UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

PEDAGOGICKÁ FAKULTA

Katedra cizích jazyků

Bakalářská práce

Jakub Červinka

Historie a charakteristika Středozemě v díle J. R. R. Tolkiena

Olomouc 2022   Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Petr Anténe, M.A., Ph.D.

Acknowledgements

Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracoval samostatně za použití pouze uvedených pramenů a literatury.

V Olomouci 14. 4. 2022

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Abstract

The fictional mythology of J. R. R. Tolkien appears to be considerably complex, and in addition, separated into several literary works of which each portrays a certain fragment of it, but none of them provides the complete image. The aim of this project was to assemble and analyse the essential elements of Tolkien's work in this one single document, and create a general overview and explanation of it, with intention to reduce its complexity and chaotic distribution for a reader, who has not studied the mythology into detail. Based on the complex research of Tolkien's work, and eventually the author's life as well, this project portrays the extensive history since the beginning of the universe to the end of the Third Age, characteristics of the geography, peoples, and dark powers of Middle-earth, and presents the circumstances which affected Tolkien's creative process.

Introduction

In the previous century, professor Tolkien created a fictional world which in its complexity, regarding history, languages, peoples, and further aspects, presumably surpasses the majority of modern fiction. His legacy portrayed in the work continues to inspire the succeeding generations of fantasy writers. However, the complexity of Tolkien's work appears to be both an advantage, and a disadvantage. To understand it to a greater extent, numerous books and writings are required to be studied, each providing different fragments of information. This suggests that an average reader, or a spectator of the movie adaptation, might become confused as the story, or further discussions about the topic, progress into details. Additionally, it is not a secret that within academic circles, opinions on fantasy literature occasionally suggest the genre does not reach the quality or value of generally respected works.

As the title of this thesis suggests, the work intends to provide the reader with a general overview of Tolkien's complex mythology, with primary focus on Middle-earth, a continent that appears to have a major role in the professor's writings. The project should help the reader with orientation within the fictional work, provide extension of knowledge about its main features, and outline the background of its origins in terms of Tolkien's writing process. Eventually, with expanded understanding, the reader might develop greater respect towards this complex work of fantasy as well. This suggests the reader should be able to understand essential features of Tolkien's work without having to read a vast number of books and writings.

To achieve these objectives, Tolkien's mythology required to be studied in detail, and subsequently, the fundamental fragments were selected for this project, which to a certain extent serves as a guide to the original work. Those fragments appear to be the history of the fictional world, its characteristics (which includes peoples, geography, and a great theme of evil), the major role of languages, and the author's influences, life experiences, and to a certain extent his philosophy, which were undoubtedly projected into his work.

The history chapter proved to be particularly difficult, since a vast number of detailed information and little fragments from a number of different sources had to be studied, simplified and generalized, and eventually connected together to create a meaningful narrative. The process was more or less comparable to assembling a complex jigsaw puzzle.

Moreover, in regard to uncertain or questionable elements, such as capital letters of the races, the project follows the author's original formula.

1. History of Middle-Earth

The first chapter outlines the history of J.R.R. Tolkien's fictional world since the events which resulted into the creation of Arda, up to the end of the Third Age of the World. The major aim of the description is Middle-Earth, one of the continents of Arda. However, a numerous amount of events in the history of this mythology that had a great impact on Middle-Earth itself were set in different locations. The essential significance of those events and locations required them to be included to preserve the overall integrity and meaningfulness of the story.

1.1 The creation of the universe

In Tolkien's mythology, everything begins with Eru, the highest divine being, among the Elves known as Ilúvatar (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 3, 9). Before the beginning of time, his thoughts and visions developed into entities known as Ainur, angelic creatures serving Eru. Ainur were once asked to compose a celestial choir for Ilúvatar. This choir in heaven is what created the cosmos (Day, 2019, pp. 19, 25). However, the music of the Ainur only outlined the foundations of the world. Some of the Ainur then decided to enter this creation, and to build the material world out of darkness. Those Ainur are called Valar, "the Powers of the World" (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 9, 10), and their servants, Ainur of lower degree, Maiar (Tolkien, 1999, p. 21).

1.1.1 Valar

Fourteen Valar entered the foundations of the world that had been outlined by their choir. Seven lords of Valar, Manwë, Ulmo, Aulë, Oromë, Mandos, Lórien, and Tulcas, and seven Valier, queens of Valar, Varda, Yavanna, Nienna, Estë, Vaire, Vána, and Nessa. The highest one among them, the king of Valar, is Manwë. His wife, and the most powerful of the Valier, is Varda. Varda, the Lady of the Stars, is the most beloved of Valar among the Elves (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 15-16).

1.1.2 Maiar

Ainur of lower degree than the Valar. Despite the fact that some of the Maiar are very significant throughout the history of Middle-earth, their exact number is unknown to the Elves. Ilmarë, the servant of Varda, Eomwë, Manwë's herald, Ossë, Ulmo's vassal, and Olórion, the wisest of Maiar represent the greatest of Maiar spirits (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 21-22).

1.1.3 The War in Heaven

However, at the time of the celestial choir, during which the world was outlined and foresung, there was one more among the Ainur. His name was Melkor, "He, who arises in might", brother of Manwë, and the mightiest of the Ainur (Tolkien, 1999, p. 23). His desire was to create and rule by his own will, not as a servant of Ilúvatar (Day, 2018, p. 20). Motivated by his own pride and jealousy, he deliberately disrupted the harmony of the choir. The battle of voices between Melkor and the rest of the Ainur influenced the creation process of the world and had major impact on its final shape (Day, 2016, p. 24). As a consequence of this betrayal, Melkor became the enemy of the Valar, and is not considered as one of them (Tolkien, 1999, p. 16).

1.1.4 The First War

When Ainur and Melkor entered the world and gained their physical forms, the first war of supernatural powers begun (Day, 2016, p. 27). Melkor dwelt in Utumno, his first fortress he had built in the north (Day, 2018, p. 23). The first image of Arda was the result of this conflict. The seas were boiled and the mountains shaped (Day, 2016, p. 27). In addition, the original home of Valar on the isle of Almaren was destroyed. Valar decided to leave Middle-earth and built a new home in the most western part of the World, Aman. The new realm of Valar has been called Valinor, and it is protected by Pelóri, the Mountains of Aman (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 29-30).

1.2 Ages of the stars

Telperion and Laurelin. Those are the names of two legendary Trees of Valinor. The trees sprouted during singing of Yavanna. Located at Ezellohar, a knoll within the realm of Valinor, both trees were a source of light. Telperion shined in silver glow, and Laurelin in gold. Since then, Valar's time counting followed the bloom cycles of the trees (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 31, 32).

With the world itself, the vision of Eru also contained coming of Elves, the Firstborn, and Men, the Followers, as the Children of Ilúvatar (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 6, 7). However, it was Dwarves who first breathed the air of Middle-earth. Aulë, the Smith of the Valar, created the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves due to his desire to have followers and students who would learn his craft. This creation was done secretly in the underground darkness, and without a permission of Ilúvatar (Tolkien, 1999, p. 37).

Despite the fact the Dwarves were not his creation, Ilúvatar decided to be merciful, and accepted their existence. Nevertheless, he had one condition:

"They shall sleep now in the darkness under stone, and shall not come forth until the Firstborn have awakened upon Earth; and until that time thou they shall wait, though long it seem. But when the time comes I will awaken them, and they shall be to thee as children; and often strive shall arise between thine and mine, the children of my adoption and the children of my choice" (Tolkien, 1999, p. 38).

Yavanna was concerned the Children of Ilúvatar would not respect the sanctity of nature and would damage it in favour of their own necessities, comfort and wealth. To prevent this scenario, the great Eagles of Manwë and Ents, the shepherds of the trees, were created before the awakening of the Firstborn (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 39-42).

