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- Introduction
- 1. Introduction to the Author
- 2. Classification of the Inheritance Cycle
- 3. Summary of the Inheritance Cycle
- 4. Literary Influences
- Conclusion

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- Bickers, James. "Christopher Paolini." Publishers Weekly 250, no. 51 (December 22, 2003): 28. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 6, 2015).
- Macauley, Michael. The Inheritance Almanac: An A to Z Guide to the World of Eragon. London: Doubleday, 2010.
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- Tolkien, J. R. R. The Hobbit. 1937. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2014.
- . The Lord of the Rings. 1968. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.

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Introduction

Christopher Paolini is a contemporary young fantasy writer who managed to accomplish a goal most writers only dream of, being sold worldwide. He dedicated the majority of his free time to research and reading of many books of the fantasy genre. Several of these books influenced his writing.

The aim of this thesis is to select and examine the most influential books in which I can find elements that bear a resemblance to the elements in his fantasy world. In order to do so, I need to consult the pieces of literature that Christopher Paolini studied and enjoyed reading.

The initial part of the thesis focuses on the description of his life and his work. In the first chapter I summarize his life, and I mention the books that are particularly influential. The second chapter provides the classification of the Inheritance Cycle. In the third chapter I introduce the fantasy world of Christopher Paolini as such. This description is convenient for the next chapter on Literary Influences because it helps with the indication of the particular elements Paolini borrowed from the books he was inspired by. I describe only the elements that are either important for the novels, for my research or for both at once. The elements are systematically ordered.

The final part of the thesis provides the list of the most influential books for Paolini's world according to my point of view and analyzes the elements' resemblance. The elements are divided into their own sub-chapters for the sake of orderliness.

1) Introduction to the Author

This chapter does not need any special description as it is clear it covers the life of Christopher Paolini. For this purpose I draw information from two biographies—*Christopher Paolini* by Jill C. Wheeler and *Christopher Paolini* by Lisa Wade McCormick, and I occasionally support the facts with a few articles.

Christopher Paolini was born in Southern California on 17 November 1983—to Talita and Kenneth Paolini. The entire family moved to Alaska where Christopher’s father worked for a publishing company. Kenneth could then establish his own publishing company called Paolini International with his publishing experience when they moved to Paradise Valley in Montana. This place was also significant for Christopher’s fantasy world with its magnificent sceneries: “The Beor Mountains--the 10-mile-high mountains in Eragon--are simply an extreme exaggeration of the Beartooth Mountains where I live. When the sun is setting--the mountains with deep shadows on one side and gilded on the other--it really is the stuff of fantasy.”¹

Paolini was taught at home along with his younger sister Angela by his parents, particularly by his mother, who used to be a teacher, and therefore could receive a proper education—his parents wanted to provide him with something more important: “They did not just want Christopher and Angela to learn facts. They wanted them to learn how to think.”² Christopher’s studies at home proved to be worthwhile, and he managed to graduate from a distance-learning high school at fifteen, and since then has focused on his writing and later on publishing. He became famous in this way but at what cost? It took its toll because he deprived himself of social experiences typical of average teenagers “while most teenage boys were worried about who to ask to the prom, Paolini was thinking about print runs and publicity junkets.”³ Furthermore, Christopher “spent his young-adult years on the banks of the Yellowstone River in Montana, dreaming up an imaginary land filled with heroes and dragons” rather than living a life among friends.⁴

While Christopher had enough time for himself not having to attend a school, he spent his time reading books, most importantly, the books of the fantasy genre. McCormick states that Christopher Paolini “studied books written by his favorite

¹ “Christopher Paolini,” *Writer (Kalmbach Publishing Co.)* 117, no. 3 (2004):66.

² Jill C. Wheeler, *Christopher Paolini* (Edina: ABDO Publishing Company, 2007), 8.

³ James Bickers, “Christopher Paolini,” *Publishers Weekly* 250, no. 51 (2003): 28.

⁴ Bryon Cahill, “Magic and Dragons and Writing... Oh, My!” *Writing* 29, no. 4 (2007): 18.

authors, including J. R. R. Tolkien (*Lord of the Rings*), David Eddings (*The Ruby Knight*), E.R. Eddison (*The Worm Ouroboros*), Frank Herbert (*Dune*), Anne McCaffrey (The Dragonriders of Pern), and Philip Pullman (His Dark Materials).”⁵ Moreover, she mentions that he “also researched Norse mythology and Seamus Heaney’s translation of *Beowulf*.”⁶ Wheeler enlarges the list of Paolini’s favourite books by *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*, and she also claims that Paolini read more than 3,000 books.⁷ Furthermore, Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock claims that “the mechanism of language-based magic takes its inspiration from Ursula K. Le Guin’s depiction of wizards and their shaky relationships with dragons developed in her ‘Earthsea’ novels (1968-2001).”⁸ The range of the books Christopher Paolini was inspired by and borrowed ideas from is rather large, and his novels are for that reason described as highly derivative, nevertheless the novels can be considered a success.⁹ After all, sometimes and in this case it counts— bad publicity is still publicity, and the numbers tell their own tale: “Random House’s first hardcover printing of the fourth volume was 2.5 million copies. Almost 500,000 copies sold on the first day of release, the biggest launch day for any book in 2011.”¹⁰ It was a long way to this success, and several facts have yet to be mentioned.

As Christopher Paolini’s mind was drifting into fantasy matters, he started to weave fantasies about his own fictional world. He began to scribble them down when he was fourteen. The process of writing *Eragon* was rather time-consuming, and only to create the first version it took Paolini about a year. After creating the first version it took him also about a year to refine his writing style. Finally, with the help of his parents, who also helped him edit the book, he was able to publish *Eragon*, the first book of the Inheritance Cycle, in their own publishing company. However, the book was not widely known yet. The turning-point came in 2002 when “the wife of author Carl Hiassen stopped at the store and stumbled upon a copy of Paolini’s self-published book, *Eragon*. She bought it for her twelve-year-old son, Ryan. The story captured Ryan’s

⁵ Lisa Wade McCormick, *Christopher Paolini* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2013), 73.

⁶ McCormick, *Christopher Paolini*, 73.

⁷ Wheeler, *Christopher Paolini*, 9.

⁸ Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, ed., *The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters* (Farnham: The Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), 187.

⁹ Paul Goat Allen, “Paolini’s *Eragon* Revisited 10 Years Later,” *Barnes & Noble Reads*, October 28, 2013, <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/paolinis-eragon-revisited-10-years-later/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

¹⁰ Philip Martin “Christopher Paolini’s Amazing Success: For the Bestselling Author of the Inheritance Cycle, It All Came Together Thanks to Discipline and Learning How to Structure and Pre-plot a Story,” *Writer* (Kalmbach Publishing Co.) 125, no.5 (2012): 24.

imagination.”¹¹ Later with the help of Carl Hiassen who recommended *Eragon* to Alfred A. Knopf, who was Hiassen’s publisher, the novel was republished in 2003 and became a bestseller and the rest of the fantasy novels were published in this sequence—*Eldest* (2005), *Brisingr* (2008) and *Inheritance* (2011).

Christopher Paolini became a sort of a hero for children around the world and a means of inspiration with his success at such a young age, and many of them strive to have the very same accomplishment. One of such examples is the young author Kaleb Nation who was inspired by Christopher Paolini, as he suggests on the web pages of the official Inheritance Cycle fan community. He learned about Christopher Paolini in a magazine: “It told me he had started writing a novel when he was fifteen, and was now on the New York Times bestseller list. His name was Christopher Paolini, and the book was *Eragon*. Suddenly I knew exactly where I wanted to be one day.”¹² Kaleb Nation managed to publish his first novel *Bran Hambric: The Farfield Curse* after six years of great effort, and he claims he did not forget about Paolini: “I’ve always remembered that day I stumbled across the article about Christopher Paolini. Hearing his story was the encouragement I needed to go on writing.”¹³

There is no doubt Christopher Paolini will sooner or later resume his writing and publishing: “I have laid the ground for at least three separate novels in *Brisingr* and *Inheritance*, so I may return. I have put so much work into developing this world that it seems a shame not to do so again. But I would like to try other things first.”¹⁴

¹¹ McCormick, *Christopher Paolini*, 6.

¹² Michael Macauley, “Kaleb Nation: Young Adult Author Inspired by Christopher Paolini,” *Shurtugal The Official Inheritance Cycle Fan Community*, September 30, 2010, <http://www.shurtugal.com/2010/09/30/kaleb-nation-young-adult-author-inspired-by-christopher-paolini/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

¹³ Macauley, “Kaleb Nation,” <http://www.shurtugal.com/2010/09/30/kaleb-nation-young-adult-author-inspired-by-christopher-paolini/>.

¹⁴ “Paolini Completes Epic Series with Publication of *Inheritance*,” *Bookseller* no. 5504. (2011): 10.

