothlórien. [...] That is the fairest of all the dwellings of my people. There are no trees like the trees of that land. For in autumn their leaves fall not, but turn to gold. Not till the spring comes and the new green opens do they fall, and then the boughs are laden with yellow flowers; and the floor of the wood is golden, and golden is the roof; and its pillars are of silver, for the bark of the trees is smooth and grey (Tolkien 2003: 438).

Due to the intensive use of imagery, the description looks impressive. Though the superlative form of the adjective “the fairest” (Tolkien 2003: 438) reminds us of a folk lore cliché it certainly underlines the beauty of the woods. The comparison “[there are no trees like the trees of that land” (Tolkien 2003: 438) specifies their uniqueness. The repetition of the adjective “golden” (Tolkien 2003: 438) in the phrase “and the floor of the wood is golden, and golden is the roof” sounds poetic. At the same time the adjective “green” (Tolkien 2003: 438) in reference to leaves contrasts with the adjective “golden” (Tolkien 2003: 438).

Next we observe the characters enter one of such woods, the Golden Wood. The narrator portrays the location in this way:

Under the night the trees stood tall before them, arched over road and stream that ran suddenly beneath their spreading boughs. In the dim light of the stars their stems were grey, and their quivering leaves a hint of fallow gold (Tolkien 2003: 442)

The description sounds impressive. The adjective “tall” (Tolkien 2003: 442) specifies the size of the trees. The adjective “grey” (Tolkien 2003: 442) portrays the colour of their stems. “The dim light of the stars” (Tolkien 2003: 442) makes the wood look mysterious. A little later Legolas mentions the stream Nimrodel in Lothlórien. We notice that the narrator likes to accumulate new elements. Due to this reason, the location appears more complex than at the beginning.

After a while the narrator depicts the mound of Cerin Amroth. The mound is described in this manner:

When his eyes were in turn uncovered, Frodo looked up and caught his breath. They were standing in an open space. To the left stood a great mound, covered with a sward of grass as green as Springtime in the Elder Days. Upon it, as a double crown, grew two circles of trees: the outer had bark of snowy white, and were leafless but beautiful in their shapely nakedness; the inner were mallorn-trees of great height, still arrayed in pale gold. High amid the branches of a towering tree that stood in the centre of all there gleamed a white flet. At the feet of the trees, and all about the green hillsides the grass was studded with small golden flowers shaped like stars. Among them, nodding on slender stalks, were other flowers, white and palest green: they glimmered blue, and the sun of afternoon glowed upon the hill and cast long green shadows beneath the trees (Tolkien 2003: 459).

Later the narrator metaphorically calls the mound “the heart of the ancient realm” (Tolkien 2003: 459). We see that imagery becomes reinforced. The metaphore “a sward of grass” (Tolkien 2003: 459) and the comparison “as green as Springtime in the Elder Days” (Tolkien 2003: 459) sound poetic. The description of two circles of trees that grow on the mound in the shape of “a double crown” (Tolkien 2003: 459) looks elaborate. The adjective “snowy white” (Tolkien 2003: 459) that depicts the bark of the outer trees contributes to the description. The phrase “leafless but beautiful in their shapely nakedness” (Tolkien 2003: 459) which portrays the trees, due to alliteration of lateral /l/ and devoiced fricative /f/, sounds expressive. Therefore, it has a strong effect. Simultaneously, the description of the inner trees which appear to be “of great height, still arrayed in pale gold” (Tolkien 2003: 459) contrasts with the image in the previous phrase. Flowers increase the beauty of the place. The yellow ones which are compared to stars make salient the green grass on the mound. The white and palest green ones on slender stalks which appear to be “glimmer[ing] as a mist amid the rich hue of the grass” (Tolkien 2003: 459) look different than the yellow flowers. The blue hue which is reflected on the white and palest green flowers seems cold and contrasts with the afternoon sky which “glow[s] upon the hill and cast[s] long green shadows beneath the trees” (Tolkien 2003: 459).

In the next episode light and colours in Lórien are payed special attention to. While looking at the realm from the mound Frodo sees it in much light. The narrator describes the surroundings as such:

All that he saw was shapely, but the shapes seemed at once clear cut, as they had been first conceived and drawn at the uncovering of his eyes, and ancient as if they had endured for ever. He saw no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them and made for them names new and wonderful. In winter here no heart could mourn for summer or for spring. No blemish or sickness or deformity could be seen in anything that grew upon the earth. On the land of Lórien there was no stain (Tolkien 2003: 459-460).