The Elves awoke in the waters of lake Ciuviénen. Oromë found them and named them Eldar, the people of the stars (Tolkien, 1999, p. 45). Tragically, during the first years of their existence, a certain amount of Eldar was captured and imprisoned by Melkor. A long lasting torture, cruelty, and practice of dark sorcery resulted in the prisoners' transformation into the first Orcs (Tolkien, 1999, p. 47). In reaction to this abomination, Valar decided to act. They returned to Middle-earth, fought Melkor and his servants, and defeated him in front of the gates of Utumno (Day, 2016, pp. 32-33). Melkor was captured, and his great fortress Utumno was destroyed (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 47-49). To punish him for the crimes he had committed, Melkor was sentenced to prison for three ages of the trees (Fonstad, 2001, p. 2).

After the defeat of Melkor, the Elves were offered to leave Middle-earth and live in The Undying Lands in the west. However, the decision was not unanimous. A great amount of the Elves decided to stay in Middle-earth, and since then, they were known as Avari, the Unwilling, and later as Elves of the Darkness (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 49-51). Three kindred of the Elves - Vaynar, Noldor, and Teleri - undertook the great journey to the west, and with help of Ulmo, they managed to reach the shores of the Blessed Realm (Fonstad, 2001, p.3).

The land where Eldar settled and lived in The Undying Lands was named Eldamar (Day, 2019, p. 122), and in the northern part, Teleri built their harbours (Fonstad, 2001, p. 6). Ingwë, the king of Vaynar, built a majestic city Tirion, and ruled as High King of the Eldar (Day, 2019, pp. 200-201). The greatest among the Elves in knowledge and craft skills was Fëanor, one of the Noldor. One day, he created three jewels, into which he inserted the light of the two trees of Valinor (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 1009 – 1010). The jewels are known as Silmarils, the greatest and the most sacred items ever crafted in Arda (Day, 2019, p. 345).

After three ages of the trees, Melkor was released from the prison. However, the imprisonment did not change his character. Motivated by spite and hatred, he secretly created an alliance with Ungoliant (Day, 2016, p. 36), one of the ancient creatures of darkness of an unknown origin, shaped into an enormous spider form, titled also as "Mother of Spiders" or "The Dark Terror" (Day, 2018, p. 32). Strategically, during a great Eldar celebration, Melkor and Ungoliant silently approached the trees of light, Melkor pierced them with his black spear, and Ungoliant consumed their sap. The trees of Valinor perished, and the great darkness covered the land (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 79–80). After their mission succeeded, Melkor and Ungoliant travelled to Elvish stronghold Formenos, killed Finwë, the king of Noldor and Fëanor's father, Melkor stole Silmarils, and protected by the darkness of Ungoliant, they returned to Middle-earth through a northern pass (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 83–85). After his return to Middle-earth, Melkor inserted the jewels to his iron crown (Day, 2016, p. 37).

When Fëanor learned about the crimes Melkor had committed, he named him Morgoth (Tolkien, 1999, p. 83), "The Dark Enemy" (Day, 2018, p. 30). A great amount of Eldar then decided to leave The Undying Lands with intent to defeat Morgoth. Their leaders were Fëanor and Fingolfin. Motivated by grief and anger, Fëanor and his people approached the harbours of Teleri, violently seized their ships, and sailed to Middle-earth. After reaching the shores, they burnt the ships, and abandoned Fingolfin and his people, who remained forsaken at the shores of the Blessed Realm (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 87 – 97). Fëanor was extremely determined to avenge the death of his father and theft of Silmarils. On his progress to Angband, he slayed a large number of Orcs. However, when he finally reached the gates of the fortress, he was outnumbered and deadly wounded by Balrogs, fire Maiar spirits serving Morgoth, and subsequently passed away (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 120 – 121). Simultaneously, Fingolfin, his sons, lady Galadriel, and their people decided to march through northern pass Helcaraxë and ice mountains. The journey proved to be extraordinary difficult, and many Noldor passed away. Nevertheless, Fingolfin and his people eventually reached the land of Middle-earth (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 97-98).

After the Two Trees of Valinor were destroyed, Valar created the Sun and the Moon (Howe, 2018, p. 9). The ages of the stars ended with the first rising of the Sun. The golden light covered Arda at the very same moment when Fingolfin arrived in Middle-earth (Tolkien, 1999, p. 120).

1.3 The First Age

The history of the First Age describes series of events mostly located in Beleriand, the north-western part of Middle-earth. The major theme of this age is the war between the Elves and Morgoth over Silmarils. The First Age also introduces the races of Men and Dwarves, and their roles in the war.

Those Elves, who had decided not to migrate to The Undying Lands, and settle in Beleriand instead, were called Sindar, and the name of their king was Thingol (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 54-55). These Elves dwelt in Doriath, a mighty forest kingdom known also as "the hidden realm" (Day, 2019, p. 97). King Thingol and the people of Doriath earned their wealth through business with dwarves, who had built their kingdoms in Ered Luin (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 99-100), the mountains that separated Beleriand and the east of Middle-earth (Fonstad, 2001, p. 11). After the arrival of Noldor back in the Middle-earth, Thingol offered them areas of Hithlum, highlands of Dorthonion, and uninhabited lands located east of Doritath (Fonstad, 2001, p. 19). During the colonization of Beleriand, Turgon of Nevrast, one of the Noldor, discovered and examined an unknown territory. A vale, hidden within a ring of rocks. There, he decided to build a hidden city as the reflection of Tirion. Turgon and his people worked in secret for fifty-two years, and when the city was finally completed, it was named Gondolin, the Hidden Rock (Tolkien, 1999, p. 144). The information about the position of the city remained secret. Nobody except a small amount of Noldor knew where Gondolin was (Tolkien, 2014b, p. 44).

The first great battle after the rising of the Sun is known as The Glorious Battle, year sixty of the First Age (Day, 2016, p. 44). The Elves, led by Fingolfin and Maedhros, defeated the forces of Morgoth, and for the next four hundred years, Angband was besieged, which allowed the rest of Beleriand to exist in peace (Tolkien, 1999, p. 131).

The awakening of Men, the Followers, happened at the time corresponding with the first rising of the Sun, therefore, year one of the First Age. The place of this second miracle of life was Hildórien, a land located in the eastern part of Middle-earth (Tolkien, 1999, p. 115). Later, they gradually started with exploration of the western lands. Eventually, in the fourth century of the First Age, they migrated to Beleriand, and later became valuable allies of the Elves against Morgoth (Day, 2019, p. 118). Edain was the name given by the Elves to three houses of Men that entered the lands of Beleriand (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 165-166). However, not all Men were elf-friends. During the fifth century of the First Age, a great number of tribes, led by their chieftain Ulfang, arrived from the east, and joined their forces with Morgoth (Day, 2018, pp. 73, 75).

In the year 455 of the First Age, Morgoth initiated an enormous war, known as The Battle of Sudden Flame. A great portion of Elvish lands was destroyed, the siege of Angband was broken, and the long-lasting peace ended. Fingolfin, the High King of the Noldor, duelled Morgoth himself in front of the gates of Angband. He managed to wound Morgoth, but eventually, he was defeated and killed (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 174 – 179). After Fingolfin's passing, the Elves managed to secure certain locations back under their control, but several were lost (Tolkien, 1999, p. 187).

The story of Beren and Lúthien explains how the blood of the Elves merged with the blood of the Edain (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 189). Beren, son of Barahir, originated from one of the three houses of Edain (Tolkien, 1999, p. 172). One day, he encountered Lúthien, daughter of king Thingol, and a great love developed between them (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 192-193). However, king Thingol would not accept their love but under one condition:

"Bring to me in your hand a Silmaril from Morgoth's crown; and then, if she will, Lúthien may set her hand in yours. Then you shall have my jewel; and though the faith of Arda lie within the Silmarils, yet you shall hold me generous" (Tolkien, 1999, p. 196).

Despite the danger, Beren accepted the offer, and with a great difficulty, he managed to accomplish the mission. However, he was seriously wounded, and passed away due to his injuries. Lúthien sacrificed her immortality in favour of Beren's life. By this action, Beren was resurrected, and their fates were finally bonded (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 219–222). Eventually, they had son, Dior, who had daughter Elwing the White, and of Elwing and her husband Eärendil originated the Kings of Númenor (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 189-190).