2) Classification of the Inheritance Cycle

The Inheritance cycle is a tetralogy of fantasy novels. There are several ways how to classify fantasy, and the ways are usually subjective because they depend on people and their personal view of what they find important in the novels. The authors of *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults*, argue that even “specialists in the field are unable to agree as to what category of fantasy a particular book might belong.”¹⁵

However, two types of fantasy are widely known—high fantasy and low fantasy. Nikki Gamble and Sally Yates, the authors of *Exploring Children’s Literature*, distinguish, for example, fantasy this way.¹⁶ Moreover, they sub-divide high fantasy into three types according to its setting, particularly its alternative world. Gamble and Yates recognize the first type as the type where: “*The primary world does not exist. In this type of fantasy the reader is transported directly to the alternative world*” and where: “*Maps of imaginary lands are often included to help build the reader’s belief in the fantasy world*” because it is easier to believe in something you have in front of your eyes—having the imaginary world’s map makes it more believable, almost realistic, and the readers can more easily project themselves into the story.¹⁷ Moreover, the map helps the readers to orient themselves. The second type they describe as the one where: “*The alternative world is entered through a portal in the primary world. This type of fantasy enables the writer to make a direct comparison between the two worlds.*”¹⁸ The last type is the type where: “*The alternative world is a world-within-a-world, marked off by physical boundaries. This seems to most closely match the world of Hogwarts in the Harry Potter novels.*”¹⁹ On the other hand, low fantasy is known for the fact that its “non-rational happenings occur in the rational world.”²⁰ In another words, the fantasy is set in our world as such.

Having considered the facts mentioned above, I have decided to classify the Inheritance Cycle as high fantasy. From the three sub-types mentioned above, the Inheritance Cycle belongs without doubts into the first sub-type. The Inheritance

¹⁵ Pamela S. Gates, Susan B. Steffel, and Francis J. Molson, *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 7.

¹⁶ Nikki Gamble and Sally Yates, *Exploring Children’s Literature: Teaching the Language and Reading of Fiction* (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 2002).

¹⁷ Gamble and Yates, *Exploring Children’s Literature*, 102.

¹⁸ Gamble and Yates, *Exploring Children’s Literature*, 102.

¹⁹ Gamble and Yates, *Exploring Children’s Literature*, 102.

²⁰ Gamble and Yates, *Exploring Children’s Literature*, 102.

Cycle's setting is placed into the fictional world of Alagaësia, and there is not the existence of a primary world. By a primary world is meant our world. Furthermore, the Inheritance Cycle is provided with a map that helps the readers to orient themselves in an environment yet unknown. The novels can be also classified as coming-of-age novels. Eragon, the protagonist of the novels, has to learn how to fend for himself and his dragon. After all, at the opening of the book he is only a fifteen-year-old farm boy who needs to learn about the mysterious world along with us, readers.

3. Summary of the Inheritance Cycle

I begin with the map and its most important parts of Paolini's fantasy world because it is an essential element of any book of high fantasy helping the readers in various ways as is explained in the second chapter, and it opens up the space for another item of the summary—the inhabitants. By the inhabitants I mean only the significant living beings in Paolini's world according to my point of view. The inhabitants have their own way of communication and their own language, however, I focus only on the ancient language which plays an important role in the novels—the ancient language is closely connected to the magic system and the concept of true names. In the last sub-chapter I mention one item which is of a different nature and thus would not fit in the sub-chapters already mentioned.

3.1. Map

Christopher Paolini's world is set in a fantasy world called Alagaësia. Eragon, the protagonist of the books, was born in a village called Carvahall. For that reason I describe the map from this place. Carvahall is situated in Palancar Valley in the north western part of the map. The village is destroyed, however, in the second book by the Empire. The Empire is a territory in the west usurped and controlled by King Galbatorix. Palancar Valley is shielded against the sea by the Spine, a mountain range. The Spine has the dubious distinction of being very dangerous and is entangled with several rumours and unfortunate stories. People along with Galbatorix and his army usually avoid this place for that reason. The Spine is also the place where Eragon, while hunting, finds the dragon egg from which Saphira hatches. In the north-west corner of the map lays an island named Vroengard. Vroengard is especially important for the Vaults of Souls. The Vaults of Souls is a location where Eldunari and dragon eggs are hidden from Galbatorix by spells. Then there are several cities of lesser or almost no importance on the map, therefore I continue with Teirm, a large port city in the west. Eragon meets there Angela and Solembum who play an important role in the novels. Their characters along with the rest of the soon to be mentioned ones are discussed in the next sub-chapter. Teirm's harbour is also used by Roran and the villagers of Carvahall who need to save their lives by escaping to Surda. Surda is the territory of humans free from Galbatorix's influence and rule. It is ruled by King Orrin. Surda is at

the end of the novels joined by the Varden and other factions and races to attack Urû'baen. Urû'baen is the capital city of the Empire, and therefore it is also the place where Galbatorix rules from. Hadarac desert is located in the middle of the map. Beor mountains, which are described as “a ragged, toothy wall linking Alagaësia with the heavens” are located in the south of the map and are home to dwarves.²¹ Tronjheim—the capital city of dwarves and the hiding place of the Varden is located in the middle of the mountains, specifically in Farthen Dûr which is a volcanic crater. It is written in *Eragon* that its “walls were too high for a dragon to fly over, and no army could break through the entranceway, even if it managed to find the hidden doors,” yet the Urgals and the Shade Druza, who is in the lead, force their way inside and attack the dwarves and the Varden.²² The last significant location that should be mentioned is Du Weldenvarden. Du Weldenvarden is a large forest in the north. It is inhabited by elves, and to Eragon the forest appeared like “another world” that is “riddled with strange magic and stranger creatures.”²³ Ellesméra is the capital city of the elves and is situated in the depth of the forest. Michael Macauley summarized it in his book *The Inheritance Almanac* as “heavily guarded by elf sentinels and an intricate series of magical defences.”²⁴ When Eragon is permitted to enter Ellesméra, where he goes to start his training, he is suddenly able to perceive things he would not notice at first: “He blinked, and his vision suddenly shifted as if a lens had been placed over his eyes, resolving everything into recognizable shapes.”²⁵ He is able to see dwellings that grow out of trees. Ellesméra is also a special place because it is the hiding place of Glaedr and Oromis, Saphira and Eragon’s mentors.

3.2. The Inhabitants

Alagaësia is a home to several people, races and simply living beings in general. In this sub-chapter I single out the ones who are from my point of view and according to their importance in the novels worth mentioning, I aim to focus more on the ones who fit for further examination in the chapter on Literary Influences. I divide the characters according to their race except for the ones who are Dragon Riders.

²¹ Christopher Paolini, *Eragon* (London: Random House, 2011), 335.

²² Paolini, *Eragon*, 399.

²³ Christopher Paolini, *Eldest* (London: Random House, 2011), 159.

²⁴ Michael Macauley, *The Inheritance Almanac: An A to Z Guide to the World of Eragon* (London: Doubleday, 2010), 66.

²⁵ Paolini, *Eldest*, 222.

3.2.1. Dragons and Dragon Riders

Dragons are the focal race of Alagaësia. Macauley writes that “the brother gods Urûr, god of the air and heavens, and Morgothal, god of fire, combined their talents to create the dragon race.”²⁶ The god of fire would then give the dragons the ability to breathe fire which is developed in the course of time as the dragons are growing up and the god of the air and heavens would give the dragons the ability of flying. The dragons are strong, proud, wise and respected by other races. Describing their appearance Brom explains to Eragon that their scales “came in every color and shade. It was said that a group of them looked like a living rainbow, constantly lifting and shimmering.”²⁷ Michael Macauley further enlarges on the looks of the dragons by adding: “The gemlike scales of Christopher Paolini’s dragons were inspired by the iridescent feathers of the hummingbird.”²⁸ The colour they possess is the same of their egg from which they hatch. Their spines are covered with spikes.

An amazing fact is that Paolini’s dragons never stop growing: “Some of the ancient ones, before the Empire killed them, could have passed for large hills.”²⁹ Since the dragons’ diet consists of meat, it must not have been an easy task to satisfy the hunger of such a huge beast, especially considering the fact that the dragons can live forever, unless they are killed or their rider.

The bond between the dragons and their riders is created after the arrival of the elves. At first, however, they are enemies because of an elf who kills one of the dragons. This changes when Eragon, the first Dragon Rider who bears the same name as the protagonist of the book, finds a dragon’s egg. He names the dragon Bid’Duam and raises him. With their bond they can conclude peace among the elves and the dragons because the two races are finally able to communicate. The bond is represented by the *gedwëy ignasia*—a mark on the hand of the one to whom the dragon hatches. It is received when a rider touches a dragon for the very first time with his palm. More Dragon Riders come into existence in order to preserve peace and later on the Dragon Riders are considered to be of greater authoritative importance and Vroengard becomes their home before they are defeated by Galbatorix.

I now move to the description of the most prominent dragons and dragonriders. I

²⁶ Macauley, *Inheritance Almanac*, 52.

²⁷ Paolini, *Eragon*, 53.

²⁸ Macauley, *Inheritance Almanac*, 53.

²⁹ Paolini, *Eragon*, 52.

begin with the description of Galbatorix and his dragons. Galbatorix is at first a promising Dragon Rider with no signs of insanity and evil nature whatsoever. One day though, his female dragon Jarnunvösk is killed by a group of Urgals, and this changes him significantly. He wants to receive another dragon egg, but his request is denied because he is mentally damaged. Since then he decides to wreak vengeance on the Riders and one day manages to steal the black dragon Shruikan with the help of Morzan, another Dragon Rider and Murtagh's father. Galbatorix creates sort of an artificial bond mastering Shruikan with the help of dark spells, and the Riders fall. Galbatorix becomes the self-proclaimed king of Alagaësia.

I now proceed to Brom who at first appears as a simple story-teller, however, over the course of the time it is revealed he once was a Dragon Rider. Brom is remarkable for his intelligence and fighting experience. Brom's age is not explicitly revealed, but since he has a white beard and white hair, it is assumed he is of older age. He has an eagle nose. Furthermore, he carries a twisted staff and smokes a pipe. He is also full of secrets. He rarely passes them to others with the exception of Eragon to whom he becomes his mentor, yet he does not tell Eragon everything, not even that he is his real father. That fact is revealed to him though by Oromis in *Brisingr*.

Oromis is a Dragon Rider who is hiding in Ellesméra with his dragon Glaedr. Although they are one of the eldest Dragon Riders, their power is mostly lost due to harm they suffered during the war. Glaedr lost his leg, and Oromis was injured. The two teach Eragon and Saphira everything they need to know about fighting, magic and history. The reader also discovers that dragons have an object inside their body that has the ability to store their consciousness. The object resembles a gem and is called Eldunarí or the heart of hearts. This way Glaedr stores his soul into the Eldunarí and disgorges it. His body and his Eldunarí can work separately, so he gives it to Eragon to protect it because Glaedr and Oromis go to support Islanzadí and in case something happens he does not want it to be misused. Oromis is killed along with Glaedr by Murtagh and Thorn who are controlled by Galbatorix from distance, yet the soul of Glaedr remains to live inside the Eldunarí.

Murtagh is a son of Morzan and Selena thus he and Eragon share the same mother. Murtagh helps Eragon at first in several situations—saves him from the Ra'zac and assists him during the rescue mission of Arya. When he is kidnapped after the arrival to the Varden and returned back to Galbatorix, he and Thorn, a red dragon who hatches for him there, are forced to serve him in the ancient language, and therefore

they are even easily controlled. Murtagh with Thorn kill Hrothgar, the king of the dwarves, and Glaedr with Oromis this way.

I continue with Eragon and Saphira because they are the most crucial characters of the novels. Saphira's egg is protected by Arya and transported to Eragon to whom she later hatches in *Eragon*. I mentioned two typical abilities of the dragons in this sub-chapter—the ability to breathe fire and the ability to fly. Those are not, however, the only abilities of Saphira. Her magical abilities are outlined later, in the sub-chapter covering the magic system. Not only is Saphira strong, smart and wise, she is also vain—a trait that is not exactly to be proud of, therefore it takes her some time to accept it: “For Saphira, the hardest thing to come to terms with had been her vanity, which she had refused to acknowledge as such for the longest time.”³⁰ Eragon's life changes dramatically, when Saphira hatches for him. He needs to abandon the life he lead so far and is put into the position of the only one who can stand a chance against Galbatorix. When he bonds with Saphira, he is able to cast magic and their minds are linked together. Therefore when he rides on her back, he can merge with Saphira to enjoy the flight with the same experience: “His vision blurred, and he found himself looking through Saphira's eyes. Everything was distorted: colors had weird, exotic tints; blues were more prominent now, while greens and reds were subdued.”³¹ Furthermore, his life is prolonged thanks to his bond with Saphira, and he is also granted a healing along with the abilities typical of the elves—strength and swiftness during the Blood-oath celebration which is held among the elves once every century to honor their partnership with the dragons. The healing helps Eragon remove the huge scar he has on his back from the fight with Durza. Moreover, his senses are sharpened, and he is much better at casting spells. This way he becomes a sort of human-elf hybrid because he is not changed completely. He keeps some of his qualities and his flaws of character remain untouched. Eragon is not any better than Saphira at accepting his vices when Glaedr tells him about them: “Eragon could not help but feel a sense of wounded pride upon hearing Glaedr list his various failings.”³² After all, he is still a human being.

The last of the Dragon Riders I want to mention is Arya—she becomes a Dragon Rider in the last book, *Inheritance*. A green dragon hatches from the egg they manage to save after defeating Galbatorix. Arya calls the dragon Firnen. Eragon wants her to leave

³⁰ Christopher Paolini, *Inheritance* (London: Random House, 2012), 535.

³¹ Paolini, *Eragon*, 162.

³² Paolini, *Inheritance*, 535.

with him Alagaësia to help him find a place similar to Vroengard and train the dragons there, however, she becomes queen of the elves after the death of her mother, previous queen Islanzadí, and for that reason cannot leave with him.

3.2.2. Dwarves

Dwarves, along with the dragons, are an ancient race which originally inhabits the world of Alagaësia. After the Riders are destroyed, the dwarves hide underground, especially in the Beor Mountains and Farthen Dûr. The dwarves support the Varden who are at first hidden there with them. The dwarves believe they were created by Helzvog, the god of stone, who formed them out of granite. The dwarves are fittingly long-lived. They rely on their faith—they believe, for example, that a coral is the evidence of life inside stone, and although they are contradicted by reasoning: ““But we elves discovered that coral is actually an exoskeleton secreted by minuskule animals that live inside it,”” they remain believing.³³ Helzvog is not the only god they believe in. They also believe in Gûntera, King of the gods, Kîlf, the goddess of rivers and the sea, Sindri, goddess of the earth and Urûr with Morgothal who were already mentioned as the creators of the dragons, therefore it can be said they believe in polytheism. They are not used to heights: ““This is unnatural, it is. Dwarves aren’t meant to ride dragons. It’s never been done before,”” as it is explained by Orík.³⁴ However, this will be changed, and I mention more about it in the sub-chapter on Magic System.

Considering the appearance of the dwarves, they are exactly what a fantasy reader would expect them to look like—they are of a small and stout build, and they have a beard. Chanting is one of the things they are fond of, especially when they are relaxed. They are known for their power and perseverance. The dwarves are also good smiths and fighters. For the fights they usually use axes or some of them use Ascûdgamln—fists of steel, they are attached to their hands. This weapon is not fit for everyone though as Orík explains to him: ““Few knurlan get Ascûdgamln because you can easily lose the use of your hands if the drill goes too deep,”” and it is recommended to the humans and other races to completely avoid it because they have thinner bones than the dwarves.³⁵ Since they can shape stone and most of other material easily, their architecture is rather decorated and diverse. There are onyx pillars, yellow zircons, the

³³ Paolini, *Eldest*, 543.

³⁴ Paolini, *Eldest*, 558.

³⁵ Paolini, *Eldest*, 145.

floor made of carnelian and much more. One object there, however, is especially remarkable and that is Isidar Mithrim, a huge red star sapphire that should resemble a blooming rose. The dwarves are very proud of it, therefore when Arya destroys it to help Eragon kill Durza, she upsets the dwarves immensely: ““The star sapphire holds a special place in the hearts of dwarves. Every dwarf has a love of gemstones, but Isidar Mithrim they love and cherish above all others, because of its beauty, and most of all because of its immense size. Restore it to its previous glory and you will restore the pride of their race.””³⁶ Saphira manages to repair the sapphire for the coronation of future King Orik.

Orik is an adopted son of Hrothgar. Hrothgar is a dwarf king and a member of a clan called Dûrgrimst Ingeitum. Altogether there are thirteen clans, and they choose their king. By adopting Eragon into Dûrgrimst Ingeitum Hrothgar offers him the highest honour since it happens for the first time that a human is offered their membership. Hrothgar is killed on the Burning Plains where the Varden fight against the Empire. After Orik’s coronation he supplies the Varden and helps them fight the Empire until the end.

3.2.3. Humans

Although it could appear that humans do not need any special introduction as they are a race known to the readers, and their appearance does not require any comments, they are not the original inhabitants of Alagaësia. They come from an unknown place. During the ravaging of Galbatorix a group of the humans with Orrin in the lead form the free state of Surda, otherwise the humans are under the rule of Galbatorix, especially inhabiting the north-west. King Orrin wants to rule the humans when Galbatorix is defeated, but Nasuada is chosen instead to represent them and becomes their queen.

Nasuada is a daughter of Ajihad. Ajihad rules the Varden. He is killed after the battle in Farthen Dûr when he is caught by surprise on his return from a chase after the Urgals who managed to escape. He is succeeded by Nasuada. She undergoes a Trial of the Long Knives to retain her leadership. In this trial she has to prove that she is stronger than the leader of wandering tribes by cutting her forearm. They take turns, and

³⁶ Christopher Paolini, *Brisingr* (London: Random House, 2011), 367.

Nasuada manages to win. She proves to be strong and intelligent, however, she is captured by Murtagh and brought to Galbatorix where she is tortured. Murtagh grows to be fond of her and helps her with the suffering Galbatorix inflicts on her. Despite all of the facts about Nasuada, Paolini focuses the most on the character of Roran, a cousin of Eragon, considering the human race.

Roran is the embodiment of pure, natural strength that comes from within and is not enhanced by any magic. He is only driven by the love for Kathrina. He begins to be called Stronghammer, not only for using a hammer as the weapon of preference but also thanks to his dauntlessness.

The last person I want to mention from the humans is Elva. When Eragon meets her, she is only a parentless baby, therefore she has only an old woman who takes care of her. The old woman wants to provide her with some luck and begs Eragon to bless her. He does so along with Saphira who touches the baby and gives her hope while Eragon curses her by mistake. She grows faster than any common child and has the ability to sense ahead other's suffering foretelling future events and is forced to help those who suffer, otherwise it has consequence—this way she becomes a slave to her ability. Eragon wants to remedy for his mistake, but he is only partially successful—he gives her a chance to control it, yet she still feels the pain of others and proves to be helpful when she defends Nasuada. Although she could be considered a very powerful weapon against Galbatorix when he is confronted, he silences her, and her talent cannot be used against him. When Eragon gives her chance to remove the rest of the curse, she refuses because it is already a part of her, and she comes to terms with it.

3.2.4. Elves

Elves are not originally from Alagaësia—instead they come from a place they call Alalea. As was already mentioned, they inhabit the forest Du Weldenwarden. The elves are a proud and graceful race—for that reason they are called the fair folk. They are strong in magic, and as the dwarves are good at shaping heavy materials, the elves are good at doing the same with plants and trees because their dwellings are made of them. They are swift, strong, and physically beautiful, they have pointed ears, their body parts are generally slender, and they are good with swords and bows. While the humans are in some ways similar to the dwarves, especially considering their approach

to feelings—both express their emotions more, and their emotional outbursts are more apparent, the elves are strikingly different in this sense. They have a high estimation of courtesy because: ““You cannot afford to give offense when a grudge can be held for decades or centuries. Courtesy is the only way to prevent such hostility from accumulating. It doesn’t always succeed, but we adhere to our rituals rigorously, for they protect us from extremes.””³⁷ The elves have their own special etiquette and breaching it out of ignorance is way worse than out of rudeness. The elves are less prolific than the dwarves—a baby or a young elf is rarely seen. They are closely connected to nature, and they eat only vegetables and fruits. Moreover, the elves are immortal, unless their body is seriously wounded. The elves, unlike the dwarves, do not believe in gods. They can be called agnostics—they cannot prove that the gods do not exist, and they cannot even prove that the world was not created by some god-like entity, yet they have never seen any miracle. They rely on their reasoning. They are fond of art, especially of music. They tend to sing often, and their voice is enchanting.

They are lead by Islanzadí who is also Arya’s mother. She is followed and protected by a white raven I write about later as he does not fit in here. She possesses the traits typical for her race—she is proud, beautiful and imperious. She leads the elves to the war against Galbatorix where she is killed. After her death Arya is elected new elven queen.

3.2.5. Ra’zac

Ra’zac are not, as well as the humans and the elves, originally from Alagaësia. They most probably come from the same unknown land as the humans. They are in the service of Galbatorix who provide them with protection and comestibles in return for their services. He uses them as investigators and hunters because they have a keen sense of smell. They are of a similar build as the humans—that is where their similarity begins and ends at the same time. They are as fast as the elves, however, their movement reminds of insect which is due to the fact that “the Ra’zac are based on Jerusalem crickets,” as Macauley states in his guide.³⁸ They are strong, they can jump high, and they are cunning at the same time which is why they should not be

³⁷ Paolini, *Eldest*, 160.

³⁸ Macauley, *Inheritance Almanac*, 157.

underestimated. If they are hurt, they bleed—their blood is blue. Their skin is black. They have a bald head. Their eyes are lidless, and they have no iris and pupil inside their eyes. Their tongue is barbed, and it emerges from a beak instead of a mouth. They wear dark robes and cloaks and prefer to move and attack at night when they are strongest. They loathe the sun and water because the sun hurts them and the water because they cannot swim. As a weapon they usually use a dagger which they tend to poison with Seithr oil. Although the Ra'zac cannot practice magic, they cannot be sensed by anyone—they can hide their minds, and that is why they prefer to ambush. They can paralyze people with their breaths, and then prey on them easily. However, the elves are immune to their breath, as well as the dwarves who are immune only partially.

When the Ra'zac turn twenty, they turn into Lethrblaka and are able to fly, and sometimes they can be seen carrying the Ra'zac—their children who hatch from eggs, like the dragons. Their intelligence can be also compared to that of the dragons. I do not refer to any of them specifically because they do not use proper names. In the end of the Inheritance Cycle they are killed off, yet Galbatorix hints their eggs are hidden somewhere and about to hatch soon. After Galbatorix's death, Eragon examines several materials to find their location, but there is no such information to be found. Their whereabouts, if they exist, remain unknown.

3.2.6. Urgals

Urgals come to Alagaësia right after the elves whom they follow hoping for a fight. Their fondness of fighting does not come from an evil nature but rather from their traditions and culture. If a male Urgal wants to be appreciated and respected among his fellows, he can achieve that either by fighting his opponents or attacking another village. The more successful the Urgal is in fighting his rivals, the more he has chance to win over the sympathies of Urgal females. This tradition is so deeply rooted that they simply cannot stop it, regardless of their effort. Durza regards the Urgals as the mere means of accomplishing Galbatorix's will, even though they are strong, dreaded fighters, and because Galbatorix betrays them, they later join the Varden.

They resemble the humans, with the exception of their tall, muscular and thick figure and the most marked difference—their twisted horns positioned on their heads.

They have yellow eyes and gray skin. The elite of the Urgals are called Kulls. They are larger and stronger than the Urgals. Because of their weight, they cannot ride horses. This drawback is eliminated by their untiring running. When they join the Varden, they are represented by Nar Garzhvog. After the war with Galbatorix, they are given vast lands because they come in great numbers, and their land does not suffice anymore.

3.2.7. Werecats

Not much is known about a werecat ancient race as they are full of secrecy and generally prefer being in solitude, with the exception of a few who follow a companion they can stand—kings, the elves or any other important figures. They do not have any ruling king or queen. Only when it is necessary, they choose one to represent them all as it happens during the war with Galbatorix, when they choose Grimrr Halfpaw for a leader. There are not many of them. However, their part in the war is outstanding. They prove to be as savage as the Urgals when fighting, and due to their unpredictability they can be considered even more dangerous. It is not known whether they can use magic or not, however, there are legends saying they have some sort of magical powers and are long-lived. They are generally well-informed and know about the latest happenings as they tend to listen, watch and wander alone in the dark places of Alagaësia, though they give advice and help only rarely. If they decide to help, they should not be ignored on any account. They have fondness for the dragons because their personality is of a similar nature—both of the races are wise, proud and love riddles. Moreover, they cherish their freedom most of all and can be trusted.

The werecats do not look like ordinary cats. They are large, with oversized paws, white fangs and shaggy mane. Macauley suggests that: “Paolini derived physical descriptions of werecats from the caracal, a species of medium-sized cat native to Africa and western Asia.”³⁹ The werecats can turn into a human form. When in the human form, they are as high as the dwarves. Their figure remains shaggy. Their pointed teeth and chin along with wide cheekbones are most conspicuous about them. Solembum is one of the most prominent werecats in the Inheritance Cycle. He accompanies Angela, and after he meets Eragon, he grows to like him. Not only he gives him important advice, he also helps saving him when the need arises.

³⁹ Macauley, *Inheritance Almanac*, 206.

3.2.8. Others

There are three special characters I want to mention, however, they do not fit in any of the categories above, therefore they are described here. I begin with Angela. She is one of the most mysterious characters in the novels. No one really knows what race she belongs to—there are only assumptions of a different kind. Mostly she is referred to as a witch and herbalist. She tells Eragon his future with the help of knucklebones of a dragon. Aside from telling future, using herbs according to the present needs—to poison or cure someone, she can practice magic, but it rather depends on herbs and potions. Regardless of that, she is still very powerful and can prevent Elva from having any advantage over her. She is also good with weapons in hand-to-hand combat. She is thought to be an extraordinary and eccentric woman. Furthermore, she is unpredictable and independent. Although Angela appears young, she is much older, approximately as old as Galbatorix. She enjoys the company of Solembum, the werecat. She is actually even similar to the werecats considering her behavior. She is always there where something important happens. She knows ahead about all sorts of information, and she is rather elusive—she does not share her spells and secrets with other people. She hardly shares her past. Considering all that, she provides a great help to Eragon.

The second character I want to mention is Blagden. Blagden is a raven who accompanies and protects Islanzadí. There are no surprising physical features of the raven, except for his white colour. His character and behavior is why he is distinguishable. He once saved Arya's father from an Urgal pecking out his eyes, and since then he is granted intelligence and a long life. His typical black color also fades after that, and he is able to sense certain upcoming events. He is described as a fickle and wily creature. He loves to speak in riddles and jokes often. He is also heard to say "Wyrda" several times. If Eragon was better at solving riddles, he would have realized Murtagh is only his half-brother earlier.

The last character I want to mention is Durza. He is a Shade which means his body is controlled by evil spirits who are very powerful and difficult to kill. He can be killed only when he is stabbed to the heart, otherwise he later reappears, not many beings can survive the encounter of the Shade, so when he is killed by Eragon, it is a great feat. He is not charmed by what is considered beauty. He is cunning and vicious. According to Eragon's description that he gives to Ajihad, the Shade has a pale complexion, red hair and wears black clothes. His figure is tall and thin. His eyes are

red and dark adapted, and thus he can see easily when there is no sunlight. He practices dark magic and torturing is nothing strange to him.

3.3. The Ancient Language, True Names, Magic System

3.3.1. The Ancient Language

The ancient language is originally spoken all over Alagaësia. It is, however, forgotten over time. There is a revival of the ancient language after the arrival of the elves, but the language is not known by everyone anymore. When one speaks in the ancient language, they cannot lie, although it can be circumvented. One can say something while meaning something else, and this way the user of the language basically does not lie. Since the elves speak in the ancient language, it is often hard to understand what they really mean, and one needs to pay undivided attention to the conversation. The ancient language is very closely connected to magic because it describes the true nature of everything. Brom illustrates this by an example: ““For example, fire is called *brisingr*. Not only is that a name for fire, it is the name for fire. If you are strong enough, you can use *brisingr* to direct fire to do whatever you will.””⁴⁰ To put it another way, if one knows the name of a thing in ancient language, then it can be controlled and used however one pleases. Everything has its name in the ancient language. This is not limited anyhow, not even to living beings.

On the official web pages of Paolini, there is an essay on the grammar of the ancient language compiled by the students and the professor Frederico Gobbo of the University of Amsterdam.⁴¹ They arrived at the conclusion that Paolini does not focus on the linguistic part of the ancient language much, since he is not linguistic himself, so that “the sentences seemed to be constructed randomly and any solid regularities proved to be hard to find. However, we have tried to pick out as many original regularities as possible and worked them into the grammar.”⁴² They created the complete identity of the language by relying on Old Norse, from which Paolini drew, and from an English

⁴⁰ Paolini, *Eragon*, 140.

⁴¹ Immanuela Meijer, “The Complete Grammar of the Ancient Language,” *Paolini*, January 9, 2015, <http://www.paolini.net/2015/01/09/complete-grammar-ancient-language/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

⁴² Sophie Brower and Susannah Dijkstra and Emma Konijn, “An Introduction to the Ancient Language,” *Paolini*, <http://www.paolini.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/An-introduction-to-the-Ancient-Language.pdf> (accessed April 6, 2015).

grammar, and when it was necessary due to the insufficient amount of examples from the original source, they had to create some features on their own. This essay is definitely helpful for the readers interested in the function of the ancient language and also for Christopher Paolini himself as the source from which he could draw from if he decided to return to his world of Alagaësia.

3.3.2. True Names

True names are connected to the ancient language. Those who can speak it not only have their ordinary names they use on daily basis but also their true names. It is best to have the true name hidden from everyone or to reveal it only to those who the person trusts unconditionally because as Brom continues explaining: ““There was a time when no one concealed his true name, but this age isn’t as kind.””⁴³ When one knows a person’s true name, they know their true nature, their flaws and virtues, their entire being and most importantly, they can control them. Every living being has its name, however, not everyone knows about it. Only the elves have an innate knowledge of their true names, other races have to discover their names by own effort. When Eragon and Saphira are directed by Solembum’s advice to go to the Rock of Kuthian, they are supposed to speak their name in front of it to open the Vault of Souls. They realize they must speak their true names, unfortunately, none of them knows their true names yet, so they have to discover them at first. They try several exercises to exchange their views of each other, to understand themselves more. Although they thoroughly research their personalities, they are not able to find their true names. Fortunately, after some time Saphira succeeds. Her true name is described as “grand and majestic, but also tinged with sadness, for it named her as the last female of her kind.”⁴⁴ Furthermore, in her name he “could hear the love and devotion she felt for him, as well as all the other traits that made up her personality.”⁴⁵ Eragon is proud of Saphira, yet at the same time he feels frustrated for not being able to find his own true name, especially when the time is what matters at that moment. He realizes he is not anymore who he once was and finally finds his true name. His true name is described as “weaker and more flawed than he would have liked, and he hated himself for that, but there was also much to admire

⁴³ Paolini, *Eragon*, 146.

⁴⁴ Paolini, *Inheritance*, 539.

⁴⁵ Paolini, *Inheritance*, 539.

within it.”⁴⁶ At this point, it is appropriate to mention that a person’s true name changes along with the bearer of the name and their personality and experience. This way it is possible for Murtagh to free himself of Galbatorix’s supremacy. A question that generally comes to one’s mind is definitely why not to control Galbatorix through his true name and depose him. Although Galbatorix’s true name is discovered by a few elves, nobody dares to use it as Galbatorix put a spell on it. The spell kills the one who attempts to use it. Nobody knows how this spell works, and therefore it is not know how to protect oneself from its killing effect. It is not even clear whether Galbatorix knows his true name as it must be of a horrific nature and is unaffected by that knowledge or he does not know it. In this case its nescience would be sweet. Galbatorix is the one who finds the true name of the ancient language—the name of names, and if he was not defeated, he would be able to control magic and simply entire Alagaësia with its help. After the death of Galbatorix, Eragon removes Galbatorix’s spells, and he casts one of the greatest spells. The spell had been cast only once due to its complexity and strenuousness, and it changes the compact between the Riders and the dragons. Since the Urgals and the dwarves are included in this compact, they can also become the Dragon Riders.

3.3.3. Magic System

The ancient language is closely connected to magic. Magic can be found throughout the entire land of Alagaësia. To practice magic one has to have some sort of innate power inside to which they can reach. This innate power is described as “a small bump that was a part of him and yet not of him.”⁴⁷ One who practices magic has to be wary. The more a spell is complex, the more energy it requires. The amount of the energy a spell requires also depends on the distance. When one tries to affect something or somebody in a greater distance, the more energy it consumes. If one uses a spell that requires more energy than they or their body has access to, it can kill them. The most complicated part about it is that nobody knows how much energy a spell consumes, therefore it is important to know one’s strength. Not only is one limited by the amount of the energy but also by their extent of the knowledge of the ancient language. When a

⁴⁶ Paolini, *Inheritance*, 547.

⁴⁷ Paolini, *Eragon*, 148.

Dragon Rider casts a spell, the power is usually channeled from the palm where the gedwëy ignasia is. It is possible to channel the power through the other palm, but it is much harder. When a Rider casts a spell, the gedwëy ignasia glows. There are several ways how a spell can be cast. Eragon provides this example ““if I want to light a fire, I could light it with heat gathered from the air or the ground; I could create a flame out of pure energy; I could summon a bolt of lightning; I could concentrate a raft of sunbeams into a single point; I could use friction; and so forth.””⁴⁸ To prevent the spell from happening one needs to only block the final action of the spell—in this case it would mean blocking the lighting of the fire, there is no need to cogitate on the ways outlined above and to block each of the spells one by one. This way Galbatorix protects the Ra’zac from being affected by the death spells. When there is a fight between two magicians, what matters is not only the amount of the energy, the extensive knowledge of the ancient language and the strength but rather someone’s wit. In order to win, one must know the weakness of their enemy, how they react, how they perceive the world, and what they possibly cannot expect and therefore defend themselves from. If one needs an additional energy, there are various ways how to obtain it.

The energy can be either drawn from items, the Eldunarí or from living beings. The items one can draw the energy from are represented namely by Aren, an elven ring given to Brom as a sign of friendship, and by Beloth the Wise, a belt with diamonds given to Eragon by Oromis. The energy is stored inside the gems. There is one more item I would like to mention with the connection to magic, and that is a necklace Eragon receives from Hrothgar. This necklace shields Eragon and Saphira from scrying. Scrying is a skill that allows conjuring up an object onto a mirror or a pool of water, simply onto a reflecting object. The object of scrying can be chosen from various categories—from places and things to people. It has almost no limits, except for the fact that the person who wants to scry it, has to have seen it at least once. As I already mentioned, Alagaësia is full of magic. According to Solembum, there are even several surprising happenings, such as “whirlwinds of light spinning in caverns deep below the ground, men who age backward, stones that speak, and shadows that creep,” however, I focus on the ones that are described throughout the novels, such as the magical spells of Saphira.⁴⁹ In *Eragon*, for example, she is able to turn Brom’s sandstone tomb into a more fitting version to pay Brom last tribute and to protect him from ravages of time:

⁴⁸ Paolini, *Brisingr*, 19.

⁴⁹ Paolini, *Inheritance*, 388–89.

“The sculpted sandstone mausoleum of moments before had transformed into a sparkling gemstone vault—under which Brom’s untouched face was visible.”⁵⁰

Moreover, with the help of magic induced by Eragon’s emotions she can restore Isidar Mithrim, otherwise it would be nearly impossible as magic does not work on command, it needs some sort of emotional stimuli or inspirations. In this case Eragon feels melancholic and moved to tears.

There is also a traditional magical event called Dagshelgr. Dagshelgr is an elven celebration. During this celebration the elves sing songs in the ancient language that are nearly impossible to resist even for the elves themselves. The more they sing, the more the spell is powerful, and the more the forest flourishes, and its animals are provided with fertility. As one of the sources of the energy I mentioned the Eldunari.

The Eldunari hidden in the Vault of Souls help Eragon from distance in various ways right from the very beginning by directing Arya’s spell, so that Saphira’s egg appear in front of him, to the final moment of facing Galbatorix who appears undefeatable. Eragon casts a wordless spell to make Galbatorix understand what he had caused. The Eldunari present there join the flood of emotions. They widen and deepen the spell, so that Galbatorix’s pain is even more heightened. Eventually he kills himself by an unmaking spell. With the help of the Eldunari, Eragon’s power is immense. There is, however, one important limit to the power. It cannot solve everything. When Eragon visits Brom’s tomb with all the power he has at his elbow, he thinks about healing Brom from his fatal injury. There is a chance it might be possible since Brom is well-preserved in the diamond tomb. Saphira objects though that they cannot command magic whenever and however they please and Umaroth, one of the Eldunari that is found in the Vault of Souls, adds that even if they found a way how to do it, they would not have to be able to revive Brom’s mind. Eragon, therefore, lets Brom go and keeps him in his memories.

⁵⁰ Paolini, *Eragon*, 284.

3.4. Other Items

This short sub-chapter deals very briefly with one item that does not fit in the previous sub-chapters. It is Zar'roc. Zar'roc is a sword that is at first in Brom's possession. It once belonged to Morzan whom Brom killed. Brom gives the sword to Eragon, however, since it belongs rightfully to Murtagh, the son of Morzan, he takes it from Eragon after a battle.

4. Literary Influences

In the chapter about Christopher Paolini's life I mention his popularity and success along with him being criticized for writing derivative novels at the same time. A question arises as to what he owes his popularity to. What makes the books popular, and what makes them the object of criticism, anger and even hatred? I believe that his age played a significant role. At the age of fifteen many people can mostly only dream about writing a book, especially such an extensive one, that turns out to be sold all over the world, and therefore Paolini is either subject to jealousy or inspiration.

Even more important, however, is that in the same chapter I also mention that he studied and read several books that affected his writing. I believe that he is popular and hated thanks to rightly chosen elements—the elements that he borrowed and collected from other works, and that he used in his books. His way of writing can be thus compared to the style of Philip Pullman, another fantasy writer, who acknowledges his inspiration in *The Amber Spyglass*: “I have stolen ideas from every book I have ever read. My principle in researching for novel is ‘Read like a butterfly, write like a bee,’ and if this story contains any honey, it is entirely because of the quality of the nectar I found in the work of better writers.”⁵¹

In this chapter I focus on Christopher Paolini's methodology analyzing the aspects that can be found in the books that influenced him. In other words I make effort to get hold of the “nectar” he used in particular. For this purpose I choose these books—*The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* by Tolkien, *Dragonflight* from The Dragonriders of Pern series by Anne McCaffrey, *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* by Bruce Coville, *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula K. Le Guin, and Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf*. I selected the books in a following manner—all of the books are mentioned in the first chapter where it is written Christopher Paolini either studied them or in the case of Ursula K. Le Guin the particular influence of this author is already hinted at. I chose the ones that possibly exhibit the greatest influence. Therefore, why I chose *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* is rather obvious. Both are written by Tolkien who is one of the most famous and influential fantasy writers ever. Tolkien is no exception to literary influences as E. L. Ridsden states in his book *Tolkien's Intellectual Landscape*: “No one escapes literary influence, so we ought to do our best to acquire and harness the most powerful influences we can. *Beowulf* provided that

⁵¹ Philip Pullman, *The Amber Spyglass* (London: Scholastic, 2000), 549.

influence for Tolkien.”⁵² Therefore, I could not omit *Beowulf* from the list. *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* was selected because Wheeler claims it is Paolini’s favorite along with *The Lord of the Rings*.⁵³ Finally, there is *Dragonflight*, the first book of The Dragonriders of Pern series. The title of the series clearly hints the concept of dragon riding.

4.1. Names

Although I can identify myself with Juliet’s belief that “that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet; so Romeo would, were he not Romeo call’d” considering the situation, I do not think, however, this would be applicable for the naming process of literary characters.⁵⁴ In this case the names of the characters, especially of the protagonist, matter. To illustrate it with an example, Paolini wanted to name the character, we know nowadays as Eragon, Kevin.⁵⁵ Not only the name simply does not appear fitting for the fantasy world, the name Kevin is already associated with the film *Home Alone* (1990). Paolini himself acknowledged it would not have been a fortunate choice: “Now if your name is Kevin, it’s a great name, but I don’t think the books would have been half as popular if they were about the adventures of the great Dragon Rider Kevin.”⁵⁶

There are two compiled lists of the names of the Inheritance Cycle along with the naming process behind them on the official web pages of Paolini. Eragon, one of the examples, is claimed to be inspired by its two aspects “dragon, with one letter changed, and era-gone, as in a time gone by,”⁵⁷ however, I do not discuss each of the names mentioned on the web pages copying them here as it would be purposeless because most of them are not connected with literature, except for Bid’Duam, the first dragon connected with a Dragon Rider, “whose name spelled backward yields Muad’Dib, the

⁵² E. L. Ridsen, *Tolkien’s Intellectual Landscape* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2015), 191.

⁵³ Wheeler, *Christopher Paolini*, 9.

⁵⁴ William Shakespeare, *Rome and Juliet* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing Group, 2014), 41.

⁵⁵ Preston Sotello, “Burton Barr Library Hosts Book Signing with the Author of the Inheritance Cycle Series,” *Downtown Devil*, December 5, 2011, <http://downtowndevil.com/2011/12/05/18142/burton-barr-library-hosts-book-signing-with-the-author-of-the-inheritance-cycle-series/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

⁵⁶ Sotello, “Book Signing with the Author of the Inheritance Cycle,” <http://downtowndevil.com/2011/12/05/18142/burton-barr-library-hosts-book-signing-with-the-author-of-the-inheritance-cycle-series/>.

⁵⁷ Michael Macauley, “Behind the Naming Process of Some of the Inheritance Cycle’s Memorable Characters and Locations,” *Paolini*, September 24, 2014, <http://www.paolini.net/2014/09/24/behind-naming-process-inheritance-cycles-memorable-characters-locations/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

name of the main character from the novel *Dune*⁵⁸ and Hrothgar, a dwarf king, whose name “comes from the epic *Beowulf*.”⁵⁹ The author of the article fails to mention that also most probably the sword of Oromis comes from *Beowulf* because Naegling is also the sword of Beowulf. Furthermore, I examined the names of the Inheritance Cycle and compared them with the names from *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, several of them bore a striking resemblance, not only Eragon being similar to Aragorn but also Arwen and Arya. Beorn, as the elven name for a cave bear mentioned in *Eldest*, the dwarves call it Urzhadn and Beorn in *The Hobbit* as one of the characters, a skin-changer who can transform into a bear. The fact the name is connected with a bear in both cases is not a coincidence because as is stated in *J.R.R Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*: “Beorn has a relationship with Old English and Norse sources. The etymology of his name is Old English and Old Norse. In Old English Beorn means ‘man, warrior.’ The Old Norse word bjorn means ‘bear.’”⁶⁰ Then there is Celbedeil, the greatest temple of the dwarves presented in *Eldest* and Celebdil, one of the three peaks of the Mountains of Moria in *The Lord of the Rings*. Elessari, a female member of the Council of Elders—the Varden advisers of Ajihad mentioned in *Eldest* and Elessar, one of the names by which is Aragorn called in *The Lord of the Rings*. When Brom helps Eragon choose a name for Saphira in *Eragon*, he offers him the names of former dragons—Eridor and Vanilor. The latter is similar to Valinor, the place Arwen and Bilbo sings about in *The Lord of the Rings*, while the former, Eriador, are the westlands between the Misty Mountains and the Mountains of Lune, also mentioned in *The Lord of the Rings*. Gil'ead, one of the elven cities in Alagaësia, and Gil-galad, an elven king who overthrew Sauron with the help of Elendil. Then there is Furnost, a small town in Alagaësia, and Fornost, a desolate place, previously the dwelling of the heirs of Valandil.

There are surely more names of resemblance throughout several novels, the few I outline here are for the illustration of the fact that it appears Paolini was also further influenced by the names from other novels during the naming process.

⁵⁸ Michael Macauley, “Nods and Inspirations within the Inheritance Cycle,” *Paolini*, January 23, 2015, <http://www.paolini.net/2015/01/23/nods-and-inspirations-within-the-inheritance-cycle/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

⁵⁹ Macauley, “Nods and Inspirations within the Inheritance Cycle,” <http://www.paolini.net/2015/01/23/nods-and-inspirations-within-the-inheritance-cycle/>.

⁶⁰ Michael D. C. Drout, et al., eds., *J.R.R Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 56.

4.2. The Creatures

4.2.1. Dragons and Dragon Riding

Although dragons appear in *Beowulf*, *A Wizard of Earthsea* and *The Hobbit*, the dragons presented there are of a different nature than Paolini's, mostly considering their behavior. Nobody would attempt to ride such an evil creature, unless it was for a while and in order to kill it, therefore Christopher Paolini was not influenced by the concept of dragon riding from those pieces of literature. The concept of the dragon riding and the bond between the dragon riders and the dragons are introduced in the novels of two of his favorite writers—Anne McCaffrey and Bruce Coville. Firstly, I use the first book, *Dragonflight*, from The Dragonriders of Pern series to demonstrate the influence on Christopher Paolini by describing the similarities, and then I do the same with Bruce Coville's book *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*. Although the dragons in the novels of Christopher Paolini and in *Dragonflight* choose a rider according to their preference, the dragons in *Dragonflight* choose among the candidates present in the Hatching Ground during the Impression, whereas in Paolini's world, they choose from a wider circle as they are not limited by any location, and they hatch when they feel the time is right, therefore they can postpone their hatching. Comparing the communication between the people and the dragons, the communication in Paolini's world is much easier because if the dragons want to be understood among other races, it is not a problem, however, the dragons in *Dragonflight* communicate only with their riders and with the riders such as Moreta or Lessa who have a special innate talent which enables them to communicate with all the dragons. In both pieces of literature, there is a strong bond between the rider and the dragon full of a deep loving emotion, therefore when the dragon riders survive their dragon, they suffer immensely. Furthermore, the dragons share emotions with their riders.

In *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* a dragon again chooses its "hatcher" and sort of a "rider"—the concept of the dragon riding is not fully-developed there. In this book the dragon's hatching and caring about is more important, there are even several instructions provided. Before Jeremy, the protagonist of the book, finds out he purchased a dragon egg, he thinks it is a marble or a sphere. Jeremy and Eragon are both ignorant to what they acquire. The very first contact and the communication between the dragons and the protagonists of Paolini and Coville are of a similar nature: "Eragon blinked, trying to understand what had occurred. Something brushed against his

consciousness, like a finger trailing over his skin,”⁶¹ and Jeremy “could feel the question-*ness* of it inside his head, almost as if the dragon were using its ferocious little claws to etch a question mark into his brain.”⁶² Furthermore, both protagonists of the books, Eragon and Jeremy, are required to conceal the dragon and protect it from the world for as long as possible. The dragons of both authors share the emotions of their “rider” and vice versa. Although the concept of true names is discussed more in its own sub-chapter in connection with *A Wizard of Eearthsea*, it is also slightly touched upon in *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*. Since in this book the concept is connected only with the dragons, I mention it in this sub-chapter. The true names are not discussed there as such, the reader is only provided with the information about the fact that the dragon is born with a birth name, but the name must be guarded, therefore the dragon needs to be named again. What is also similar is the naming process of the dragon. Both protagonists decide to mention several of male names assuming the dragon is of male sex, however, they both are mistaken since the dragon is of female sex.

4.2.2. Dwarves

Where Christopher Paolini drew his inspiration from considering the dwarves is not hard to guess because Christopher Paolini’s dwarves match the description of Tolkien’s dwarves, one of the authors he studied, as is mentioned in the chapter on his life. Tolkien’s dwarves are the original inhabitants of Middle-earth. They are long-lived. Their figure is small and rather stout, and they have a beard. They are fond of metals, and they are good at mining and making tunnels. Furthermore, they are great smiths. They invented runes and write in them. Tolkien’s dwarves and their characteristics are distinctive and widely known since they are portrayed in a traditional way: “In Teutonic and especially Scandinavian mythology and folklore, the term dwarf (Old Norse: *dvergr*) denoted a species of fairy inhabiting the interiors of mountains and the lower levels of mines. Dwarfs were of various types, all of small stature,” and “they resembled grave old men with long beards.”⁶³ Furthermore, it is explained that: “The mountain dwarfs were organized in kingdoms or tribes, with their own kings, chieftains, and armies. They lived in subterranean halls, believed to be full of gold and precious stones.

⁶¹ Paolini, *Eragon*, 39.

⁶² Bruce Coville, *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2007), 30.

⁶³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. “dwarf,” accessed April 09, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/174825/dwarf>.

They were principally famous for their skill in all kinds of metalwork and the forging of magical swords and rings.”⁶⁴ Considering all this Paolini cannot be blamed for not being original in this aspect. According to my point of view, having completely different dwarves, mainly their appearance, would go against nature and tradition, and it is possible they would not be accepted by the fantasy readers.

4.2.3. Elves

The inspiration behind Paolini’s elves is rather similar to the dwarves. The influence of Tolkien’s elves on Paolini’ is apparent. As Tommy Kuusela writes in his article “In Search of a National Epic”, the elves of Tolkien “have become a fundamental element in most fantasy-world fictions.”⁶⁵ He also explains that “the elves in Tolkien’s view are far removed from the elves of myth and folklore” because they are not of a fairy-like nature.⁶⁶ Tolkien’s elves are about the same height as humans. They move swiftly, tirelessly and lightly. If they are not killed, they live immortal lives. They are fond of music, singing and dancing. They have keen senses. Their sight helps them to be great archers, for that reason their weapon of preference is often a bow. They are beautiful and rather grave. They are connected to nature—they live in the woods where magic is felt and seen everywhere. All of the aspects are true also for the elves of Paolini as I describe them in their sub-chapter.

4.2.4. Ra’zac

Ra’zac are also most likely influenced by Tolkien, particularly by Black Riders—Nazgûl for they do not possess a proper name. They are servants of the antagonist. They wear a black coat and hood and prefer using their noses than eyes. Furthermore, as Tolkien explains: ““In dark and loneliness they are strongest.””⁶⁷ Their breath is also what makes them dangerous, for it also affects consciousness of their

⁶⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. “dwarf,” accessed April 09, 2015,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/174825/dwarf>.

⁶⁵ Tommy Kuusela, “In Search of a National Epic: The Use of Old Norse Myths in Tolkien’s Vision of Middle-earth,” *Approaching Religion* 4, no. 1 (2014): 34.

⁶⁶ Kuusela, “In Search of a National Epic,” 34.

⁶⁷ J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007), 174.

enemies immobilizing them. The Nazgûl also use beasts to fly on, similarly as the Ra'zac who fly on their parents—Lethrblaka.

4.2.5. Urgals

Although the similarity of Orcs and Urgal's appearance is not as striking as of the dwarves, elves or the Ra'zac, the Urgals even then are likely inspired by the Orcs of Tolkien since both of the creatures work for the antagonist and are divided according to their appearance. Urgal's stronger and taller version is called Kull, while Orcs have a breed called Uruk-hai.

4.3. Characters

I mention Arya and Eragon in the connection with the name influence, however, they need to appear also in this section, for they bear more similarities with Tolkien's characters than only the names. Arya and Arwen are both of noble birth. They are of elven race, therefore long-lived. Both are powerful and wise. They fell in love with a human. Eragon and Aragorn are that human. Eragon and Aragorn are a subject of prophecy. Aragorn is supposed to become king and Eragon is supposed to leave Alagaësia forever, however, before that they need to overthrow the antagonist. They are both long-lived. Notwithstanding, Aragorn's character can be also compared to Murtagh as they both are long-lived wanderers who are of important birth and should assume a position according to their inheritance. Furthermore, they are proficient in archery and swordsmanship which helps them protecting the protagonist on the journey.

Then there is Brom who is similar to Gandalf in various ways. They are old, wise, powerful, and intelligent. They rarely share information with their surroundings. Their appearance is also similar, for they both have a beard and white hair, and they carry a staff. They are both fond of smoking a pipe and blowing smoke rings. Moreover, they both start a journey in order to help the protagonist with his quest protecting him. They also sacrifice themselves for the purpose of saving the protagonist.

Durza is penultimate character I want to mention in this sub-chapter. He reminds of the Witch-lord. They both are full of pride finding themselves undefeatable, they are also leaders of the army under the service of the antagonist. At first they are simple

men, however, they are turned into shadows. They are both evil sorcerers and wound the protagonist seriously.

Finally, there is Islanzadí who can be easily mistaken for Galadriel. They are both elven women and rulers of the forest and the elves. They both appear to play a more prominent role than their husbands. They are powerful and beautiful. They both give similar presents—a bow and a quiver of arrows, and also one of their statements is similar, although it is said for different reasons. Galadriel says: ““I will diminish””⁶⁸ when she resists the lure of the Ring, and Islanzadí states: ““I am diminished””⁶⁹ when she realizes she was lax during her rule.

4.4. Plot

The plot of the Inheritance Cycle again appears to be inspired by *The Lord of the Rings*. Eragon and Frodo live their relatively calm lives, and they do not appear as prototypical heroes when they are forced to leave their home. They both are entrusted with a powerful “weapon”—with the dragon and the Ring, and for that they become the target of the enemy. They are the only characters who can fight the evil. After the evil is defeated, they both leave the country, where the plot takes place, on an elven ship and with their mentor, however, this and any further similarity of the plot is explained in the article on the web pages of the Guardian: “He deliberately set out to include the archetypal ingredients - a quest, a journey of experience, revenge, romance, betrayal and a special sword - and he is unperturbed by charges of being derivative, pointing out the difference between 'drawing on' traditional stories and 'plagiarism'.”⁷⁰

Furthermore, on the official web pages of Paolini it is mentioned that: “The scene in which a toll bridge keeper attempts to swindle Eragon and Brom was a nod to *The Ruby Knight* by David Eddings.”⁷¹ When examining the scenes they are indeed strikingly similar. Both of the bridge keepers are not rightfully collecting the money for the passing of the bridge, and they are deprived of their purse. Furthermore, in both

⁶⁸ Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*, 366.

⁶⁹ Paolini, *Eldest*, 268.

⁷⁰ Kit Spring, “Elf and Efficiency,” *The Guardian*, January 25, 2004, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/jan/25/booksforchildrenandteenagers.features> (accessed April 9, 2015).

⁷¹ Macauley, “Nods and Inspirations within the Inheritance Cycle,” <http://www.paolini.net/2015/01/23/nods-and-inspirations-within-the-inheritance-cycle/>.

cases the bridge keeper realizes it tardily—the protagonists are gone and only hear him howl of anguish.

4.5. The Ancient Language, True Names, Magic System

The ancient language, the magic system, and the concept of true names in Paolini's novels seem to be inspired by *A Wizard of Earthsea* as I briefly mention in the first chapter. Old Speech strikingly resembles the ancient language for in both languages things and people have their true names, and one must speak the language to practice magic. Moreover, one cannot lie when they use the language. When a magician uses his or her power, they need to be wary as they can overspend their power, it is not limitless, and it exhausts the magician. When the protagonist of the book is taught about magic and spells, he is taught to know the being of a flower before he can learn its true name. The true name should be shielded from all the people. It should be said only to those who one trusts. It means that the person to whom one says their name is basically entrusted with their lives. Except for the true name, the person is called by their use-name or nickname. The concept of true names of Ursula L. Guin is only different in that that a person is not born with the true name, they receive it during a ceremony when they also lose the name they received after their birth.

4.6. Writing Style

In his essay on writing, which is on the web pages of Random House, Paolini wrote: "In my writing, I strive for a lyrical beauty somewhere between Tolkien at his best and Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf*."⁷² I do not want to comment on whether he achieved it or not, I want to use it instead as an introduction to a few elements of his novels. This involves riddles and poems. Although the concept of riddles is nothing new in literature: "The Anglo-Saxons were fond, it seems, of riddles, judging at least from the collection of them Aldhelm penned in Latin and the grouping of them contained in the Exeter book," it is nonetheless a part of the lyrical expression

⁷² Christopher Paolini, "Christopher's Paolini Essay on Writing," *Random House*, 2003, <http://www.randomhouse.com/teens/eragon/essay.htm> (accessed April 6, 2015).

of both authors.⁷³ Tolkien summarizes in *The Lord of the Rings* the riddle game Bilbo lead with Glum and adds that “other folks besides hobbits ask riddles.”⁷⁴ Paolini has also a game of riddles which is between Saphira and Orin in *Eldrest*, only for a different purpose—to save oneself from the monotony of the ride instead of the wretched creature. Paolini also occasionally attempts to intersperse the novels with poems, in a similar spirit as Tolkien. He, besides other things, switches the point of views from Eragon to Roran until the two characters meet for the final moment. Furthermore, Paolini uses the plural form “dwarves” instead of “dwarfs” as would be grammatically correct. Kuusela explains that this phenomenon became “standard in most fantasy worlds” after Tolkien popularized the form that was previously used “in an English translation by Arthur G. Brodeur of the *Prose Edda*, from 1916.”⁷⁵

4.7. Other Elements

In this sub-chapter I discuss the elements that do not cover enough information to have their own sub-chapter or do not fit in the sub-chapters already mentioned, namely the map, Zar’roc, and the minor books Christopher Paolini consulted. The geographical parts of the maps of Alagaësia and Middle-earth, particularly of the west, bear several resemblances. Gondor and Surda are both the lands of humans in the south. Approaching the north-west there is a mountain range covering the coast from the sea—in Alagaësia it is called the Spine and in Middle-earth it is called the Blue Mountains. Finally, there is a great forest in the north-west—in Alagaësia called Du Weldenvarden and in Middle-earth Mirkwood.

In the sub-chapter on Other Items I commented briefly on Zar’roc. Zar’roc is similar to Bilbo’s sword Sting in a few ways. Not only it is provided with a name, it can also be viewed as a symbolic object. The sword possibly represents the responsibility and the legacy of its bearer. Brom and Bilbo pass it down to Eragon and Frodo, both become adventurers and eventually heroes. This is also the case of Beowulf’s sword. It has its own name—Naegling. It becomes the possession of Wiglaf before Beowulf dies. Wiglaf is also supposed to become a hero and a leader.

Finally, Paolini did not only consult the popular and widely known books, on the

⁷³ Robert Boenig, *Anglo-Saxon Spirituality: Selected Writings* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2000), 23.

⁷⁴ Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*, 54.

⁷⁵ Kuusela, “In Search of a National Epic,” 31.

official web pages of Paolini there is an article where Paolini claims he researched “a book from Dover on clothing from the medieval era” and “a number of books on ships when writing the sequence where Roran and the villagers steal the Dragonwing in *Eldest*.”⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Michael Macauley, “Q&As with Christopher: Angela’s Love Life, Eragon’s Scar, Elva as a Rider, and More,” *Paolini*, <http://www.paolini.net/stuff/articles/article-series-qas-christopher/qas-christopher-angelas-love-life-eragons-scar-elva-rider/> (accessed April 6, 2015).

Conclusion

Christopher Paolini is perceived as a contemporary fantasy writer with derivative tendencies drawing the “nectar” from several fantasy books. I aimed to select and examine the most influential pieces of literature on Christopher Paolini’s fantasy novels in which I could find elements that bear a resemblance to the elements in his fantasy world.

For this purpose the first chapter provided the information about Paolini’s life along with the list of the books he studied. Ursula K. Le Guin was not mentioned in the bibliographies I drew information from, however, her influence on Paolini was hinted at in the book *The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters*. The second chapter classified the Inheritance Cycle. In the third chapter I described the fantasy world and the elements of Paolini’s novels. In the fourth chapter the elements from Paolini’s world were compared to the elements of the books I selected from the first chapter. The books selection was explained also in the fourth chapter. Among the selected books were *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* by Tolkien, *Dragonflight* from The Dragonriders of Pern series by Anne McCaffrey, *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* by Bruce Coville, *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula K. Le Guin, and Seamus Heaney’s translation of *Beowulf*.

Examining the common elements in the fourth chapter one can observe that Paolini was mostly influenced by Tolkien, especially considering the variety of the sub-chapters in which Tolkien’s name or the name of his novels appeared. This observation did not come as any surprise since Tolkien is one of the most famous and known fantasy writers, for that reason *Beowulf* can be put next to him as Tolkien is known to be influenced by *Beowulf*. *Dragonflight* should be also highlighted for the concept of dragon riding was fully developed there, and it was neither introduced in *Beowulf* nor in Tolkien’s works. The behavior of the dragon and the naming process of the dragon in *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* were also very inspirational for Paolini. *A Wizard of Earthsea* provided inspiration in terms of magic, true name and language system. In the fourth chapter I also wrote about the articles that outlined a few more literary influences such as *The Ruby Knight*, *Dune* and less known books on clothing and ships that helped Paolini complete the series.

Resumé

Tématem této bakalářské práce jsou literární vlivy na Odkaz Dračích jezdců Christophera Paoliniho. Christopher Paolini, současný mladý spisovatel, je vnímán jako velmi neoriginální autor. Tento fakt ale nijak nepřitěžuje prodejnosti jeho fantasy románů. Na rozdíl od většiny autorů se může pochlubit celosvětovým prodejem.

V první kapitole popisují život Paoliniho a zároveň zmiňují knihy, které Paolini studoval. V druhé kapitole se věnují zařazení Odkazu Dračích jezdců v rámci fantasy. Třetí kapitolu zaměřují na popis Paoliniho fantasy světa. Popis je systematicky rozdělen do podkapitol. V podkapitolách uvádím prvky, které jsou jednak důležité pro příběh Odkazu Dračích jezdců, ale také zejména pro porovnání v následující kapitole. Tyto prvky porovnávám ve čtvrté kapitole s prvky z fantasy knih, u kterých se mi zdá, že mají největší vliv na Paoliniho fantasy romány. Knihy, jež mají dle mého názoru největší vliv na Paoliniho tvorbu, jsem vybrala z fantasy knih, které Paolini studoval, či byly uvedeny v první kapitole. Zmíněné knihy zahrnují *Pána prstenů* a *Hobita* od Tolkiena, *Dračí let* z cyklu *Drakeni z Pernu* od Anne McCaffrey, *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* od Bruce Covilla, *Čaroděj Zeměmoří* od Ursuly K. Le Guin a překlad *Beowulfa*.

Po prostudování společných aspektů ze čtvrté kapitoly lze usoudit, že Tolkien má na Paoliniho největší vliv jakožto zde nejčastěji zmiňovaný autor, což není žádné překvapení, jelikož je jeden z nejznámějších a nejúspěšnějších fantasy autorů. Tolkien byl ovlivněn *Beowulfem*, proto ho také zmiňují. Dále poukazuji na *Dračí let*, který představuje myšlenku létání na dracích. Tato myšlenka není rozvinuta u Tolkiena ani v překladu *Beowulfa*. Chování dračice a vybírání jména pro ni v díle Bruce Covilla má také velký vliv na Paoliniho. *Čaroděj Zeměmoří* ovlivňuje Paoliniho systém magie, jazyka a pravého jména. Ve čtvrté kapitole též píšou o článcích na webových stránkách Paoliniho, které nastiňují více literárních vlivů jako je *Rubínový rytíř*, *Duna*, ale i méně známé knihy o oblečení a lodích.

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Anotace

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Název bakalářské práce: Literární vlivy na fantasy romány Christophera Paoliniho.

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Klíčová slova: Christopher Paolini, Odkaz Dračích jezdců, fantasy literatura, literární vlivy, společné aspekty, Tolkien

Cílem této práce je vybrat a prozkoumat knihy, které mají největší vliv na fantasy romány Christophera Paoliniho, a ve kterých mohu najít aspekty, jež jsou podobné aspektům v Paoliniho fantasy světě. První část práce se zaměřuje na život Christophera Paoliniho, na knihy, které prostudoval, na začlenění Odkazu Dračích jezdců a popis fantasy světa Christophera Paoliniho. Druhá část práce porovnává prvky Paoliniho světa s prvky z ostatních knih.

Annotation

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The aim of this thesis is to select and examine the most influential books on Christopher Paolini's fantasy novels in which I can find aspects that bear a resemblance to the aspects in Paolini's fantasy world. The first part of the thesis focuses on the life of Christopher Paolini, the books he studied, the classification of the Inheritance cycle and the description of Christopher Paolini's fantasy world. The second part compares the elements of Paolini's world to the elements from other books.