The environment looks pure, fresh and unspoiled. The adjective “poignant” (Tolkien 2003: 460) underlines the brightness of the colours. The view has a strong influence on the character. The narrator points out that Sam who is contemplating Lórien together with Frodo is amazed to see the realm in sunlight. Before he believed that “Elves were all for moon and stars” (Tolkien 2003: 460).

In the chapter “The mirror of Galadriel” Frodo and his companions come to the City of Trees where they find elves sitting at the foot of a tree. The narrator depicts the elves as some tall creatures. The clothing of the elves is represented by “gray mail” (Tolkien 2003: 464) and “long white cloaks” (Tolkien 2003: 464) which hang from their shoulders.

While continuing to portray the environment the narrator describes the hall of the Lord, Celeborn, and the Lady, Galadriel. Accordingly, we are said the following:

The chamber was filled with a soft light: its walls were green and silver and its roof of gold. Many Elves were seated there. On two chairs beneath the bole of the tree and canopied by a living bough there sat, side by side, Celeborn and Galadriel. They stood up to greet their guests, after the manner of Elves, even those who were accounted mighty kings. Very tall they were, and the Lady no less tall than the Lord; and they were grave and beautiful. They were clad wholly in white; and the hair of the Lady was of deep gold, and the hair of Lord Celeborn was of silver long and bright; but no sign of age was upon them, unless it were in the depths of their eyes; for these were keen as lances in the starlight, and yet profound, the wells of deep memory (Tolkien 2003: 465).

We notice that the adjective “green” (Tolkien 2003: 465) and the nouns “silver” (Tolkien 2003: 456) and “gold” (Tolkien 2003: 465) make the hall appear elaborate. The present participle “living” (Tolkien 2003: 465) reminds us of life. The phrases “of deep gold” (Tolkien 2003: 465) and “of deep silver” which describe the colour of hair of Celeborn and Galadriel expressively specify the appearance of the characters. The adjectives “grave and beautiful” (Tolkien 2003: 465) contribute to their appearance and make the characters look impressive. The comparisons “keen as lances” (Tolkien 2003: 465) and the metaphor “the wells of deep memory” (Tolkien 2003: 465) which describe the eyes of the characters sound poetic.

As we see, the novel contains various descriptions of the environment where fairy people stay or appear. The elves are represented as tall and beautiful creatures. They have their Lord and Lady who dwell in a hall. The hall is situated on a tree. The realm is depicted as pure and bright with much sunlight upon it. The narrator develops settings gradually while accumulating new elements in them. First trees in the woods are portrayed. Then the descriptions of lakes, streams, wells, mounds and hills are added to the environment. Due to the accumulation, the settings become extended. The narrator makes use of comparisons, metaphores, adjectives and alliteration in the descriptions. Therefore, they sound poetic. On this point I would like to leave settings in literary tradition and turn to English folk belief.

Chapter 3 - Typical Locations in Which Fairy People Dwell or Appear in English Folk Belief

In the 1960s and 1970s Katharine M. Briggs, as Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud point out, devotedly studies and systematizes folk lore. At this time in England many samples of rural lore happen to have been collected by regional folklorists of the 17th and later centuries. In her research the Briggs manages to clarify certain aspects in English oral tradition, “demonstrating its coherence and power” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212).

It is remarkable that while commenting on typical locations in which fairy people dwell or appear the folklorist says that, even though the fairies “seem to have their houses underground [...] [they] come up to hills and flowery places to hold their festivities on moonlit nights” (Briggs 1976: 376). She outlines that in England these beings usually hold “sprightly dances in the velvety turf of the green sheltered, secluded places” (Briggs 1976: 375). Briggs also mentions areas between cairns which occur to be situated close to some water’s edge, beautiful green spots grown with ferns and cliffs (cf. Briggs 1976: 375).

In the meantime the folklorist underlines that “sometimes [...] the fairy palaces are out in the open, visible to those to whom the fairies wish to show them” (Briggs 1969: 12). She says that in the North of England these beings are known to inhabit hills (cf. Briggs 1969: 23). At the same time Briggs claims that fairies “live under the green mounds, or tumuli, all over England” (Briggs 1976: 325). In addition, the folklorist mentions that in Oxfordshire fairies were seen “going into a hole near the King Stone of the Rollright Stones” (Briggs 1969: 12). Now let us pay attention to some representatives of fairy people in English folk belief.