Year 472 of the First Age is known because of infamous Battle of Unnumbered Tears (Day, 2016, p. 60). After several days of cruel fights around the area of Angband, the alliance of Elves, Men, and Dwarves was betrayed by a large number of men, who secretly created an alliance with Angband, and Morgoth won. The majority of Elvish kingdoms was destroyed (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 227-233). Many Noldor captured during the war were sent to Morgoth's mines in the north because of their mining and forging skills (Tolkien, 1999, p. 246).

Húrin, the greatest warrior of Edain (Day, 2019, p. 197), was also captured, and imprisoned in Angband (Tolkien, 1999, p. 231). After twenty-eight years of imprisonment, Morgoth pretended mercy, and released Húrin. However, Morgoth was deceitful and Húrin was monitored by his spies (Tolkien, 1999, p. 272). When he reached the area where a secret path to Gondolin was, an approximate location of the city was revealed to Morgoth (Tolkien, 1999, p. 274). Nevertheless, Húrin then travelled to Nargothrond, an abandoned kingdom destroyed by a dragon, and secured a necklace called Nauglamír, the most beautiful work of Dwarves in

the First Age (Tolkien, 1999, p. 277). Nauglamír was given to Thingol, who decided to insert his Silmaril into the necklace. This labour was entrusted to Dwarves, but they claimed the treasure to be theirs. The Dwarves murdered Thingol, and stole Nauglamír with already inserted Silmaril. However, during their escape, many Dwarves were slain by the Elves, who managed to regain Silmaril (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 278-280). In the Blue Mountains, the Dwarves reported a distorted version of what had happened, gathered an army, marched back to Doriath, and assaulted the kingdom. A great amount of Elves and Dwarves perished, but the Dwarves retook the necklace (Tolkien, 1999, p. 281). On their march home, the Dwarves were ambushed by Beren and Green-elves. Beren won, secured Silmaril, and after his passing, his son Dior inherited the treasure (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 282-284). The destruction of Doriath was completed when remaining sons of Fëanor, the creator of the Silmarils, attacked Dior, and mutually slew themselves. The Silmaril was taken to the shores of the sea by Dior's daughter Elwing (Tolkien, 1999, p. 286).

The exact location of Gondolin was finally revealed to Morgoth because of the capturing and torturing of Maeglin, a related of Turgon, the king of Gondolin (Tolkien, 1999, p. 290). Subsequently, an immense army was sent to the city. King Turgon was killed, and the hidden city fell. Not many citizens survived. Among those who managed to escape appeared to be Idril, the king's daughter, and her son Eëarendil (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 290-291).

The survivors from Gondolin settled in delta of river Sirion. However, the sons of Fëanor once again attempted to regain the Silmaril and attacked them. Elwing managed to escape, and decided to jump into the sea, with the jewel around her neck. Nevertheless, she was rescued by Vala Ulmo, who transformed her into a white bird, and in this form she managed to find Eärendil and his ship (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 296-297). Together, they reached the shores of Valinor. Eärendil asked Valar for forgiveness for the Elves and Men, and Valar did forgive. Afterwards, Eärendil's ship Vingilot was raised to the skies, and since that moment, Eärendil has been sailing the night sky with the Silmaril glaring as a bright star in the west (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 297-301).

Following the encounter with Eärendil, Valars' decision was to end Morgoth's terror. Valar entered Middle-earth, the Elves and the three houses of Edain united with them, and together they attacked Angband. The event is known as The War of Wrath and the Great Battle. Morgoth and his forces of darkness were finally defeated, and the two remaining Silmarils secured (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 301-303). However, the enormous scale of the war caused that the north of Middle-earth was transformed, and Beleriand disappeared under water (Day, 2016, pp. 69-70).

Two remaining sons of Fëanor, Maedhros and Maglor, made the last attempt to regain the Silmarils, and, with application of violence, they succeeded. However, because of the evil and crimes they had committed, neither of them could endure the burning touch of the jewels. Maedhros committed suicide by casting himself, and the jewel, into the fiery depths of the earth, and Maglor threw the third Silmaril into the sea (Tolkien, 1999, p. 303-305).

The majority of Eldar, with exceptions such as lady Galadriel, Gil-galad, Celeborn, or Círdan, returned to The Undying Lands (Tolkien, 1999, p. 305-306). Morgoth was punished for eternity, and since then, his prison has been the Timeless Void behind the Walls of the World (Tolkien, 1999, p. 306). This appears to be where the First Age of the Sun reached its end.

1.4 The Second Age

The primary concern of the Second Age is the history of Númenor, an island of the Men in the west. This suggests that despite the fact the Second Age is the longest period of the three ages of the Sun, it appears to be simultaneously least described age for the continent of Middle-earth itself. However, history of Númenor has significant impact on history of Middle-earth, and vice versa.

The Second Age begins with a variety of events following the consequences of the end of the First Age. Peoples of Beleriand migrated to the east, because their former homeland was lost. Therefore, kingdoms of Lindon and Eriador were established, located west of Misty Mountains (Day, 2018, pp. 90-91). Lindon was founded and ruled by Gil-galad. The capital of the kingdom was Mithlond, known also as the Grey Havens, built during the first year of the Second Age (Day, 2019, p. 265). Of three powerful realms of Dwarves built during the First Age, only Khazad-dûm in Misty Mountains endured to the Second Age (Howe, 2018, p. 131). The Dwarves of the lost cities relocated to Khazad-dûm in year forty of the Second Age (Fonstad, 2001, p. 40).

Rewards by Valar to the three houses of Edain who remained loyal during the War of Wrath were generous. Not only extended life and wisdom were given to them (Tolkien, 1999, p. 310), Valar also presented the Edain with a new land, located west of Middle-earth, and east of the Blessed Realm (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 310-311). Majority of Edain abandoned Middle-earth, and the new realm Númenor was built (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1011). However, Valar also determined a condition that people of Númenor were not allowed to sail further to the west and reach the shores of The Undying Lands (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1011).

Eärendil had two sons, Elrond and Elros, who were given a choice whether they desire to live immortal life of Elves, or mortal life of Men. Elrond selected the immortality, Elros decided to accept the mortal life, and became the first king of Númenor (Tolkien, 1999, p. 312). For centuries, power and glory of Númenor were increasing. Númenóreans were competent sailors who occasionally travelled to Middle-earth, and helped local people, who were not prospering during the Second Age, by providing them resources and teaching them crafts (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 312-314). Eventually, after more than two millennia, the beatitude of Númenor reached its maximum level. However, a great amount of people developed a desire for power and immortality, and since then, they did not travel to Middle-earth as saviours, but rather as conquerors. Many harbours were built by Númenóreans in the Second Age. (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 317-319).

The most powerful of Morgoth's followers who survived the War of Wrath was Sauron (Day, 2018, p. 91). After 500 years, Sauron returned to Middle-earth. In year 1000, he fortified himself in a land called Mordor and started building a tower, later known as Barad-dûr (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1058). Originally, in Valinor, Sauron had been one of the Maiar spirits serving Aulë, the smith of Valar. This appears to be the reason why Sauron himself possessed such an extensive knowledge in the craft of forging and blacksmithing (Day, 2018, p. 95). Sauron pretended friendship, and collaborated with Elvish smiths on forging magical rings, known as the Rings of Power (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 236). However, one more ring was secretly created by Sauron himself, in the land of Mordor. Forged in the fires of Mount Doom, the One Ring was designed to control the other Rings (Day, 2019, p. 317). The forging of the One Ring dates to year 1600 of the Second Age (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1058).

"Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky,

Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,

Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,

One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne

In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.

One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,

One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them

In the Land of Mordor where she Shadows lie" (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 49).

When the Elves realized they had been betrayed, they managed to hide their three Rings. On that occasion, Sauron initiated a long-lasting war with the rest of the Middle-earth. The lands of Middle-earth were devastated by the war (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 344-345). Because Sauron was dominant in the war, Elrond decided to build a stronghold in the north, known as Imladris,

in 1697 (Fonstad, 2001, p. 42), serving as a refuge for the Elves (Tolkien, 1999, p. 345). Except for Gil-galad's Lindon and Elrond's Imladris, Middle-earth appeared to be controlled by Sauron, who at that time was in command of Orcs, and further forces of darkness (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 346-347). The nine men who had been given the Rings of Power were corrupted by the Rings, and transformed into Nazgûl, "The Ringwraiths", mighty phantoms serving the Dark Lord of Mordor (Day, 2018, p. 98, 101).

