

# FANTASY LITERATURE

*“There they dismounting, drew their weapons bold  
And stoutly came vnto the Castle gate;  
Whereas no gate they found, them to withhold,  
Nor ward to wait at morne and euening late,  
But in the Porch, that did them sore amate,  
A flaming fire, ymixt with smouldry smoke,  
And stinking Sulphure, that with griesly hate  
And dreadfull horror did all entraunce choke,  
Enforced them their forward footing to reuoke.*

*Greatly thereat was Britomart dismayd,  
Ne in that stownd wist, how her selfe to beare;  
For daunger vaine it were, to haue assayd  
That cruell element, which all things feare,  
Ne none can suffer to approchen neare:  
And turning backe to Scudamour, thus sayd;  
What monstrous enmity prouoke we heare,  
Foolhardy as th'Earthes children, the which made  
Battell against the Gods? so we a God inuade.”*

**The Faertie Queene, book 3 chant XI**

Beyond the cold, dead grey of the buildings around us, there exists a completely different world that waits for us. A world of heroes, wizards and singers; a land full of dragons, elves and dwarves, which struggle for their survival and legends and myths which have remained until nowadays. All this can be found in books and poems hidden in the deepest section of our libraries.

This research project has been made with the aim to teach the concept and reason of fantasy literature, the characters which appear in its novels, the different genres available to choose and other cultural issues related to fantasy, as well as a brief explanation of its evolution. As any other literature genre, fantasy is remarked for its imaginary background and the unreal beings that take part in it. An entire world can be invented through the imagination of one person, being a relief for hundreds of people as it provides a log off from the crude reality without leaving it. All fantastic metaphors or elements surge from a real source and, ignoring the critics which say that “fantasy is a bad genre because it does not talk about reality” (a fact that may seem rather obvious), is through the “skeptical stoppage”, it means, when you assume that a story is not real that you see the true meaning of the symbols and words written in there. That and more aspects will be discussed in the project.

As the language which is used is English, a specific point of view for this language and the countries where it is spoken has been done. England has an impressive cultural background already started before Christ's birth and it had increased during the years. Its evolution is essential to understand the facts stated in the project. On the other side, America also took part during the improvement of the genre, introducing new concepts such as “sword and sorcery”. English has something special which differs from all other languages and that is why part of the project is focused on it. An English writer who has an important role through fantasy evolution is J.R.R. Tolkien: considered as the father of modern fantasy, the world which he invented (Middle Earth) and the people and adventures which happen in it were born through the desire of the man to create a culture and a lore for a country where those values were undervalued and the novels which he wrote (The hobbit, the Lord of the Rings and the Silmarillion) reached perfection thanks to the linguistic and mythological knowledge of the author.

Although fantasy might not be of very general interest, it is hoped that, with this work, all misunderstandings related to this genre and to give a deeper introduction too. The price of what is learned by reading these novels and poems cannot be setted, thus if you appreciate fantasy, you will take advantage when facing reality