Chapter 4 - Typical Representatives of Fairy People and their Characteristics in English Folk Belief

It turns out that English folk belief has different types of fairy people among which trooping fairies seem to be prominent. Briggs says that “in England it was the smaller trooping fairies who were called elves, and the name was particularly applied to small fairy boys” (Briggs 1976: 122). The folklorist also refers to diminutive fairies that stay in Cornwall. According to the belief, in that part of England the creatures “were not [considered to be] small but dwindling” (Briggs 1976: 376). She outlines that people believe that “[...] [fairies] had once been life-sized, but in consequence of some forgotten sin they have dwindled down” (Briggs 1976: 374).

In regard to their dress, Briggs points out that in Somerset these beings are said to have clothes of red colour or of green as, for example, pixies (cf. Briggs 1997: 9-10). She also mentions fairy beings who look as young girls wearing dresses of blue colour. The folklorist specifies that in Suffolk fairy people are dressed in blue coats, yellow breeches and little red caps (cf. Briggs 1997: 11). Briggs underlines that some creatures may wear fine, fashionable clothes which are “indistinguishable from those of mortals” (Briggs 1997: 14). Simultaneously,

she notices that other beings happen to put on homely and old-fashioned clothing which, to her mind, looks “archaic” (Briggs 1997: 14).

While speaking about the size of English fairies the folklorist remarks that in Suffolk they are said to be “[t]he little mouse-sized” (Briggs 1997: 11). At the same time, while describing their appearance Briggs outlines that cheeks and foreheads of these beings happen to be covered with “wild, uncombed locks” (Briggs 1997: 12). She also underlines that in some legends the fairies are portrayed as “stunted, misgrown, ugly creatures” (Briggs 1997: 11-12). Accordingly, let us turn to legends and consider certain distinctive features of these narratives.

Chapter 5 - Main Distinctive Features of Legends as Types of Narratives in Folk Tradition

In comparison to plays and novels which we have in literary tradition, legends are connected with folk tradition. They have certain characteristics. Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud specify the most important of them. Accordingly, they point out that legends are usually short and they belong to oral narratives. The narratives are supposed to be “about a person, place, or object that really exists, existed, or is believed to have existed” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). The folklorists underline that an event, that a legend portrays as supernatural or unusual, is supposed “to have occurred in real life” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). In contrast to a fairytale or joke, a legend is considered to present information “as true” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212).

In the meantime, Simpson and Roud affirm that “the status of legends is more complex, both as regards orality and perceived truthfulness” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). On the one hand, it appears that nowadays legends become printed in books, local newspapers

and tourist guides. They also start appearing in radio transmissions and TV programmes. On the other hand, the truthfulness of the event in legends “has become a matter for heated dispute” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). It happens that in some cases the information which has been considered before as true at the present time is used as “mere entertainment” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212).

Simpson and Roud indicate that legends range from fantasies that might have some piece of truth to religious and supernatural tales that are based on beliefs and moral principles. Moreover, the folklorists underline that in the places where the belief is active, personal experience stories frequently coexist with supernatural legends (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). They emphasize that legends “are extremely common in English folklore [...] [and that they] are found throughout England” (Simpson and Roud 2003: 212). On this point let us turn to the settings in which fairy people stay or appear in some legends and compare them with the ones in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Chapter 6 - Comparison of Settings in Which Fairy People Dwell or Appear in Oral and Literary Traditions of England

In *The Legend of St Collen and the Fairy King*¹ which was summarized by S. Baring-Gould the setting is indicated by a castle situated “[a]t the top of the [hill called] Tor” (Briggs 1976: 345). In English folk belief a hill is considered to be a typical location in which fairy people dwell or appear. According to the legend, the eponymous hero who is a Welsh saint who lived in the 7th century and who spent some time in Somerset goes up the hill to meet the Fairy King. Before climbing the hill the character decides to hide away holy water under his cassock. The narrator describes the setting as such:

¹ Briggs 1976: 345-346.