In the third millennium of the Second Age, Númenóreans built a number of harbours and fortresses in Middle-earth, and controlled a majority of the coasts, while Sauron's domination appeared to be focused more or less on inland (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1058).

Ar-Pharazôn the Golden, twenty-fifth king of Númenor (Tolkien, 2019, p. 323), confronted Sauron in matter of pride and power, Sauron capitulated, and was transported to Númenor as a prisoner (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1012). However, Sauron was deceitful, and his capitulation and imprisonment appeared to be a strategic movement. After an elapsed period of time, Sauron managed to manipulate the king, distort his mind and judgement, and gain his trust (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 234-325). As a conclusion, Númenóreans began to worship Melkor, and built him a devoted temple, where they sacrificed individuals who were opposed to this policy. Those Númenóreans, who refused to accept the new regime, titled themselves the "Faithful" (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 326-328). Subsequently, Sauron convinced Ar-Pharazôn that the Valar are his actual enemies (Day, 2016, p. 85). The king gathered an army and sailed to the west, with intention to conquer The Undying Lands. At the moment his fleet approached the shores of the Blessed Realm, Ilúvatar decided to act, and transformed Arda. Númenor was consumed by an enormous split in the sea, the overall size of the World decreased, and The Undying Lands were separated from Arda and displaced into "the realm of hidden things" (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 332-334).

Nine ships of the Faithful, including their leaders Elendil and his sons Isildur and Anárion, managed to escape the destruction, and sailed to Middle-earth (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 335-336). When they reached the shores, Elendil spoke: "Out of the Great Sea to Middle-earth I am come. In this place will I abide, and my heirs, unto the ending of the world" (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 946).

In the north, west of Misty Mountains, Elendil founded a new kingdom Arnor, whereas Isildur and Anárion founded the southern kingdom Gondor (Tolkien, 1999, p. 348). The capitals of those kingdoms were Osgiliath (Gondor), and Annúminas (Arnor). Elendil's sons also built two strongholds. Minas Arnor, located west of Osgiliath, and Minas Ithil in the western direction, at the border with Mordor (Tolkien, 1999, p. 238).

The original physical body of Sauron was destroyed during the fall of Númenor. However, he was able to return to Mordor in a form of a dark shadow, and because of the power of the One Ring, he created a new, dreadful form (Tolkien, 1999, p. 336).

In reaction to Sauron's regaining or power, Elendil and Gil-galad, with intention to end Sauron permanently, formed the Last Alliance of Elves and Men. They battled forces of Sauron on Dagorlad, the Battle Plain, and subsequently sieged Barad-dûr for seven years. Eventually, Sauron was defeated by Isildur, who also gained the possession of the One Ring. However, the price for the victory was enormous, because Elendil, Gil-galad, and also Isildur's brother Anárion had perished during the war (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 352-353).

The Second Age ends with the overthrowing of Sauron in year 3441 (Tolkien, 2014a, 1059).

1.5 The Third Age

The Third Age concerns primarily the history and struggles of the kingdoms of Dúnedain (=Númenóreans), as well as the second rising of Sauron as the Dark Lord of Middle-earth.

After the end of the Second Age and passing of king Gil-galad, the majority of his people settled in Imladris and Grey Havens in Lindon, ruled by Círdan (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 357-358).

In the second year of the Third Age, Isildur was ambushed and killed by the Orcs at Gladden Fields. Since then, the One Ring has been lost for a long period of time in a river (Tolkien, 1999, p. 354). As a consequence of the war with Sauron, Dúnedain of Arnor were weakened, and their city Annúminas fell at the beginning of the Third Age as well (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 238). During the first millennium of the Third Age, Gondor in the south was involved in many war conflicts with Rhûn, a kingdom east of Mordor, and Harad, kingdom south of Gondor (Fonstad, 2001, p. 54). Harad was defeated in 1050. This period also marks the point when Gondor was apparently most powerful (Tolkien, 1999, p. 1060).

With the beginning of the new millennium, a shadow extended over Greenwood, a large forest, home of Elven-king Thranduil and his people. Since then, the forest was known as Mirkwood (Tolkien, 1999, p. 359). It was believed a Necromancer dwells in Dol Guldur, an ancient stronghold in Mirkwood, but in reality, it was the spirit of Sauron (Day, 2018, pp. 125-126). Simultaneously, Istari entered Middle-earth. Five Maia spirits – Saruman the White, Gandalf the Grey, Radagast the Brown, Alatar, and Palando - in forms of wizards (Day, 2019,

p. 202). Sent by Manwë, their purpose was to spread goodwill and oppose Sauron (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 359-360).

Meanwhile in the north, the Lord of the Nazgûl – the "Witch-king", conquered kingdom Angmar, and declared war to Arnor. The conflict lasted for seven centuries (1300 – 1975 of the Third Age), until it reached its end with the Battle of Fornost (Day, 2019, pp. 25, 29). The result of the war was the end of both kingdoms (Day, 2018, p. 150). The Witch-king returned to Mordor, and reunited with the remaining Ringwraiths (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1027). During the war with Angmar (year 1601), an area in Arnor, later known as the Shire, was populated by Hobbits, migrating from the east (Howe, 2018, p. 15). After the war ended, the Shire became independent (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1018).

Situation in the south appeared to be different. While the north of Middle-earth was in the war, Gondor was prospering (Fonstad, 2001, p. 56). However, it changed in 1636, when a plague killed a great number of Gondor's population (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1061). In 2002, the Ringwraiths conquered Minas Ithil, and controlled the stronghold, since then known as Minas Morgul, until the Third Age ended (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1027). Gondor's reaction was renaming Minas Anor to Minas Tirith, and the two cities were in war conflict ever since. The last king of Gondor was Eärnur, who rode to Minas Morgul with intention to duel the Witch-king, and never returned. Since Eärnur did not have a successor, Gondor was ruled by the Stewards for twenty-six generations (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 356-357). As the war progressed, Osgiliath was destroyed by Orcs in 2475 (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1028), and Minas Tirith became the capital of Gondor (Day, 2019, p. 173).

The kingdom of Rohan was established at the time of Cirion, the twelfth Steward, when the Rohirrim helped Gondor in a battle at Field of Celebrant. Out of gratitude, Cirion rewarded Rohirrim with the land (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 663). They had arrived from the north, led by Eorl the Young (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 420), who, in 2510, also became the first king of Rohan. Since then, Rohirrim has been allies of Gondor (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1039).

Khazad-dûm, the ancient kingdom of the Dwarves, appeared to be the only place in Arda where mithril, material ten times more valuable than gold, could be found (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 309). At the time of Durin VI., the extraction of mithril awoke a Balrog, who apparently survived the War of Wrath. Durin was slain, and the dwarves of Khazad-dûm had to abandon their kingdom. Durin's grandson, Thráin I., established kingdom of Erebor in the north in 1999. Further dwellings of the Dwarves in the Third Age were the Grey Mountains and the Iron Mountains (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1046). However, the Grey Mountains had to be abandoned as well, since that part of the north was inhabited by dragons (Howe, 2018, p. 151). During the

last three centuries of the Third Age, the dwarves in the north were dealing with several war conflicts with Orcs, which resulted into the Battle of the Five Armies (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 1063-1064), located in front of Erebor, in 2941 (Day, 2016, p. 136). Armies of Elves, Men, and Dwarves stood against armies of Orcs and wild Wolves (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 264). Eventually, Orcs and Wolves were defeated, and Dáin II. became the king of Erebor (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1052).

The White Council was a gathering formed with intention to monitor the Shadow in Mirkwood, and situation regarding the Rings of Power. The members were Saruman, Gandalf, Galadriel, Círdan, Elrond, and other lords of Eldar (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 360-361). The founder of the Council appears to be Galadriel (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 346), and the first gathering dates to 2463, the same year, when the One Ring was secured by Sméagol, later known as a creature called Gollum (Tolkien, 2014a, p.1062). Eventually, the White Council decided to act, and Sauron was ejected from Mirkwood not long before the Battle of the Five Armies (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 46). The Dark Lord returned to Mordor, where the Ringwraiths and armies of Orcs were already gathered, and re-claimed his throne in Barad-dûr (Tolkien, 1999, p. 363).

After his return to Isengard, a great stronghold where he dwelt, Saruman gradually became corrupted by his increasing desire for power and for the One Ring (Day, 2019, p. 327).

The War of the Ring begun when the position of the One was revealed. Since the Battle of the Five Armies, the Ring dwelt in the Shire. Fortunately, it appeared to be Gandalf who learned the information first, and he managed to prepare several arrangements. Hobbit Frodo and his servant undertook a great and difficult journey to the land of Mordor, and to the Mount Doom (essentially, the only place where the Ring could be destroyed [Howe, 2018, p. 72].), whereas Aragorn, the rightful heir of Isildur, with allies more or less from Gondor and Rohan, simultaneously resisted armies of Sauron and Saruman (Tolkien, 1999, pp. 363 – 365). The three greatest battles of the war could be considered the Battle of the Hornburg, the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, and the Battle of the Black Gate (Day, 2016, p. 147). The spirit of Sauron perished with the destruction of the One Ring in 3019, March 25 (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1069). The destruction of the Ring happened simultaneously with the Battle of the Black Gate (Day, 2018, pp. 339, 343 – 344).

When Sauron was defeated, Aragorn claimed his right for the throne. Therefore, the kingdoms of Gondor and Arnor were restored and united again (Tolkien, 1999, p. 365). The power of the Three Rings of Elves had perished with the destruction of the One Ring, and when the kingdoms of Dúnedain were restored, the bearers of the rings, along with the rest of the Eldar, left Middle-earth and sailed to The Undying Lands (Tolkien, 1999, p. 366). The event of

the departure of the Three Rings marks the end of the Third Age in September 3021 (Tolkien, 1999, p. 1009).

"And latest of all the Keepers of the Three Rings rode to the Sea, and Master Elrond took the ship that Círdan had made ready. In the twilight of autumn, it sailed out of Mithlond, … into the Ancient West, and an end was come for the Eldar of story and of song" (Tolkien, 1999, p. 366).

2. Characteristics of Middle-earth

This chapter contains extending information to chapter one about the continent of Middle-earth, regarding its geographical features, peoples, and significance of evil powers throughout its history.

2.1 Geography

Chapter one mentions many locations and geographical aspects. To facilitate orientation, maps of Beleriand (see Figure 1), and the Third Age Middle-earth (see Figure 2) are included.

The mountain ranges of Ered Luin (east of Beleriand in Figure 1, and the west coast of Eriador in Figure 2) suggest the mutual positions of the locations. The most extensive mountain range appears to be Misty Mountains, extending through the central part of Middle-earth. According to Howe (2018, p. 70), Misty Mountains were a strategic creation of Melkor against the mobility of Oromë, the huntsman of Valar. The strategic aspect of mountains appears to be important throughout the whole history. Not only mountains served as inhabitancy, primary to the Dwarves, they imply to be natural protection to several kingdoms and strongholds as well, for example to Gondolin in the First Age, or to the land of Mordor in the Second and the Third Age.

Whereas mountains are primarily the domain of the Dwarves, the Elves appear to dwell in forest kingdoms. The history of the First Age highlights the kingdom of Doriath, and during the Second and the Third Age, the examples of significant Elvish realms could be the kingdom of Thranduil in Mirkwood, and Lothlórien, which Day (2019, p. 228) mentions in regards to its beauty, and its protection by the power of Nenya, one of the Three Rings of the Elves.

Figure 2 presents that Gondor and Arnor, as well as Rohan and the Shire, appear to be primarily plains. This suggests that Men and Hobbits might prefer open fields over areas naturally protected either by forests or mountains.

2.2 Peoples of Middle-earth

2.2.1 Elves

Tolkien (1999, pp. 50, 55) explains the Elves are divided into the Eldar (Teleri, Vaynar, and Noldor), and Sindar (the Elves, who never migrated to The Undying Lands). The noble and formal language of the Eldar is called Quenya, whereas Sindar developed more or less a colloquial tongue, known as Sindarin (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 1101, 1102). Alphabets and writings

appear to be developed by the Elves as well. Tengwar (see figure 3) for written texts (by Eldar), and Cirth (see figure 4), for stone and wood carving (by Sindar) (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1091). Arguably, the most significant difference that separates the Elves and the remaining races is their immortality. The theme of immortality appears to be present throughout Tolkien's entire mythology.

2.2.2 Dwarves

To a certain extent, the eldest race in Middle-earth. Their passion for mining, craft, precious metals, and gemstones might be justified by their origin, since they were created by Aulë, the Smith of Valar. Despite the fact the history portrays conflicts of the Dwarves and the Elves, according to Tolkien (2014a, p. 1006) "they are not evil by nature, and few ever served the Enemy of free will". As for languages, the Dwarves do have their own tongue, however, since they appear to be secretive by nature, they do not share it with other races, and generally use the language of Men (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1106).

2.2.3 Men

Since the Elves are blessed with immortality, and the Dwarves are able to live for several centuries, according to a family tree in *The Lord of the Rings* (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1054), the life duration of Men appears to be the shortest of the three ancient races. The exception are Númenóreans, who were rewarded with extended life by Valar. The race of Men possibly inhabits more or less every part of described Middle-earth. However, throughout the history, many happened to be allies of the evil forces, particularly people of Haradwaith and Umbar in the south, and Easterlings (Day, 2018, p. 140). The language of Men in the western kingdoms of Middle-earth is known as Common speech (Tolkien, 2014a, p. 1103).

2.2.4 Hobbits

The Hobbits are diminutive humanoids, who do not appear to be interested in industrialization, magic, or power. Instead, they create impression of a peaceful nation, interested in comfort, quality cuisine, beverages, and entertainment. Three branches of Hobbits, Harfoots, Stoors, and Fallohides, settled in Eriador in the Third Age (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 1-3). Despite the appearance that the Hobbits are rather insignificant people with absence of power and further heroic abilities, the contribution of their race to the defeat of Sauron proved to be essential.

2.3 Evil powers of Middle-earth

Conflict between good and evil might be considered the theme that formed the history, and apparently influenced the geography as well, of Arda. With the question of the nature of evil itself is concerned a paragraph in the subchapter 3.1 below. This actual subchapter covers the dark powers that appear to have a major influence on the continent.

The history of Middle-earth suggests the essential symbols of evil and corrupted morality are portrayed in the two Dark Lords, Morgoth (originally Melkor), and Sauron. Day (2016, pp. 144, 146) argues the primary difference between Morgoth and Sauron is their motivation. Morgoth appears to despise Ilúvatar and Valar, which suggests his intention was the destruction of their creations, whereas Sauron's motivation appears to be desire for domination over Middle-earth, possibly the most significantly portrayed through the Rings of Power being controlled by the Dark Lord's One Ring.

However, despite the different motivations, both Morgoth and Sauron utilized corruption and violence to achieve their objectives. To a certain extent, those two aspects are portrayed in the race of Orcs, who served both Dark Lords as instruments and the main executors of their plans. Throughout the history, Orcs are divided into five breeds – Snaga, Uruk-hai, Half-Orcs, Wolf-riders, and Goblins (Day, 2018, p. 30), with Uruk-hai, bred during the Third Age, being arguably the most powerful (Day, 2018, p. 161).

In addition, Morgoth and Sauron both commanded creatures of darkness, who gave the impression of being significantly more powerful than Orcs. Examples of such beings might be Sauron's Nazgûl, the nine Ringwraiths, originally rulers and sorcerers of eastern and southern kingdoms, transformed into lethal phantoms by the Rings of Power (Day, 2018, pp. 98, 101), whereas Morgoth was in control of Balrogs, the fire Maiar spirits.

The dragons of Middle-earth are divided into Cold-drakes, Uruloki Fire-drakes, and Winged Fire Drakes (Day, 2018, p. 30). The historically significant dragons appear to be Glaurung, who destroyed Nargothrond in the First Age (Tolkien, 1999, p. 276), Ancalagon, "the greatest dragon to ever enter this world", killed by Eärendil in the War of Wrath (Day, 2018, pp. 79, 82), and Smaug the Golden, the greatest dragon of the Third Age, who conquered Erebor, and eventually was killed by Bard of Esgaroth, preceding the Battle of the Five Armies (Tolkien, 2014a, pp. 1047, 1052).