At the top of the Tor he [Collen] found the most beautiful castle that the mind of man could conceive, troops of bodyguards and a number of musicians with all kinds of instruments, beves of maidens, and gallant young men riding around on beautiful horses. He was conducted into the banqueting hall where the king pressed him courteously to sit down and eat. A great banquet was carried in by fair pages in uniforms of scarlet and blue (Briggs 1976: 345)

The setting reminds us of the portrayal of the hall in Lórien in *The Lord of the Rings*. However, in the legend the fairy people are not said to be elves. As compared to the novel where the elves wear white clothes, in the legend the creatures are dressed in blue and scarlet ones. Due to their garments, they look as “[...] [a] shining assembly” (Briggs 1976: 345). The cliché “the most beautiful” (Briggs 1976: 345) depicts the castle as fabulous. The reference to young men who look “gallant [...] on beautiful horses” (Briggs 1976: 345) and the musicians with instruments in “the banqueting hall” (Briggs 1976: 345) vividly create the atmosphere of a party. The setting looks glamorous.

As compared to the legend, in the novel the hall where the Lord Celeborn and the Lady Galadriel stay is located on a tree. Elves are not amusing themselves in the hall. The Lord and the Lady are dressed in white clothes. As Frodo and his companions enter the hall the atmosphere looks peaceful and solemn there. Inside the hall is depicted in green, silver and golden colours. The house is filled with “a soft light” (Tolkien 2003: 465). The setting in *The Lord of the Rings* does not look glamorous as in the legend.

In the novel some time later Galadriel takes Frodo and his companions to a stream which runs through “[a] deep green hollow” (Tolkien 2003: 474). The stream is said to emerge “from the fountain on the hill” (Tolkien 2003: 474). The Elf-lady fills some basin with water to the brim and uses it as a mirror which reveals different things to the fellows. The setting looks picturesque. On the contrary, in the legend holy water makes the castle

disappear. Collen finds himself “in the pale light of dawn among the grassy tumps at the summit of the Tor” (Briggs 1976: 345). The setting looks ordinary.

In *Child Rowland*² an outline of which was told to Sir Walter Scott by a country tailor when the writer was a child of seven or eight years old the setting is presented as “a round green hill surrounded with rings (terraces) from the bottom to the top” (Briggs 1970: 181). In English folk belief a hill is treated as a typical location in which fairy people stay or make themselves visible. The eponymous hero enters the hill while looking for his sister, Ellen, who is supposed to be taken by the king of Elfland to his castle. The narrator describes the surroundings in the following way:

Then he [the eponymous hero] went three times [...] round the green hill, [...] and the third time the door opened, and he went in. It immediately closed behind him; and he proceeded through a long passage, where the air was soft and agreeably warm like a May evening, as is all the air of Elfland. The light was sort of twilight or gloaming; but there were neither windows nor candles, and he knew not whence it came, if it was not from the walls and roof, which were rough and arched like a grotto, and composed of a clear and transparent rock, incrustated with *sheeps-silver* and spar, and various bright stones. At last he came to two wide and lofty folding-doors, which stood ajar. He opened them, and entered a large and spacious hall, whose richness and brilliance no tongue can tell. It seemed to extend the whole length and height of the hill. The superb Gothic pillars by which the roof was supported were [...] large and [...] lofty [...]. They were of gold and silver, and [they] were fretted [...] with wreaths of flowers composed of diamonds and precious stones in the same manner. And from the middle of the roof, where the principal arches met, was hung by a gold chain, an immense lamp of the hollowed pearl, perfectly transparent, in the midst of which was suspended a large carbuncle, that by the power of magic continually turned round, and shed over all the hall a clear and mid light like the setting sun; but the hall was so large, and these dazzling objects so far removed, that their blended radiance cast no more than a pleasing lustre, and excited no other than agreeable sensation in the eyes of Child Rowland (Briggs 1970: 181-182).

As in the previous legend the description of the environment reminds us of the portrayal of the hall in Lórien in *The Lord of the Rings*. As compared to the chamber in the novel, which is situated on a tree the hall in the legend is located inside a hill. Accordingly, the characters approach the location differently. In the novel Frodo passes many flets. He uses stairs and a ladder to enter the hall. In the legend the character comes to the hall through some passage.

In the passage the light reminds the character of twilight. In the novel, as Frodo passes the flets, no light is mentioned. In the legend we are said there are no any windows or candles

² Briggs 1970: 180-183.

in the passage and the light is supposed to come from the walls and the roof which are made of some clear transparent stone. At the same time the walls and roof in the passage look rough. They are shaped as arches in some grotto. In the novel the chamber, where Celeborn and Galadriel sit together with other elves, has a shape of an oval. In the middle of the chamber there is a trunk of a tree that makes “a pillar of wide girth” (Tolkien 2003: 465).