3. J.R.R. Tolkien and his creative process

An efficient method how the works as *The Silmarillion, The Lord of the Rings,* or *The Hobbit* might be understood to a greater extent is to possess knowledge about their author. This chapter provides essential information on J.R.R. Tolkien in regards to his creative process of his lifelong literary work.

3.1 Experiences and philosophy

A major aspect portrayed in his work that appears to have roots in childhood of the British author, is his love for nature, especially for trees. In 1896, his family moved to countryside in West Midlands, where he and his brother spent a great portion of time exploring the surroundings (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 35-36). Young Tolkien also expressed interest in botany and trees. He considered it enjoyable to be in the presence of trees, and talk to them (Carpenter, 2016, p. 38). His affection for nature was essentially emotionally reinforced after his mother's passing, because, according to Carpenter (2016, p. 52), he associated memory of her with that particular part of his childhood. His positive attachment to the nature suggests that the industrialization at the expense of landscape during the twentieth century, including both world wars, genuinely disturbed him. Carpenter's biography (2016, p. 170) provides a quotation from Tolkien's diary, in which he named this issue "violent and peculiarly hideous change". This attitude towards industrialization is on many occasions projected in his stories. Shippey (2005, pp. 193-194) suggests the passages with Saruman in *The Lord of the Rings* as an obvious depiction of the attitude.

The first half of the twentieth century is inseparably connected with the two world wars. It appears to be generally known Tolkien was a First World War veteran, and to a certain extent, the experience from the Great War influenced his work as well. In a letter to his son, Christopher, Tolkien (2014b, p. 6) claims "I first began to write [*The Silmarillion*] in army huts, crowded, filled with the noise of gramophones", and eventually, those first narrative texts from 1916-17 later became the story of the fall of Gondolin. Arguably, the strongest representation of soldiers in the Great War is the character of Samwise Gamgee, the companion of Frodo on his quest to destroy the One Ring in *The Lord of the Rings*. Confirmed by Tolkien himself, Samwise was inspired by a "batman", a private with duty to serve a specific officer he had been assigned to (Carpenter, 2016, p.144). The role of Samwise is more or less identical, with the exception there is a powerful bond of friendship between Samwise and Frodo. However, the location of Mordor in the east was according to Tolkien a "simple narrative and geographical

necessity", and was not meant to resemble German Reich during the Second World War, nor the totalitarian Soviet Union (Carpenter, 2016, p. 252).

The power of love appears to be a major theme in the story of Beren and Lúthien. The character of Lúthien is to a certain extend based on Tolkien's wife Edith (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 135-136). Tolkien's devotion to Edith, including separation during the war, appears to be portrayed in the story of Beren's quest.

Another major subject of Tolkien's work appears to be an idea that power corrupts, possibly the most evidently represented by the One Ring. However, this suggests that the nature of evil in Tolkien's work might not be as one dimensional as in many other literary writings. According to Shippey (2005, p. 166), Tolkien's frequent usage of the word "shadow" represents the author's perspective on evil – as a shadow is absence of light, evil is absence of good. This might indicate that the evil cannot exist without good. This idea, combined with implication that power corrupts, suggests the line between evil and good is most often narrow or even intertwined, and such object as "an absolute evil" probably does not exist, since the word "corrupted" more or less means "transformed into evil".

Tolkien's philosophy regarding writing descriptive fiction was more or less based on his opinion that experiences an author collects within the first half of life are sufficient enough for forming the imagination, and during the later phases of life it matures and no new experience is required (Carpenter, 2016, p. 171). This might be also related to the fact that despite his work being vastly descriptive, with a great amount of locations included, Tolkien himself did not appear to be interested in traveling (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 168-169). This to a certain extent indicates how extraordinary the imagination and perfectionism of Tolkien were.

The influence of Tolkien's Christian faith is on many occasions noticeable in his work as well. Shippey (2005, p. 198) claims the positive ending of Tolkien's stories have foundations in the Christianity, as he believed that things are predestined to end happily. However, Tolkien himself apparently believed, that since he was writing fantasy, he was not obligated to precisely follow the principles of Christianity. An example might be the Elves and the question of their immortality – no purgatory, no heaven and hell, and in case of their passing, their spirits travel to the Halls of Mandos, and after a certain period of time, they are able to return (Shippey, 2005, pp. 268-269).

3.2 Reasons and motivations for creating the mythology

The Silmarillion (Tolkien, 1999, pp. xii – xxxi) contains a copy of letter to Milton Waldman, in which Tolkien explains the reasons why he had decided to create his own fictional world. According to the letter, Tolkien was passionate about literature and inventing his own stories since early childhood. However, what concerned him, was despite the fact the old stories were to a certain extend connected to Great Britain, the emphasis on languages, especially English, was absent. Therefore, his intention was to create legends that would reflect Great Britain's culture, including the aspect of English language. Prior to writing narrative stories in the style of novels, Tolkien wrote an epic poem about Eärendil in 1914, which Carpenter (2016, p. 102) identified as "the beginning of Tolkien's own mythology". When he invented his own language, Quenya, he reached a decision that a language require history and people who use it. As the result, Quenya became the language of the Elves, and Tolkien began further development of his story of Eärendil (Carpenter, 2016, p. 108). The aspect of the Great War apparently influenced Tolkien's motivation as well. G. B. Smith, Tolkien's friend from school, passed away as a consequence of a war injury. However, not a long period of time prior to his passing, he wrote a letter to Tolkien, in which he encouraged Tolkien to "say things" that had been subject of their discussion. This appears to be the impulse for Tolkien that affirmed his intention to create his complex mythology (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 121, 126).

3.3 Languages

"The invention of languages is the foundation. The "stories" were rather to provide a world for the languages rather than in reverse" - quotation of Tolkien in Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth* (2005, p. 28).

Tolkien was fascinated by languages since early childhood, when he began with study of English and Latin, attracted to sounds and shapes of the words (Carpenter, 2016, p. 38). During his adolescence, he studied Old English and Greek (Carpenter, 2016, p. 38), Germanic languages, and Old Norse texts, and as he developed a strong bond to the languages and their sounds, his own language inventing appeared to be a logical outcome (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 55-56). As a student of Oxford, he discovered Finnish language and mythology (Carpenter, 2016, p. 86), to a certain extent the major influence on *The Silmarillion*, as Quenya is based on linguistic style of Finnish (Shippey, 2005, p. 275). Regarding his career as a linguist and university teacher, his main subjects were Middle English, Old English and history of English language (Shippey, 2005, p. 6). However, on emotional level, languages that he considered the

most pleasant sound wise appeared to be, according to Carpenter (2016, pp. 177-178), Finnish, Welsh, and Gothic.

A great number of characters and locations in his mythology suggest that Tolkien was enthusiastic about names. A majority of the languages he admired and studied were to a certain extent utilized in his fictional world, most often in names. According to Tolkien himself (2015, pp. 22, 32), names of the characters with origin in the north of Middle-earth are based on the "Northern tongues in our own time", as well as the names of Númenóreans that are derived from Quenya, which indicates the connection to Finnish language. Shippey (2005, p. 395) points out *Kalevala*, Finnish national epic poetry, as Tolkien's primary source of Finnish language and legends. Additionally, Shippey (2005, p. 132) also mentions Old Norse as the foundation for the names and characteristics of the Dwarves. In *Unfinished Tales* (Tolkien, 2014b, p. 14), Christopher Tolkien claims that "In his last years my father wrote much concerning etymology of names in Middle-earth".

With intention to reflect the British culture, English appears to be an integral part of the work. Since English apparently represents Common Speech of Middle-earth, the language of Rohirrim is derived from Old English, as their tongue is essentially related to Common Speech, but different in several aspects (Tolkien, 2015, pp. 20, 21). Shippey (2005, p. 139) also points out the riders of Rohan to a certain extent resemble Anglo-Saxons. While Quenya is primarily based on Finnish, Sindarin and Gondor names possess linguistic patterns of the Welsh, as well as the Sindarin language itself (Shippey, 2005, pp. 131, 275).

3.4 Inspirations

Tolkien's cultural inspirations were most often linked with the languages he was interested in, because along with the languages of those particular cultures, he studied their legends and mythologies as well. This suggests he was affected primarily by Finnish, Scandinavian, Germanic, Celtic, and Greek mythology, as well as by the culture of Great Britain.

English literature was possibly one of his first encounters with fiction and adventurous stories. Arthurian legends and *Alice in Wonderland* are examples of works he admired since childhood (Carpenter, 2016, p. 39). Day (2019, p. 29) mentions the resemblance between king Arthur and Aragorn, as Tolkien's archetypal hero. Old English poems with major impact on Tolkien were apparently *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Shippey, 2005, p. 105). As they are epic poems, it might be assumed Tolkien admired the combination of poetic

style written in Old English and the narrative aspect. Eventually, Tolkien's own poems, such as the "Song of Eärendil", are built on the similar foundations – poems narrating a heroic story. Moreover, the area of the Shire is more or less the author's implementation of West Midlands England into the mythology, along with the protagonist of *The Hobbit*, Bilbo Baggins, who appears to be a direct reflection of the author himself, regarding his English nature and mentality (Carpenter, 2016, pp. 233-234). Existence of objects such as "pipewood" or "fish and chips" in the fictional world suggests, according to Shippey (2005, p. 79), Tolkien's effort to portray Hobbits as Englishmen. The word "hobbit" itself has the origin in Old English word "hol-bytla", meaning "hole-dweller" (Shippey, 2005, p. 76).

The Old Norse mythology inspiration resembles more or less throughout Tolkien's entire work. Carpenter (2016, p. 127) presents Midgard as the equivalent to Middle-earth, and Day (2019, p. 21) argues The Undying Lands might have been inspired by Alfheim. Both of the worlds are part of the nine connected realms in the Norse mythology. Besides, Day (2016, p.165) is convinced the positive qualities of Odin, the highest Norse God and sorcerer, are portrayed through the character of Gandalf, whereas his negative attributes were given to Sauron. A significant fragment in the creation process of the race of Dwarves was to a certain extent an Old Norse poem *Völuspá*, which associates the race with stone and mining, and in addition apparently inspired the names of the Dwarves in *The Hobbit* (Shippey, 2005, pp. 70, 390). Besides languages, a notable aspect of Tolkien's fantasy that resembles Old Norse sagas is a great number of complex family trees of the characters (Shippey, 2005, p. 282). North-West Europe legends and folklore are frequently concerned with dragons and elves (Shippey, 2005, p. 270), which suggests the influence of Celtic culture in Tolkien's work, particularly Welsh and Irish (Day, 2019, p.82).

"*The Lord of the Rings* is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work" – Tolkien in a letter to a friend in 1953 (Shippey, 2005, p. 230). The importance of Christianity in Tolkien's work is already outlined in the subchapter 3.1 above. In addition, Carpenter (2016, p. 128) mentions the resemblance of Tolkien's myth of creation to Christianity – one God and his angelic beings, out of which one of the angels starts a rebellion. This analogy suggests Melkor might have been inspired by Lucifer. Out of Christian literary works, Shippey (2005, pp. 276, 390) points out *Paradise Lost*, in relation to the Elves and question of their homes in either Middle-earth or The Undying Lands, and *Exodus*, in regard of it being a Christian material with a heroic narrative, which was assumingly a combination Tolkien appreciated.

Further noteworthy inspiration appears to be the legend of Atlantis and its flooding. In the biography by Carpenter (2016, p. 227), one of the paragraphs describes Tolkien's recurring

nightmare about a destructive wave of water, which Tolkien himself named "Atlantis-haunting". The legend of Atlantis and its subsequent destruction is, to a certain extent, comparable to the story of Númenor and its fall.

Conclusion

The essential features of Tolkien's complex work of fantasy portrayed and explained in this thesis guide the reader through the author's fictional world, with the intention to provide and extend knowledge of the mythology itself, exclusively concentrated on the continent of Middle-earth, as well as the author and his creative process. The reader is presented with carefully selected and verified information summarised into this single document that should, to a certain extent, create a general understanding of the complex work without the necessity of studying a great amount of writings, which appears to be a time consuming process, and in addition, possibly build a greater appreciation towards Tolkien and his work, as well as toward the fantasy genre in general.

Chapter one, divided into five major subchapters, outlines the essential events and aspects of the history of Middle-earth and several further locations and elements that, to a certain extent, directly influenced the continent. The first subchapter provides information on divine beings of Tolkien's mythology, and introduces the fictional world and its origins, regarding the myth of creation. The subsequent subchapters, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, each portray a different period of time, "Ages", in chronological order. The Ages of the Stars are concerned with arise of Morgoth, the first Dark Lord of Middle-earth, and with the race of Elves as the first Children of Ilúvatar. The major theme of The First Age is more or less the war between the Elves and Morgoth, and the period additionally introduces the race of Men, the second Children of Ilúvatar. The history of the Second Age deals with the legend of Númenor and its eventual downfall, whereas Middle-earth is terrorised by Sauron, a former servant of Morgoth and the second Dark Lord of Middle-earth, who arises through the creation of the Rings of Power and the One Ring. The Third Age closes the described history of Middle-earth, and therefore also the first chapter of this thesis by portraying primarily the development of Arnor and Gondor, kingdoms of Númenóreans in Middle-earth, and the definitive defeat of Sauron by destroying the One Ring.

Chapter two analyses selected aspects of Middle-earth into a greater depth, to complete the reader's understanding of the mythology and aspects that formed its history. The Geography subchapter's focal point is the continent itself in regards of the landscape, and its relation and importance to the peoples living in it. With the attachment of the maps in appendices, it might facilitate the reader's orientation in the great number of locations occurring in the history. The following subchapter, 2.2, individually examines the significant characteristics of the major races of Middle-earth, the Elves, the Dwarves, the Men, and the Hobbits, their differences, and

culture. Since one of the essential themes of Tolkien's work is the conflict between good and evil, the final segment of chapter two, subchapter 2.3. is exclusively concerned with major dark forces of Middle-earth, primarily focusing on the two Dark Lords, Morgoth and Sauron, and their servants.

Chapter three provides the reader information about the author himself, significant background aspects and circumstances, and their role in the process of writing. Four subchapters concern with Tolkien's personality, to a certain extent his philosophy, and his motivation for writing this complex work of fiction, as well as with the importance of languages and their incorporation into the mythology, and other, most often ancient myths, legends and cultural aspects that influenced his work.

Tolkien's mythology appears to be a complex work that eventually might serve as an inspiration to many people in several fields of study, such as linguistics, history, literature, or philosophy. However, to appreciate it to the extent as the author originally intended, it requires to be understood in its entirety. This thesis, as a consequence of a careful and detailed research, provides a fundamental material explaining Tolkien's work, which might serve as the starting point and impulse for the reader to examine the fictional world, its author, or languages even to a further extent, and expand the knowledge and understanding of fantasy genre, or literature in general.