The light that comes to the chamber is said to be soft in *The Lord of the Rings*. We do not know where it comes from. The walls of the chamber are depicted as green and silver and the roof is portrayed as golden. In the legend the narrator refers to Gothic pillars that support the roof of a large hall. The pillars in the hall are said to be made of gold and silver. They are decorated with flowers which are made of precious stones. The narrator speaks about a lamp that is made of some hollowed transparent pearl. The pearl appears to be fixed on the roof. Inside the pearl there is a big gem. The gem is said to turn around and give some mild light to the hall. The light is compared to the one of the setting sun.

The adjectives “large and spacious” (Briggs 1970: 182) emphasize the big size of the hall in the legend. Its glamour is underlined in the utterance “whose [of the hall] richness and brilliance no tongue can tell” (Briggs 1970: 182). In the novel the big size of the chamber is indicated by the phrase “a house, so large that almost it would have served for a hall of Men upon the earth” (Tolkien 2003: 456). The narrator does not speak either of richness or brilliance of the chamber in the novel.

In the legend the furniture in the hall looks to suit “its architecture” (Briggs 1970: 182). We see the sister of Child Rowland “under a splendid canopy, seated on a gorgeous sofa of velvet, silk and gold” (Briggs 1970: 182). In the novel Celeborn and Galadriel appear to sit on two chairs “beneath the bole of the tree and canopied by a living bough” (Tolkien 2003: 465).

We see that in the legend the prominence is given to stones and precious metals. The narrator is fascinated by richness and brilliance of the hall. In the novel the focus is on woods and trees. Instead of pillars decorated with flowers made of precious stones which we have in the legend in the novel there is one pillar which is represented by a stem of a living tree. The glamour of pillars decorated with precious stones which we observe in the legend contrasts with the beauty of a “great” (Tolkien 2003: 465) tree that we see in the novel.

In *The Fairy Cup*³ which was recorded by William of Newbridge in the 12th century in the province of the Deiri (Yorkshire) the setting is marked by “[a] barrow” (Briggs 1997: 109). In English folk belief a barrow is regarded as a typical location in which fairy people dwell or appear. According to the legend, once a peasant happens to be late at night close to the barrow. He hears “some voices of people singing, and [...] joyfully feasting” (Briggs 1997: 109). The narrator portrays the environment in this manner:

Seeing a door open in the side of the barrow, he went up to it, and looked in; and there he beheld a large and luminous house, full of people, women as well men, who were reclining as at a solemn banquet (Briggs 1997: 110).

The house in the legend in which fairy people are holding a feast may be compared to the one in *The Lord of the Rings*. In the novel the house in which the Lord Celeborn and the Lady Galadriel sit together with many elves is said to be “so large that almost it would have served for a hall of Men upon earth” (Tolkien 2003: 465). In the legend the house is also large and there are many people in it. Beside the size of the house we know that there is much light in it. In the novel, on the contrary, the house is not said to have much light. It has “a soft light” (Tolkien 2003: 465). In the legend the adjectives “large and luminous” (Briggs 2003: 110) make the house look magnificent. The adjective “solemn” (Briggs 2003: 110) creates an atmosphere of an important event. In the novel the adjectives “green and silver and [...] of gold” (Tolkien 2003: 465) which describe the walls and the roof of the chamber make the

³ Briggs 1997: 109-110.

house look magnificent too. As Frodo and his companions enter the house and the Lord and the Lady greet them the event grows important and the atmosphere becomes solemn.

In *King Herla*⁴ which was compiled by Walter Map in the 12th century the setting is represented by “a cave in a very high cliff” (Briggs 1976: 248). In English folk belief a cave in a cliff is treated as a typical location in which fairy people stay or make themselves visible. The narrator describes the environment in the event as such:

They [the eponymous hero and the King of fairy people] entered a cave in a very high cliff and after some journeying through the dark, which appeared to be lighted, not by the sun or moon, but by numerous torches, they arrived at the dwarf’s palace, a splendid mansion (Briggs 1976: 248).

The setting in the legend reminds us of the house in which Celeborn and Galadriel receive Frodo and his companions in *The Lord of the Rings*. However, there are certain differences. In the novel Frodo and his fellows go to the hall “under a pale evening sky pricked by a few early stars” (Tolkien 2003: 463). The description sounds poetic. In the legend neither the sun nor the moon give light in the cave. In order to have some King Herla and the King of fairy people use the light of torches in the darkness.

Later in the description the adjective “splendid” (Briggs 1976: 248) and the noun “mansion” make the palace look magnificent. There are no other characteristics of the building in the description except that the noun in the genitive case “dwarf’s” (Briggs 1976: 248) tells us about the little size of the creature and, presumably, the building as well. In the novel, on the contrary, we have certain portrayal of the walls, the roof and the furniture of the house. Due to this reason, the house looks magnificent as the one in the legend.

In the next legend *Goblin Combe*⁵ which was collected by Ruth L. Tongue who heard it from two old ladies from Clevedon in Somerset in 1945 the setting is indicated by a rock or hill. In English folk belief both a rock and a hill are considered as typical locations in which

⁴ Briggs 1976: 247-248.

⁵ Briggs and Tongue 1965: 34-35.

fairy people live and make themselves visible. According to the legend, a little girl happens to pick up primroses together with some children. The children leave the girl alone. The girl comes to the rock and misses some flowers there. The narrator clarifies that “the rock opens and there’s the fairies all come to comfort her tears” (Briggs 2003: 1965: 34).

In *Goblin Combe* the narrator refers to the environment without providing us with any descriptions. Therefore, the setting is reminiscent of those ones that the Queen of the Fairies and the Fairy briefly mention in their soliloquies in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. In the play, however, which also depicts festivities of fairies by moonlight on the hills the atmosphere acquires some romantic colour. In the legend the primroses with which the little girl comes to the rock remind us of the flowers by which the fairies are surrounded in the play. Due to this reason, there is certain romantic atmosphere around the hill in the legend as well.

In *Cherry of Zennor*⁶ which comes from Cornwall the setting is marked by a hill. In English folk belief a hill is treated as a typical location in which fairy people dwell or appear. According to the legend, at the spot called “Lady Downs” (Briggs 1997: 11) the eponymous heroine meets “a handsome, well-dressed gentleman” (Briggs 1997: 100). The gentleman invites Cherry to take care of his son and brings her to his dwelling which is situated in a garden. The description of the setting in the legend echoes with the one in *The Lord of the Rings*. The narrator depicts the setting in *Cherry of Zennor* in the following manner:

They went an immense way, down and down twisting lanes with high hedges closing above them. The gentleman lifted Cherry over several streams and at length they came to a gate into a garden where flowers of all seasons grew and flowered together. Birds were singing all round them, and Cherry thought she had never seen so lovely a place. A little sharp-eyed boy ran out to greet them, followed by an old, cross looking woman. ‘That’s my wife’s mother,’ said the gentleman, ‘but she will only stay a few days to put you in the ways of the place, and then she shall go.’ The old woman looked crossly at Cherry and took her in, muttering that she knew Robin would choose a fool. It was a strange place, with long passages and a big room locked up, into which the old woman led Cherry. It was full of what Cherry thought of as dead people – presumably statues – and there was a coffin-like box in the middle of the room which Cherry was set to polish (Briggs 1997: 100-101).

⁶ Briggs 1997: 100-103.

In the novel the narrator describes the setting as such:

They went along many paths and climbed many stairs, until they came to the high places and saw before them amid a wide lawn a fountain shimmering. It was lit by silver lamps that swung from the boughs of trees, and it fell into a basin of silver, from which a white stream spilled. Upon the south side of the lawn there stood the mightiest of all the trees; its great smooth bole gleamed like grey silk, and up it towered, until its first branches, far above, opened their huge limbs under shadowy clouds of leaves. Beside a broad white ladder stood, and at its foot three Elves were seated (Tolkien 2003: 464).

As we observe, in the legend the characters go down some lanes with hedges. The adjective “twisting” (Briggs 1997: 100) in reference to the lanes creates some menacing atmosphere. The adjective “high” (Briggs 1997: 100) in reference to the hedges which make some closure above the girl and her companion contributes to the atmosphere. On the contrary, in the novel the characters climb up some stairs. The adjective “high” (Tolkien 2003: 464) with regard to the places and the adjective “wide” (Tolkien 2003: 464) as referred to the lawn help to create some delightful environment. In the legend there are several streams on the way of the characters. The gentleman lifts the heroine to come over them. The streams are depicted as obstacles. In the novel the characters come to a fountain which is situated in the middle of the lawn. The adjective “shimmering” (Tolkien 2003: 464) sounds poetic and makes the fountain look charming. The light that comes from the lamps which hang on the boughs of the trees appears charming as well. The noun “silver” (Tolkien 2003: 464) in reference to the lamps and the basin and the adjective “white” (Tolkien 2003: 464) with regard to the stream produce an atmosphere of beauty. The tree on the lawn which is described as “the mightiest of all the trees” (Tolkien 2003: 464) indicates strength of the plant. The adjective “smooth” (Tolkien 2003: 464) and the comparison “gleamed like grey silk” (Tolkien 2003: 464) in connection with the bole contribute to the beautiful atmosphere. The three elves that sit at the foot of the tree appear as a surprise and support the environment. In the legend the garden with blooming flowers “of all seasons” (Briggs 1997: 100) and the birds “singing all around” also looks beautiful. However, the strangeness of the dwelling “with long passages and a big room locked up, [...] [and] a coffin-like box in the middle of the room” (Briggs 1997: 101) create

an atmosphere of menacing danger. The angry wife's mother of Robin and "a little sharp-eyed boy" (Briggs 1997: 100-101) and the statues that seem as "dead people" (Briggs 1997: 101) contribute to the atmosphere.

Later on as Cherry puts some ointment in her eye the one with which she anoints the boy's eyes every morning the heroine notices things that she has not been aware of before. The narrator portrays the setting in the following way:

[...] one morning [...] [Cherry] sent [...] [the boy] off to pick some flowers and slyly put a crumb of the ointment in her own eye. This produced a transformation: the garden was swarming with little creatures. Her eyes smarted and she ran to the well to wash out the ointment. At the bottom of the well she saw numbers of tiny people dancing, and to her fury she saw her master among them, as tiny as they were, and on very familiar terms with the little fairy ladies (Briggs 1997: 102).

In the legend the changes in the setting have a disgusting influence on Cherry. In the novel, on the contrary, the setting remains in harmony with the characters.

In the last but one legend *Anne Jefferies*⁷ which comes from a printed letter which Moses Pitt, the son of Anne's old master and mistress wrote to the Bishop of Gloucester the setting is represented by "a little arbour just outside the garden gate" (Briggs 1997: 176). In English folk belief an arbour is not considered as a typical location in which fairy people stay or appear. The eponymous heroine is taken to some fairy realm. The narrator describes the realm as such:

She was surrounded by temples and palaces of gold and silver; there were trees covered with fruit and flowers, lakes full of golden and silver fish and bright-coloured birds singing all around. Hundreds of splendidly dressed people were walking in the gardens or dancing and sporting or reposing themselves in flowery arbours (Briggs 1997: 178).

As we notice, the environment is reminiscent of the one in Lórien in *The Lord of the Rings*. However, the manner of their portrayal is different. In the legend the nouns "gold and silver" in reference to temples and palaces sound as a cliché and create a fabulous atmosphere around the place. In the novel such nouns make the setting look impressive. They also help to create

⁷ Briggs 1997: 175-181.

some atmosphere of poetry around the location. In the legend the trees are described to be “covered with fruit and flowers” (Briggs 1997: 178). In the novel the boughs of the trees are covered with leaves and flowers. The imagery in the legend seems fantastic. On the other hand, the imagery in the novel looks impressive.

In *Anne Jefferies* there are references to “lakes full of golden and silver fish and bright-coloured birds singing all around” (Briggs 1997: 178). These are typical folk lore clichés. Therefore, the description sounds fabulous. In *The Lord of the Rings* the lake is depicted in the following manner:

Less than a mile away [...] there lay a mere. It was long and oval, shaped like a great spear-head thrust deep into the northern glen; but its southern end was beyond the shadows under the sunlit sky. Yet its waters were dark: a deep blue like clear evening sky seen from a lamp-lit room. Its face was still and unruffled. About it lay a smooth sward, shelving down on all sides to its bare unbroken rim (Tolkien 2003: 436-437)

The adjectives “long and oval” (Tolkien 2003: 436) and the comparison “shaped like a great spear-head” (Tolkien 2003: 436) describe the contours of the lake. We have elaborate references to the sky, water and the rim. Due to this imagery, the description sounds poetic.

In the legend fairy people are “splendidly dressed” (Briggs 1997: 178). They amuse themselves “dancing and sporting” (Briggs 1997: 178) as the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* who hold roundels on hills or in dales in the moonlight. In the play the environment seems romantic. In the legend the environment looks gorgeous.

In the last legend *Dwelling on Selena Moor*⁸ which comes from Cornwall the setting is indicated by “the treacherous bogland of the moor” (Briggs 1997: 111). In English folk belief a moor is not treated as a typical location in which fairy people stay or make themselves visible. The protagonist of the legend, Mr Noy, comes to some fairy realm. The narrator describes the setting as such:

⁸ Briggs 1997: 111-115.

He [Mr Noy] had made a short-cut through the moor, but had lost his way and had wandered, he thought, many miles over country unknown to him, until he saw lights in the distance and heard music. He hurried towards it [...]. His horse and dogs shrank back and would not come with him, so he tied his horse to a thorn, and went through a most beautiful orchard towards a house, outside which he saw hundreds of people either dancing or sitting drinking at tables. They were richly dressed, but they looked to him very small, and their benches and table and cups were small too. Quite close to him stood a girl in white, taller than the rest, and playing a kind of tambourine. The tunes were lively, and the dancers were the nimblest he had ever seen. Soon the girl gave the tambourine to an old fellow near, and went into the house to fetch out a black-jack of ale for the company. Mr Noy, who loved dancing and would have been glad of a drink, drew near to the corner of the house, but the girl met his eyes, and signed to him to keep back. She spoke a few words to the old fellow with the tambourine, and then came towards him.

‘Follow me into the orchard’, she said.

She went before him to a sheltered place, and there in the quiet starlight, away from the dazzle of the candles, he recognized her as Grace Hutchens, who had been his sweetheart for a long time [...] (Briggs 1997: 111-112).

The description portrays the setting as fabulous. The superlative degree of the adjective “most beautiful” (Briggs 1997: 111) sounds as a cliché. The little fairy people have a festivity at night as the little fairies in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. In the play the location is marked by a forest. In *Dwelling on Selena Moor* Mr Noy arrives at an orchard. In the play the atmosphere which is created by the moonlight looks romantic. In the legend, on the other hand, “lights” (Briggs 1997: 111), “dazzle of candles” (Briggs 1997: 112), “music” (Briggs 1997: 111), “lovely tunes” (Briggs 1997: 112), “dancing” (Briggs 1997: 112) and “drinking” (Briggs 1997: 112) produce an atmosphere of a party which contrasts with the atmosphere of “the quiet starlight” (Briggs 1997: 112) of the night. It is worth noting that as in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* so in *Dwelling on Selena Moor* the atmosphere around the location has a sense of a menacing danger. In the legend, as we see, the horse and the dogs feel fear close to the orchard and do not follow the protagonist there. In the play, as we remember, the reference to a snake that sometimes visits the flowery river bank sounds menacing. Having said enough on this point I would like to draw a conclusion.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

While comparing settings in which fairy people stay or make themselves visible in English literary tradition to the ones in oral tradition we observe certain similarities. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* fairies, which are represented as little spirits who have an ambiguous nature, dwell in forests, dales, parks and meadows. They may appear close to fountains, brooks, margins of the sea and river banks. In *The Lord of the Rings* elves, who are depicted as tall creatures which are dressed in white clothes, stay around trees. There are forests, hills and mounds, wells, fountains and streams in their realm. In the legends the fairy beings, who are usually little and who have splendid clothes, make themselves visible either near hills and rocks or close to some bogland and moor. In their realm there are also gardens, orchards and lakes. As in literary so oral tradition the beings may appear in these surroundings at different time. In the play the fairies have festivities in the moonlight. In the novel the encounter with the elves occurs in sunshine. In the legends the time may be indicated by night or day.

Nevertheless, there are some differences in the portrayal of settings too. In literary tradition a house which fairy people inhabit may be situated up on a tree. In the legends a castle, a hall or a mansion is located either on or in a hill. Moreover, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the locations in which fairy people dwell are grown with flowers and the fairies have roundels with dances and songs in the moonlight. The environment looks romantic. In *The Lord of the Rings* the imagery outlines the beauty of unspoiled nature. Due to the accumulation of adjectives, repetition of nouns, alliteration, metaphores and comparisons the environment appears poetically picturesque. In the legends, on the contrary, the environment is usually fantastic with much glamour and brilliance. The descriptions are based on clichés. In both legends and pieces of literature, however, to the environment may be introduced some sense of menacing danger. As we see, despite certain elements that may coincide the portrayal of environment in English literary and oral traditions remains different.

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