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Appendices

Figure 1: The map of Beleriand during the First Age (Theonering.com, Map of Beleriand during the First Age)

Figure 2: Map of Middle-earth during the Third Age (Theonering.com, Map of Middle-earth)
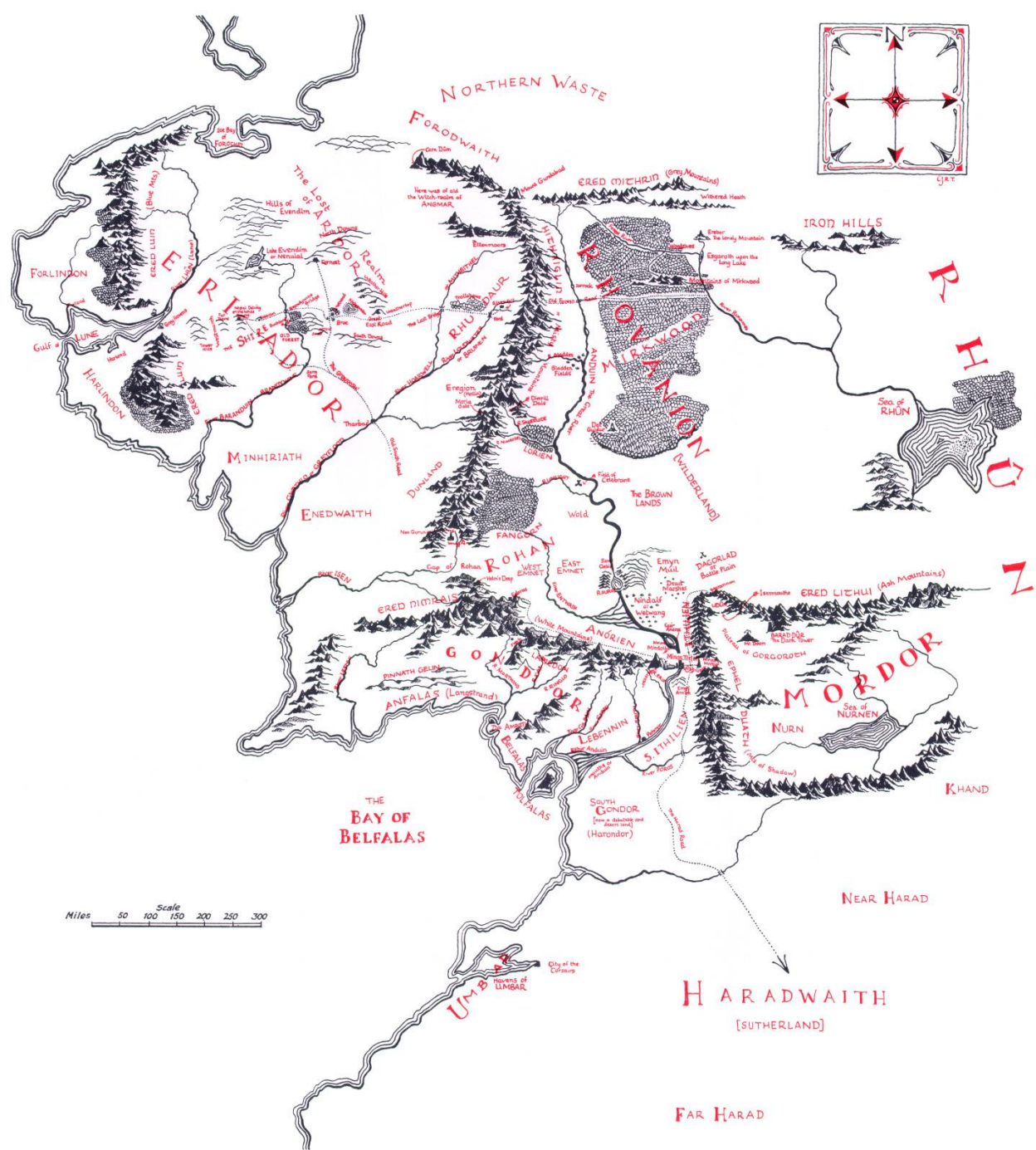
Figure 3: Tengwar alphabet (Omniglot.com, Tengwar alphabet for English)

Consonants

t	p	ch(ew)	c/k	d	b	j	g
[t]	[p]	[tʃ]	[k]	[d]	[b]	[ʤ]	[g]
th(ree)	f	sh	(e)ch(o)	th(e)	v	(a)z(ure)	gh(ost)
[θ]	[f]	[ʃ]	[k]	[ð]	[v]	[ʒ]	[g]
n	m	n(ew)	(ki)ng	(fo)r	w	y	qu
[n]	[m]	[ɲ]	[ŋ]	[ɹ]	[w]	[j]	[k]
r	l	ll	s	s/c	z	z	h
[r/ɹ]	[l]	[l]	[s]	[s]	[z]	[z]	[h]
wh	y	w	th(omas)	ph	ck/ch	the	of
[w/ʍ]	[j]	[w]	[t]	[f]	[k]		
(ri)gh(t)	pp	tt	ll	mm	nt	mp	nc
qu(iet)	and	of the	a/an	on	in		

Vowels & diphthongs

a	e	i	o	u	aa	ee	ii
oo	uu	ai	ei	oi	ui	au	eu
iu	ou/ow	ea	ae	oe			

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Figure 4: Cirth alphabet (Makealang.blogspot.com, Tolkien's Alphabets)

Cirth

Rune	Value
ᛈ	p
ᚱ	b
ᚲ	f
ᛉ	v
ᛔ	hw
ᛒ	m
ᛇ	mb
ᚷ	t
ᚠ	d
ᛁ	th
ᛃ	dh
ᛏ	r

Rune	Value
ᚺ	ch
ᚼ	ks
ᚴ	j
ᚮ	sh
ᚯ	zh
ᚦ	k
ᚵ	g
ᚢ	kh
ᚤ	gh
ᛁ	n
ᚱ	kw
ᛘ	gw

Rune	Value
ᚤ	khw
ᛘ	ghw
ᛏ	ngw
ᚳ	nw
ᚴ	g
ᚶ	gh
ᛐ	l
ᛝ	-
ᛞ	nd
ᚦ	s
ᚲ	s
ᚷ	ŋ

Rune	Value
ᛤ	ng
ᛗ,ᛘ	ou/ow
ᛁ	i
ᚴ	y
ᛂ	hy
ᛢ	u
ᛢ	z
ᛩ	w
ᚴ,ᚴ	ü
ᚻ	e
ᚺ	ee
ᚿ	a

Rune	Value
ᛒ	aa
ᚲ	o
ᛝ	oo
ᚴ	ŏ
ᚤ	n
ᚴ	h
ᚴ	e
ᚦ	u
ᛈ	ps
ᚴ	ts
ᚼ	-h
ᛋ	&

Sample

·ᚱᚢᚻᛁᚤ ᚲᛁᚤᛚᚨᚱᚱᛩᚤᛉᛁᚤᛏᛚᛏᚲᛚᚨᚱᛒᛇᛏᛁᚿ·

Résumé

Bakalářská práce je zaměřena na historii a charakteristiky Středozemě v díle britského autora J. R. R. Tolkiena. Pečlivým studiem jak primárních zdrojů, tedy materiálů, které napsal sám Tolkien, tak sekundárních zdrojů, tedy materiálů napsaných autory zabývajícími se Tolkienovým dílem či autorem samotným, byly vybrány základní a důležité informace takovým způsobem, aby vytvořily určitý celek, který dá čtenáři této práce základní povědomí a přehled týkající se jak Tolkienova fiktivního světa, tak Tolkiena jako autora samotného.

Annotation

Jméno a příjmení:	Jakub Červinka
Katedra nebo ústav:	Ústav cizích jazyků
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Petr Anténe, M.A., Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2022

Název práce:	Historie a charakteristika Středozemě v díle J. R. R. Tolkiena
Název práce v angličtině:	History and characteristics of Middle-earth in the work of J. R. R. Tolkien
Anotace práce:	Hlavní cíle této práce jsou vylíčit historii fiktivního světa Středozemě a nastínit jeho základní charakteristiky. Dále také seznámit čtenáře s autorem samotným, jeho přístupem k napsání díla a jeho inspiracemi a zkušenostmi, které toto dílo pomohly zformovat.
Klíčová slova:	Tolkien, Středozem, historie, charakteristika, jazyky, inspirace, Elfové, Lidé, Trpaslíci, Hobiti, Prsten, Morgoth, Sauron, První věk, Druhý věk, Třetí věk
Anotace práce v angličtině	The project outlines major events of the history of Middle-earth, provides characteristics of Tolkien's fictional world, and presents information about the author and his approach to the writing process, including his inspirations, importance of languages, and life experiences.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Tolkien, Middle-earth, history, characteristics, languages, inspirations, the Elves, the Dwarves, the Hobbits, ring, Morgoth, Sauron, the First Age, the Second Age, the Third Age
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Mapa Beleriandu (Figure 1), Mapa Středozemě (Figure 2), abeceda Tengwar (Figure 3), Abeceda Cirth (Figure 4)
Rozsah práce:	38 stran
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk