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The Character of Saruman in *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.
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Abstract

This bachelor's thesis deals with the character of Saruman, who is one of the important characters of Tolkien's trilogy. The aim of the thesis is to analyse Saruman as a character influencing the plot of the story. The thesis progressively examines the literary predecessors of Saruman in ancient literature, Saruman's actions within the Istari; the thesis also depicts his development and actions in the Third Age of Middle-earth. This thesis shows that Saruman is an example of a tragically ending aspiring hero who, in his desire for power, betrayed the principles of goodness.

Introduction

I chose the topic of my bachelor's thesis because, since my childhood, I have been interested in fairy tales and adventure stories whose heroes fight evil and face various challenges. Thanks to this, I was introduced to the stories of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* (later referred to as *LotR*). Among the heroes of these stories, Saruman made an impression on me. Saruman is an interesting character whose fate evolves from a noble powerful hero to an individual standing on the side of evil.

Readers of Tolkien's literary works often unfairly neglect Saruman, seeing him as a peripheral character who is only seen one-sidedly as a servant of evil, an adversary of Gandalf and a subordinate ally of Sauron. Saruman is more multi-faceted and complex, has a deeper character and the reader feels compelled to think which of his many qualities will win.

It seems that Saruman has never gained as much prominence in the literary consciousness as the rival *LotR* heroes created by Tolkien, and has been analysed as only one of many negative characters who succumb to their overweening ambitions. A bachelor's thesis dealing solely with the character of Saruman has not yet been produced. Based on this thesis, the reader would be able to understand the character of Saruman in more depth.

The main aim of the thesis is to analyse the character of Saruman as one of the important characters in Tolkien's *LotR* trilogy. The thesis is divided into four chapters which will successively explain the reasons for Saruman's actions in the plot of *LotR*. The first chapter aims to identify the sources Tolkien used to create the character of Saruman and thus to find literary predecessors of Saruman. The second chapter explores the Istari of which Saruman was a member and then looks at Saruman's history prior to the trilogy. The aim of the third chapter is to depict the activities of Saruman during *LotR*. The last chapter is to assess Saruman's relationship with the good and evil characters of the trilogy. The individual chapters include not only Tolkien's literary inspiration in creating the character but also Saruman's origins in Middle-earth, which then profoundly influenced Saruman's actions during *LotR* and his relationships with the other characters in *LotR*.

1 Literary Predecessors of Saruman

There are many stories and myths in ancient and medieval literature that still shape the cultural consciousness of our society. Tolkien's interest in texts from the ancient past is very evident in his literary works. Not only *LotR* but also Tolkien's other works contain phenomena and motifs inspired by the authors of previous literary epochs. Tolkien adopts and, in his own way, transforms the basic plot and moral message (the struggle between good and evil, the journey as a method of gaining knowledge, overcoming obstacles to strengthen the moral qualities of the hero) into a new quality. This chapter mentions the literary works whose characters have a connection with Saruman, whether it concerns their appearance or character or their destiny. Not all of them were used by Tolkien as primary inspiration, but there appears to be a parallel. The aim of this chapter is to identify potential sources Tolkien might have used to create the character of Saruman and thus to find literary predecessors of Saruman.

In the older literature, some characters strikingly resemble Saruman in appearance, behaviour and character. In his work, Tolkien drew mostly from Nordic mythology (Colbert, 2002, pp. 25-30), but his characters also have their predecessors in other literary texts (Carter, 2002, pp. 37-39), and this includes the central character of this thesis, Saruman.

Tolkien indicates that analogy with the politicians, demagogues or dictators of the late Victorian era or the turbulent 20th century provide an explanation, so it would be a mistake to seek any contemporary resemblance (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. xxv-xxvii) since Saruman is a character appearing in all eras, a complex and multi-faceted personality with a rich register of traits and deeds. A traditional literary type, such as Hamlet, Don Quixote or Faust, is known to readers by a specific characteristic or attribute. Saruman is special in this respect because he takes many forms; we recognize him as a wizard (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, pp. 359, 360), an authority of the Istari (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, p. 389), a renegade and a vagrant (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1287). It is, therefore, more difficult to specify and classify him.

Saruman is depicted as an old man, who knows the secrets of iron and possesses knowledge that is beyond the reach of ordinary mortals (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 360). In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Tolkien characterizes Saruman as "Saruman the Wise, Saruman Ring-maker, Saruman of Many Colours!" (2007, p. 337). In his actions, he behaves as an opportunist who desires to control his surroundings and pursues only his interests.

Many characters may have inspired Tolkien in creating his Saruman. Even ancient texts, which were familiar to Tolkien from his literary research, show capable and ambitious

individuals who have exceptional abilities to influence or control their surroundings. Saruman is a warning; he has dangerous traits and proves that the hero's abilities can be easily abused if he succumbs to tempting evil. "It is perilous to study too deeply the arts of the Enemy, for good or ill. But such falls and betrayals, alas, have happened before" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 345). In his laudable desire for knowledge, Saruman has not only come too close to evil but has succumbed. However, he is not the first literary character to ultimately prove negative in his pursuit of a higher goal. A parallel to Saruman might also be Hérostratos, credited with setting fire to the Ephesian Temple of Artemis, a famous wonder of the ancient world. This man wanted to bring his name into the public consciousness, even at the cost of doing a bad deed. Hérostratos wanted to be famous and Saruman in *LotR* wanted to be a mighty conqueror of Sauron. Both characters were united by ambition and a desire for publicity and respect. However, both were eventually rejected by their surroundings.

It seems that Tolkien proceeded not only from Nordic myths, but also from folk tales or ancient stories and used similar themes and motifs in his literary work (Krause, 2013, pp. 43, 44). Saruman in his appearance seems to resemble a priest, sorcerer or wizard of the pre-Christian period. As Tacitus (2006) mentions, as early as 2000 BC, Gallic druids began to appear in the British Isles and played a significant role in the political and cultural life of their community. Druids kept secrets, performed rituals and influenced whether or not war would occur (Tacitus, 2006). Their view on the existence of the soul also explains Gandalf's transformation after the battle with Balrog or Saruman's downfall. Caesar's (2012, p. 113) comment on the Druids' thoughts and values about life and death, that "souls do not become extinct, but pass after death from one body to another" (Caesar, 2012, p. 113), is consistent with Tolkien's description of Saruman's end. Even Saruman has turned into a mere disembodied ghost wandering Middle-earth (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1335).

Druids were wise men who decided the fates of others, including the right to imprison, punish, or exclude from society (Caesar, 2012, p. 112). Tacitus (2006) mentions the importance of the ring as a symbol of bonds and slavery. "All the most brave likewise wear an iron ring (...) and retain it as a chain" (Tacitus, 2006). Tolkien's proposition of the ruling ring is fulfilled in its original form, for Sauron's ring has conquered all subsequent owners except its creator, bound them with its power and enslaved them (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 81). With the rise of Christianity, the Druids lost their privileges and declined from the elite to the status of persecuted vagrants. It also corresponds to the fate of Saruman after his defeat by the ents in the Isengard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1283).

Caesar (2012, p. 112) describes the Druids' competition for power and primacy. A similar correlation can be seen in Tolkien's reference to the White Council, where Saruman and Gandalf vie for hegemony, and where it is mentioned that being the first among equals was essential for Saruman even at the cost of subterfuge and open confrontation. Saruman was the most prominent in the Council; however, by his actions, he lost his position and was replaced by Gandalf, who was endowed with authority and power. Caesar (2012, p. 112) points out the struggle of the Druids, who "sometimes (...) even contend for the presidency with arms". This motif appears in Tolkien's *Two Towers*, when Gandalf divests Saruman of his power, his magic staff, and his position in the Council after the capture of Isengard (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 761).

Caesar (2012, p. 112) acknowledges the Druids' connection to the British Isles, including their extensive knowledge, and considers ancient England the cradle of the Druids. Therefore, we can also see a predecessor of Saruman in this source, which was available to all scholars of antiquity during the Victorian era. Tolkien might have used this well-known motif when writing *LotR*. Besides, we cannot forget to mention the Druids as teachers, because Saruman is also mentioned as a teacher, albeit negatively. That can be proven by the sentence "Saruman spoke them, the teacher of Wormtongue" (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1135). Caesar states that "a large number of the young men resort for the purpose of instruction, and they [the Druids] are in great honour among them" (2012, p. 112). The relationship between the Druids and their pupils was strong, based on the teacher's unquestioned authority and the pupil's unconditional obedience. The teacher represented a role model and ideal for his pupil. Unfortunately, Saruman is a bad teacher, betraying his mission. As Saruman, the teacher, treated Gríma, so did his pupil repay him, in the same – if not a worse, way, he killed him (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1335). Saruman can also be seen as a bad pupil who has turned against the ideas of the Valar and alienated himself from them. Even the relationship between Treebeard and Saruman, when they were not enemies, was based on the relationship between a wise teacher and a polite pupil. "I told him many things that he would never have found out by himself; but he never repaid me in like kind" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 616). Ironically, the only role model that Saruman wanted to resemble was his main adversary, Sauron. Saruman studied him carefully (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 361) and tried to act in his manner, just like a student imitates his teacher.

Saruman's personality is also linked to his knowledge of metals and his ability to produce, process and use them for his purposes (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 360). The historical role of iron is unquestionable for the human race. Likewise, legends, tales, heroic

stories, songs and myths connected to the pre-Christian period of antiquity, the Bronze and Iron Ages, show respect and admiration for those fascinated by metal and the mystery of how to make it.

The ancient blacksmith Hephaestus, serving the gods, is an example of a skilled and dexterous craftsman. Even in folk tales, blacksmiths are endowed with extraordinary powers. This power over metal was overwhelming to the layman, and those who mastered the secrets of metal were considered capable and skilful in other areas. The motif of an old man, a blacksmith, iron and iron weapons is also found in folklore; *Norwegian Folk Tales* (1941, pp. 54-62) include a story about a blacksmith who wants to sacrifice his soul to the devil if the devil allows him to master the art of blacksmithing and lets him practise his craft for seven years. The hero is gifted with magical powers but must pay the price, risking his soul and afterlife. Similarly, Saruman had to pay a high price for his art, he lost his social status, trust and respect (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1334).

Saruman's interest in iron or other metals fulfils this paradigm, including the symbolic concept of iron. From time immemorial, iron has appeared in literature in multiple forms: the form of the plough represents peace, while the sword and the axe are manifestations of war and violence. In *LotR*, the swords and axes made by Saruman destroy all living things and are the path to extinction (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 630).

Slavery and servitude formerly expressed by the yoke or bridle have their equivalents in iron fetters; correspondingly, a firm bond, obligation or social status can be expressed by a ring. As such, in both the ancient and medieval periods, the ring was an ecclesiastical and secular power symbol. Not only privileges but also obligations arising from the ownership were defined between the giver and receiver of the ring. The ancient legend of the Polycrates' Ring proves that the ring could fundamentally influence the wearer's fate. All objects symbolizing slavery or obligation play a vital role in the development of Saruman's fate, and the motif of metal is interwoven in the plot of the trilogy. If we focus on Saruman's overt activities – the conquest of Isengard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1428), the manufacture of weapons (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 723, 724), the enslavement of his neighbours and the wars (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 757), we can find a parallel in Tacitus (2006); he wrote about the mining of iron ore by the subjugated Gothinians, who hand it over to their oppressors instead of using their iron weapons to win their freedom. Even the iron-smithing orcs conquered by Saruman in Isengard arm an army destined to conquer Rohan and Gondor instead of revolting against Saruman. They have grown too accustomed to his commands, and the desire for freedom is alien to them (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 581). The strong-

willed Romans and ancient conquerors resemble Saruman in the fall and demise of powerful empires.

Kalevala (1980, pp. 110-113), an epic work well-known to Tolkien, is about men who rule with wisdom and have respect for metal. In this Nordic tale of pre-Christian times, Väinämöinen appears in search of a wise, old man who can heal a wound caused by an axe. The hero argues that iron should not harm people but cut trees (Kalevala, 1980, pp. 110-113). Tolkien negates and expands on this idea, iron should not harm anything living, including the trees around the Isengard (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 740). For Tolkien, iron is a synonym for war. In *Kalevala* (1980, pp. 114-123), Väinämöinen visits the old man who cures him. In return, Väinämöinen tells him about the beginning of iron, which was first mastered by the blacksmith Ilmarinen. However, Ilmarinen sees iron as a danger because it can cause evil and shed blood. These qualities are also passed on to its creator or owner if he or she is not firm in character (Kalevala, 1980, pp. 114-123). This warning occurs very prominently in the trilogy, Saruman was not the only master of iron, but he and Sauron wanted to use iron to dominate the world and enslave their opponents.

Another inspiration for Tolkien's creation of Saruman's character may have been the Old Icelandic sagas that contain similar themes of powerful beings endowed with superhuman powers. They are gods who control the world and seek knowledge and who can sometimes be malevolent and treacherous. Yet, they cannot be clearly labelled as either good or evil (Colbert, 2002, pp. 124, 125). Through their actions, they influence the world as vehemently as Saruman does. The dramatic height of the trilogy (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1239, 1239) recalls the final motif of the Viking world's end described in *Edda* (2019, p. 15). Also the struggle of the free peoples of Middle-earth for the existence of the world and their defiance against Sauron is comparable to the Vikings' struggle of the gods against giants and creatures of evil.

According to Carter (2002, pp. 133-136), Tolkien was familiar with the *Edda* and was probably often inspired by it, as evidenced by the dwarf or hobbit characters' names in *The Hobbit* and the trilogy. Even the name of Saruman's fellow member of the Istari order, Gandalf, is mentioned in the *Edda* (2019, p. 22). The Nordic gods seem to have served as inspiration for the Istari characters, i.e. Saruman and Gandalf. Nordic mythology records a number of individuals close to Saruman in character and deeds. An example is the quarrelsome god Loki (*Edda*, p. 490), who may have influenced the model of Saruman through his cunning, guile, and ability to cause strife in his environment. Odin also bears a strong resemblance to Saruman

(Colbert, 2002, p. 126). This god has qualities suitable for a member of the Istari. Like Saruman, he is cunning and covets valuables (Edda, 1942, pp. 162, 163).

Colbert (2002, pp. 59, 60) mentions Odin's dual form because Odin's good and negative qualities are intermingled. Nordic mythology emphasizes the magical power of Odin as well as his closest servants, two wolves and two ravens, who bring Odin news from the world (Colbert, 2002, pp. 125, 126), which is similar to the wolves and crebains that help Saruman. Both characters are also united by their supremacy over their surroundings and their strong desire for knowledge.

Odin often wanders the landscape in the form of a wanderer, hiding his identity (Colbert, 2002, p. 125). The grey-bearded man's appearance (Edda, 1942, p. 179) matches the physical appearance of Saruman in many ways when he was sent to Middle-earth. Saruman's character is very close to the gods mentioned above, not only in his actions but in his weaknesses – he acts seemingly wisely but thwarts his goals through blind faith in himself and immense pride.

There is no doubt that Tolkien based his ideas of Saruman on Nordic myths, as evidenced by the example of *Kalevala* and *Edda*. Furthermore, the writings of Caesar and Tacitus contain references to priests of similar character and appearance to Saruman. Saruman is not a simple copy of already existing literary characters or types. His literary archetype resembles a mosaic that combines many of the qualities of already existing literary characters. It is demonstrated by Saruman's resemblance to ancient priests, skilled blacksmiths, and Nordic gods wielding magical power.

2 History of Saruman Before *The Lord of the Rings*

The Saruman portrayed by Tolkien in *LotR* is a character who is evolving and changing significantly. Thus, to understand Saruman's actions, it is necessary to analyse this wizard at the time when he was not an ally of Sauron but endeavoured to fulfil the mission of the Valar as a member of the noble Istari. They sent him and his companions to Middle-earth during the time of the Third Age with a clear mission to stop Sauron's destructive actions, in which he was also strengthened by the One Ring (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, pp. 359, 360). The purpose of this chapter is to first describe the Istari of which Saruman was a member and then Saruman's specific actions prior to *LotR* trilogy.

The Istari were wizards who aimed at the knowledge of mysteries and secrets, who knew the past and the character of the entire World. They came to Middle-earth from the west, landing in the Grey Havens to confront Sauron (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, pp. 388, 389). Their main task was to unite his adversaries and together stop him. The individual members of the Istari were not meant to use force as a means of coercion but were chosen by the Valar to help the good (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, p. 389). These wizards were united by their desire for knowledge and were willing to learn all the available arts of the Third Age, such as communication with animals, mastery of the secrets of iron making, understanding of nature and, in an emergency, the arts of war, politics and diplomacy (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 360).

The Istari were endowed with an immortal soul, but their own physical body was mortal. Death was not the end – they could come back to life, like Gandalf, or transform into a ghost as Saruman did (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, p. 391). Tolkien lists five wizards; Curunír, known as Saruman, chosen by Aulë, who had a penchant for metals and crafts, Mithrandir or Gandalf, Radagast the Brown, and the two Blue Wizards (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, pp. 389-394, 421). The Istari differed in character and interests, did not reveal their true names, and were therefore called different names by humans, elves, and dwarves. The Dúnedain and Eldar translated the name of Saruman as “the Man of Skill” (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1424) and the elves as “the one of cunning devices” (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 387).

However, Colbert (2002, p. 108) also mentions the Old English word *searu* as a possible meaning of Saruman's name, which is the closest to the words treacherous or cunning in the word meaning. Gandalf was “the Grey Pilgrim” (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1424), and Radagast the Brown was a friend of flora and fauna (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*,

1999, p. 360), unconcerned with the issues of men. The Istari appeared to their surroundings in the form of mature men, never young, yet, they abounded in physical prowess. Most often they roamed the countryside, travelling and exploring Middle-earth (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 360).

Initially, the Istari communicated and worked together with Saruman having the final word due to his authority and ability to speak and persuade (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 361). Saruman was also impressive in his appearance, wearing a white cloak with a cape, his hair, initially black, later turned white and he became a white-haired old man; he had polished manners and was skilled in everything he did; probably because of his white robes he was called Saruman the White (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, pp. 389, 390). Gradually, he changed, and his pride, haughtiness and lust for power became evident. The qualities of the individual members of the Istari may have been conducive to good, but Saruman gradually misappropriated them and thus failed to fulfil his mission.

From Tolkien's records, we can reconstruct Saruman's time in Middle-earth in the period before *LotR*. Tolkien's Third Age followed the events of the Second Age, the most important of which are the circumstances of the creation of Sauron's Ring of Power. The so-called One Ring was created in the Second Age by Sauron, who took advantage of his contact with elven smiths. They made the so-called Rings of Power, and Sauron gained immense power through his Ring (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1422). This power was strengthened by his possession of the Land of Mordor where Sauron had built Barad-dûr and was about to dominate the nations of Middle-earth (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1421). After the temporary success of Númenor, Sauron was captured. In 3320, he again took control of Mordor, but the united armies of elves and men defeated him, and the Ring was shortly in the hands of Isildur, only to disappear for a long time in the River Anduin after the Battle of the Gladden Fields in the second year of the Third Age (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1423, 1424).

The first indirect mention of Saruman is in the year 1000, when Saruman, as a member of the Istari, came as the first envoy to Middle-earth (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1423, 1424). Until 2463, when the White Council was formed (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1427), Saruman could not be considered a negative character; he was considered wise and was acknowledged to be skilled with metal (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 360). He gradually consolidated his position in the White Council through his knowledge of Sauron and his understanding of the rings. Moreover, he benefited from his skilful diplomacy, Radagast's passivity and Gandalf's indifference towards scheming and intrigue. The unity of

the Council was weakened by the rift between Saruman and the elves. Galadriel, ruler of the Lothlórien and a member of the Council, distrusted Saruman and preferred Gandalf's wisdom (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 1999, p. 361).

Saruman was interested in the secrets of others and was adept at uncovering them, so he also learned the secret of Gandalf, who kept the possession of the Ring of Fire (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1424) a secret so as not to arouse Saruman's envy. Saruman coveted a ring, and possession of the One Ring would elevate him above all others. However, the Ring had been missing for over 2400 years at the time of the White Council's creation, and in 2463, it fell into the hands of Smeagol, who killed his brother Déagol; the reason for the killing was a dispute over the One Ring found in Anduin (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1427).

Around 2759, Saruman took possession of the Isengard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1428); the rulers of Gondor considered it wise to entrust the fortress to Saruman, including the keys to the tower of Orthanc, as it was abandoned. From then on, the Isengard territory became known as Nan Curunír, Saruman's Valley (Wynn Fonstad, *The Atlas of Middle-earth*, 1991, p. 134). Saruman's disagreement with the White Council took place in 2851. The Council found that Sauron was regaining power in Middle-earth, yet Saruman refused Gandalf's suggestion to attack Dol Guldur, where Sauron could be defeated (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1429). The reason for Saruman's reluctance to battle was a selfish desire to gain time to search for the One Ring for him alone. Saruman wanted to outwit both the Council and Sauron. Therefore, he searched for signs of the One Ring, and through the study of old writings, Saruman began to discover the circumstances of Isildur's death. Around 2939, he started to search the area near the Gladden Fields, like Sauron's Ringwraiths had done before him, fearing that Sauron was close to finding the Ring. However, he withheld this vital information from the White Council (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1430).

At the time when Bilbo obtained the Ring from Gollum, Saruman, in a meeting of the White Council, first endorsed a plan to attack Sauron only to prevent him from finding the One Ring, which they both mistakenly believed was still in Anduin (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1430).

The last time the White Council met was in 2953, and even there, Saruman mendaciously claimed that the Ring had apparently ended up in the Sea and, therefore, there was nothing to worry about. The danger represented by Sauron was not considered crucial by Saruman, with his prying attention once again focused on Gandalf. Trying to understand why Gandalf visits the Shire so often, Saruman begins to follow him secretly. For that purpose, he

used spies and sought helpers to monitor events in the Shire. By this time, Saruman no longer wanted to be conspicuous by his interest in the Ring, so he focused on improving the Isengard defences (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1430, 1431). Before Saruman started fortifying the Isengard, it was covered with many trees, and there was a small lake, too. (Wynn Fonstad, *The Atlas of Middle-earth*, 1991, p. 134).

Because of Saruman's interventions, Isengard was transformed into a massive fortress enclosed by iron gates. The pass was also equipped with quarters for servants, soldiers and craftsmen, armouries, iron furnaces and forges to produce weapons (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 722-724). The production of iron also caused a massive need for wood for the furnaces, so Saruman began sending his orcs into the area around Isengard, arousing the resentment of the ents, who were concerned about the wanton destruction of their trees in the Fangorn Forest (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 616, 617).

During the fortification of Isengard, the danger of Mordor intensified and Saruman decided to use every opportunity to his advantage and fight. He found a preserved palantír in Orthanc, he looked into it to observe what was happening in Middle-earth and tried to find out Sauron's intentions. However, this proved to be a fatal mistake, the Mordor ruler was stronger and Saruman, without being aware of it, gradually succumbed to him (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1431). He was also unaware that Gollum had admitted the loss of the Ring and the existence of the hobbit Bilbo, who became the new owner of the Ring (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 77, 78). For the last 18 years of the Third Age, Saruman was not at the forefront of Tolkien's interest, appearing only later in *LotR*.

In this chapter, we have established that the principles of the Istari were right and noble. Members of the order were not to be subject to personal ambition, not to inflict evil, but rather to protect the peoples of Middle-earth from evil in the form of Sauron. Saruman was endowed with qualities and abilities that, if used properly, could have significantly weakened Sauron; nevertheless, by succumbing to personal ambition and the desire to find the One Ring, he chose a method of violence and intrigue. Saruman thus defied the principles of the Istari and, by his behaviour, whether consciously or unconsciously, strengthened Sauron's influence.

3 Saruman in *The Lord of the Rings*

This chapter focuses on Saruman's activities in the story of *LotR*, examining his influence on the plot and showing the changes that Saruman has undergone. Saruman is most prominently mentioned in *The Two Towers*, but Tolkien also focuses on his deeds and intentions in the rest of the trilogy, though not as intensely. If we could consider Saruman as at least somewhat good in the previous period and having only minor character flaws, here, Saruman already shows himself negatively. The aim of the third chapter is to depict Saruman's activities during *LotR* trilogy.

3.1 *The Fellowship of the Ring*

In the first part of *LotR*, we first learn about Saruman from a conversation between Frodo and Gandalf, who suspects that the Ring hidden in the Shire and now belonging to Frodo might be the Ring of Power (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 61). Gandalf meets Frodo three years after Bilbo Baggins gave the Ring to his nephew (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1432). Gandalf identifies Saruman as "Saruman the White" and confirms that he considers him "head of the Council" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 63). Nevertheless, Saruman arouses a certain distrust in Gandalf; he is not one to whom we would confide our doubts (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 63). We come to know Saruman as a proud, independent individual with a deep knowledge of the elven rings their creation and manufacturing secrets. Saruman's secrecy and closed-mindedness makes one uneasy about matters relating to the Ring. Saruman is portrayed as an authority figure – a wise thinker who speaks with discretion and calm to reassure Gandalf and remove his doubts.

Saruman's influence mentioned above comes from the position he holds in the White Council. Here, he is considered an unquestioned authority on all the matters concerning the rings and Sauron. Saruman downplays Sauron's threat and encourages the White Council to merely observe and not interfere (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 326). Both Gandalf and Saruman try to find the Ring, knowing that it is the Ring of King Isildur. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Tolkien retrospectively documents and explains what happened to the Ring in the previous period. Tolkien repeatedly deals with the beginning of Saruman's betrayal and emphasizes the moment when Saruman betrayed his mission to save Middle-earth from Sauron (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 331-353). Saruman is unaware of the Ring's presence in the Shire, but he wants to make sure that Gandalf does not keep any information about the Ring from him (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 336).

However, the book shows that Gandalf has known about the Ring for a long time but has not told Saruman, despite being the leader of the Council. An unfortunate coincidence occurs in such a tense situation, as Frodo constantly postpones his journey with the Ring to Rivendell, the Ringwraiths approach the Shire, and Gandalf finds himself in unexpected danger (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1432, 1433). Saruman prepares to control Gandalf; nevertheless, he does not act directly but insidiously invites him through Radagast the Brown to a meeting in the Isengard. Radagast has succumbed to Saruman's influence, believing his good intentions, and, therefore, Gandalf could not guess Saruman's deception (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 334, 335). Therefore, he accepts Saruman's invitation and believes that Saruman can still be useful and helpful to him in the fight against evil. In July 3018 (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1432), Saruman attempts to persuade Gandalf to cooperate, offering him friendship and the tempting possibility that, together, they might rule Middle-earth and establish order (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 337, 338). Tolkien describes the circumstances of the capture in more detail in the second book of *The Fellowship of the Ring* when Gandalf is given the chance to explain the circumstances of Saruman's betrayal to the Council of Elrond (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 325).

The second book of *The Fellowship of the Ring* provides information about Saruman's actions vicariously. The primary source of information about Saruman is Gandalf, who attends the Council of Elrond. Elrond, the leader of the elves, calls the Council to consult and make a decision on how to handle the Ring (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 311).

Saruman's absence at this Council is conspicuous, as evidenced by Galdor's inquiry, who is the first to ask why Saruman, clearly an expert on the Rings, is absent when he has studied them extensively before (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 325). It is clear to all members of the Council that Saruman's knowledge could be of great help in a time of danger from Sauron. It was not unknown to the Council that Saruman often visited Denethor, the steward of Gondor, who represented the missing king and had access to the old records stored in Minas Tirith about the past of the Gondor. After a strenuous search, he was able to uncover the secret of the Ring but did not discover its whereabouts (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 328).

Gandalf explains to the Council the events of the previous months, speaking of his stay in Orthanc, where he was imprisoned by Saruman until 18 August 3018 (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1433). We learn several important details and information about Saruman. In recounting his imprisonment in the Orthanc, Gandalf admits that before his capture, he placed

great emphasis on Saruman's knowledge, did not suspect him of treachery, and was reassured by his words, which were, in fact, deceptive (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 327). The first signs that their negotiations in Orthanc were not going well are evidenced by Saruman's reaction at the beginning of the meeting; Saruman mockingly refers to his visitor as "Gandalf the Grey" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 336), despising his own white colour, and refers to himself in his pride as "Saruman the Wise, Saruman Ring-maker" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 337). Gandalf must then listen to Saruman's rebuke that he may have been hiding information about who owns the Ring and where it is located. In his efforts to endear himself to Gandalf, Saruman displays an exceptional capacity for demagoguery and seemingly impressive manipulation. Saruman reveals his plans – to find and control the Ring to serve his purposes. Saruman expresses his admiration for the new power associated with the Ring that will change the old world (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 336-338). He does not want to wield this power by using his wisdom but rather by using a powerful army made up of orcs and wolves. He wants to equip this powerful army with weapons made in his forges (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 723, 724). Gandalf's narrative leads to the conclusion that Saruman is a traitor who has been seduced by Sauron's actions, and that the desire to obtain the Ring has led not only to lies but also to blatant hostility towards the Council and the forces of good. The main consequence of Saruman's actions is obvious – Saruman has lost his primacy in the Council and, by his futile efforts to force Gandalf to cooperate, he has finally closed his path to obtaining the Ring of Power.

The end of the first part of the trilogy announces that the author's interest in the character of Saruman will increase in the second book. If Saruman appears as a schemer in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, in the following *Two Towers*, he intervenes more strongly in the plot of the story.

3.2 *The Two Towers*

The second part of the trilogy is set in the span of a few weeks (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1435, 1436). In the previous part, the disintegration of *The Fellowship of the Ring* has occurred, and the storyline is divided into the journey of Frodo carrying the Ring; the fates of Merry and Pippin, who escape from the captivity of the orcs; Legolas, Gimli and Aragorn searching for their friends; and Gandalf, who is presumed dead after the cruel events in Moria (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. viii-x). The opening of *The Two Towers* suggests that Saruman has moved from intrigue to more offensive activities and is becoming a palpable danger to his neighbours. Attacks from Saruman-sent orcs and wolves threaten the

initially friendly warriors of Rohan (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 568). This situation is foreshadowed by Tolkien in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, where Gandalf warns at the Council of Elrond of the evil that comes from Saruman (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 566).

Saruman also does not forget about the search for the Ring, and so he sends an army of orcs from Orthanc to search for the hobbits he suspects of owning the Ring (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 580). His uncertainty as to which of the hobbits carries the Ring leads him to cooperate with Sauron, exchanging information with him through the palantír and Sauron's servants. After the fight with Boromir, Saruman's orcs capture two hobbits, Merry and Pippin, but do not get the Ring (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1435). In early March 3019, events in Middle-earth take an unexpected turn. Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli pass cautiously by Saruman's territory, warned by Éomer about a man who is "hooded and cloaked" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 576, 577), and encounter a mysterious hunched old man wearing a great cloak and holding a staff. They think it is Saruman, but before they can find out the truth, the man suddenly disappears (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 576). The situation becomes clearer when the trio of heroes again encounter the old man in the grey cloak in the forest and, believing him to be an enemy, Gimli and Legolas attack him with their weapons without the slightest success. The old man faces their attack, drops his hood, throws off his grey cloak and appears in white. Instead of Saruman, the warriors again meet Gandalf (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 641-645). Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli are strengthened by the return of Gandalf and set out to King Théoden to free him from Saruman's influence (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 660).

Rohan is being disrupted from within by Saruman. Saruman has used the Rohan warrior and servant of King Théoden, Gríma Wormtongue, to weaken the king's power through his schemes. Gríma entered the service of Saruman, influenced by his deception and the promise that he would be rewarded for his faithful service materially as well as by the hand of the king's daughter Éowyn. Saruman thus works not only with power and gifts but also the amoral offer to win a woman against her will. Gríma succumbs to the lure of controlling a woman who will never love him (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 679).

Saruman's power over Théoden ends when Gandalf reveals the servant Gríma as a traitor and Saruman's spy. Gríma's expulsion from Rohan and his journey to Isengard definitively prove his evil intentions and loyalty to Saruman (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 748).

Saruman faces a double threat at this point, on the one hand, the forces of good are strengthened by the return of Gandalf, whose power has increased (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*,

2007, p. 645); on the other hand, Saruman is threatened by the actions of Sauron, who is also beginning to suspect him of treachery (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 581). Saruman's intrigues turn against him; the intervention of his orcs brings the hobbits to the Fangorn Forrest. There, the hobbits meet Treebeard and have a chance to talk to him, which is crucial for Saruman's future fate (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 603). It is clear that Treebeard is interested in Saruman, in everything Saruman has done wrong in the meantime, and he begins to realize that Saruman has actually used him for his interests. Treebeard's disgust is strengthened by the fact that Saruman has recruited nature-destroying and tree-hurting orcs into his service. The hobbits learn from Treebeard that Saruman was once a good man, visiting his Fangorn forest to learn about the life of the trees and the ents and wandering through this forest because he was interested not only in the trees, but also in the affairs of men and elves (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 615-617). From Treebeard's characteristics, we learn Saruman's main personality traits; Saruman is now interested in nothing but what can serve him. He gives no importance to trees or people and admires only metal and machines. Treebeard reveals Saruman's character, his lack of humanity, his technical thinking; he is, therefore, the creator of evil. Treebeard gets angry, and the death of his beloved trees leads him to think that the perfidious Saruman must be defeated to prevent him from harming anyone. Therefore, it is necessary to attack Isengard and defeat him together (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 616, 617). The ents set out on their journey, only to arrive at Isengard later and destroy it (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 634, 635). Thus, Saruman fails both as a magician and a warrior. His Isengard is taken by the ents and Treebeard becomes the keeper of Isengard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1435).

Saruman's end begins when Saruman is besieged in Orthanc with his companion Gríma. Gandalf challenges Saruman to a conversation, suggesting that he make amends for his misdeeds and help in the fight against Sauron (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 759), but Saruman tries to use the magical power of his captivating voice and gradually addresses the individual members of the expedition, some of whom are enchanted by his voice (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 754-758). Because Saruman, in his pride, refuses his offer and any mercy, Gandalf strips him of his power and his magic staff, Saruman is hereby expelled from the White Council (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 761). At this moment, the relationship between the members of the Istari changes, and the Ring seems forever out of reach for Saruman. All of Saruman's efforts to obtain the Ring have been in vain. Even the orcs and crebains have not helped to obtain it; he will never again be able to defeat Sauron. Nor will he fulfil the mission he was charged with by the Valar during the Second Age. Saruman falls into

uncertainty and is left with no hope. He is robbed of his last magical power by Gríma Wormtongue, who, in an attempt to harm Gandalf, throws a palantír, an object that allows Saruman to communicate with Sauron, out of the tower (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 761). Saruman has lost the object, which gave him the ability to monitor events in Middle-earth. Even though Saruman has done much evil, the winners do not want to kill him but leave him in Isengard; he is stripped of his powers and is to be guarded by the ents “until seven times the years in which he tormented us have passed” (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 766).

The ending of Tolkien’s *The Two Towers* depicts Saruman as a seemingly completely helpless person with no support or servants. Only Gríma remains in his service, even though Saruman mistreats him. However, Gríma is unable to separate himself from Saruman, has nowhere to go, and it is impossible to determine whether this is loyalty to his master or only opportunism.

3.3 *The Return of the King*

At the beginning of the final part of the trilogy, Saruman is held captive and guarded, for an idle Saruman is no threat. It is dangerous for the imprisoned Saruman to remain in the Isengard. In addition, he has definitively lost Sauron’s trust and faces retaliation or punishment if he stops helping or pretending to be his ally. Sauron was initially in contact with Saruman through his emissaries and palantír. If Sauron has now stopped hearing from Saruman, this can be seen as a conscious intention and an apparent effort by Saruman to rid himself of foreign influence.

Saruman no longer has anyone’s trust. He will never achieve his former influence, no matter how the battle turns out. Moreover, even if Sauron were to triumph, he would likely take the Isengard from Saruman and give it to one of his loyal servants (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1165).

Meanwhile, fierce battles are being fought in Middle-earth, and Saruman is trying to exert the remnants of his once impressive influence on Treebeard. Treebeard mistakenly believes that the defeated wizard will and cannot do any more harm because he is no longer important. The ent’s rage has passed and his grief over the destruction of the trees no longer demands revenge. The hatred for Saruman has turned to pity, for Treebeard does not like any creature to be held captive (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1283). Saruman takes advantage of this compassion, leaving the Isengard with Gríma and handing the keys of Orthanc to Treebeard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1284). Saruman becomes a seemingly

harmless vagrant, but the desire to avenge his humiliation and do more harm does not leave him.

After the end of the battles, Gandalf meets with Treebeard; they talk about Saruman and his fate. Gandalf is astonished because Treebeard admits that he has set Saruman free with his humiliated servant Gríma because there is not much left of the powerful wizard. Nevertheless, Saruman can still be dangerous and Gandalf knows it (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1281-1283).

Saruman secretly moves to the Shire, and in his role as a self-appointed ruler, he behaves as he did before in the Isengard, ordering his new servants to destroy, cut down trees and kill (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1325). Once again, Saruman's desire to harm nature and turn a fertile landscape into a despoiled one is on display. He would have caused more damage if he had more power and time (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1333). The previous plundering of the Shire brings Frodo back to the memory of the barren Mordor and proves the parallel between the destructive passion of Sauron and Saruman (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1332). Saruman was in the service of Mordor and served it, though he may have believed he ruled by his own will.

However, Saruman's followers are slain or banished from the Shire, and the hobbits seek out Saruman, the culprit of all evil. They find him at the Bag End, whose ruined surroundings arouse the hobbits' grief and anger. At the door of Frodo's home stands the gloating Saruman (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1332). He is satisfied with what he has done to the hobbits. His main wish was to harm the hobbits, and he says that evil should be met with evil. But all he has left are empty threats. Frodo gives up unnecessary revenge and does not want Saruman to be killed needlessly. Saruman has a chance to leave the Shire with impunity but treacherously tries to kill Frodo, even though Frodo had mercy on him. This murderous intent does not induce Frodo to respond to Saruman with evil, and Saruman admits that even a mere hobbit has surpassed him morally (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1332-1334). He humiliates Gríma and kicks him in the face to boost his confidence, but Gríma turns on his master and slits his throat. Saruman ends his existence in a strange way. Thanks to the west wind, Saruman's soul leaves his suddenly decaying body and dissolves. The gaze of the wizard's shadow is directed westward, from whence Saruman came many years ago with an important mission he had disregarded (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1335).

In the trilogy, Saruman first seeks the One Ring, pursues and eventually captures Gandalf. As Stanton states, although Saruman had evil intentions and imprisoned Gandalf, his actions ultimately contributed to Gandalf's realization of Saruman's betrayal (2003, p. 62).

Saruman then fails to attend Elrond's council, sending orcs to prevent the fellowship from transporting the Ring to Mount Doom. The intervention of Saruman's orcs divides the company, Saruman then attacks his former allies, the Rohirrim, and because he lets the orcs destroy the trees around Isengard, he must face an ent attack on Isengard. However, he subsequently loses control and his palantír but also his power and position in the Istari order. As an insignificant beggar, he leaves Isengard and decisively refuses to help his former allies in their fight against Sauron. He secretly travels to the Shire, where, after a brief period of domination and plunder, he is killed by his servant Gríma. The dangerous wizard thus becomes an inconsequential shadow. Saruman influences the plot of the trilogy in a major way, most notably in *The Two Towers*, where he enters the action directly and repeatedly. In the remaining parts of the trilogy, his presence is not as prominent, but he emerges as a hidden mover in the plot. The other characters have to face the consequences of the deeds that Saruman initiated, and that could not go unanswered.

4 Saruman's Relationship to Other Characters of the Trilogy

While the previous chapter outlined Saruman's actions in the plot of *LotR*, this chapter aims to assess Saruman's relationship to the positive and negative characters of the trilogy. Due to the large number of characters and literary types, only those that most significantly shape and influence Saruman's actions will be selected. It is necessary to analyse Saruman's appearance, attire, and character to fully understand him; besides, we need to reflect on the attributes that distinguish him from the other characters. Such analyses will yield an understanding of the character of the central figure of this work.

Appearance and dress may not indicate the character's nature in the present day, but for the tales, myths and stories of the past, these outward manifestations of the individual are essential. Often knightly armour is a sign of courage and warriorhood or loyalty to a ruler; priestly vestments may serve as a symbol of faith and identify the priest; the cloak has been associated with the pilgrim since time immemorial as a means of protecting its wearer from external discomfort. Saruman's clothing confirms this theory.

Characters can also be identified by the objects they own or control. For example, the knight wields a sword, the magician uses magical objects (staff, ring), and the king wears a crown. Saruman's staff is a manifestation of his power; by destroying the staff, Saruman loses all magical power (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 761).

The character of the protagonists in the trilogy can be inferred from their servants as well, Saruman's servants act cruelly like their ruler and are ugly (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 581, 582), unlike the noble warriors of Rohan and Gondor (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, pp. 560, 561). The nature of an individual is also evident in their relationship with animals and how they treat them. The noble eagles helping the hobbits and Gandalf (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 340, 341) as well as the magnificent horse Shadowfax (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 681) are a contrast to the wolves and prowling crebains that Saruman uses for his nefarious purposes (Stanton, 2003, pp. 170-172).

4.1 Saruman's Relationship Towards Good Characters

Saruman's behaviour is similar towards every positive character. He takes advantage of the help they offer him and shows apparent helpfulness as long as he thinks he gains something for himself by doing so. If Saruman acquires secrets or important knowledge from someone, he then takes no further interest in them and considers further encounters or even friendships to be pointless and weak.

4.1.1 Radagast and Gandalf

Like Saruman, these wizards belong to the revered and wise Istari, but unlike Saruman, they are on the right path to goodness. Saruman treats them with disdain, distance and coldness. He mocks Radagast and belittles his intelligence, yet does not hesitate to exploit Radagast's abilities and knowledge for his own purposes. Thanks to Radagast, he has learned how to talk to birds, though he otherwise despises his interest (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 337). He considers Radagast's honesty to be foolish, so he deceives Radagast and uses him as a tool to capture Gandalf (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 335). Although Saruman refers to Gandalf as "an old friend and helper" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 337), he inwardly fears and is jealous of him because of the ring Gandalf received from the elves (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1424). Saruman's envy wins over friendship or collegiality (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 338).

Saruman, overly confident of his dominance over Gandalf, tries to talk this member of the White Council and respected friend of the elves into his plans to be the only one to gain dominion over Middle-earth. After Gandalf's resolute refusal to cooperate, Saruman's true nature as a traitor and desire to rule over the will of others becomes apparent – he imprisons Gandalf (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 338, 339). As a result, Gandalf is the first to recognize that Saruman is not the wise man he seemed, but rather a traitor who wishes to harm all who oppose him and his goals.

Saruman's reluctance to accept friendly help and his pride are shown when he refuses Gandalf's help and offer to right the wrongs he has previously committed (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 759); this motif repeatedly appears in the trilogy (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1287).

Saruman's hatred of Gandalf is paradoxical because they should be pursuing the same goals and working together to defeat Sauron. However, despite their relatively similar appearance, they are quite different in character and values. Both Gandalf and Saruman are described as old men with staffs, cloaks, white hair, long beards and rings, both are wise, clever and educated, but they use their abilities in opposite ways, Gandalf for good, Saruman is misusing them. Although they are united by their primary mission in Middle-earth and the similar origins of their destinies, each of them acts differently.

Of all the characters in the trilogy, Gandalf is the most similar in appearance to Saruman (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 650), yet he is his complete antagonist in character and action. In minor trifles, they are similar, they share a fondness for tobacco, and Saruman adopts

this weakness from Gandalf, even though he originally criticised this habit (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, p. 350). Gandalf's actions are, for the most part, positive, only occasionally joking or showing resentment at the lack of understanding of those around him. Gandalf is also capable of mockery, but only rarely. This is seen in *The Two Towers* when Gandalf says, "Saruman, you missed your path in life. You should have been the king's jester..." (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 759). At this point, the defeated Saruman is deeply offended by Gandalf's words.

Saruman and Gandalf also differ in how they face mortal danger and the threat of physical destruction. Gandalf bravely faces Balrog in Moria, sacrifices himself in the battle to save his friends (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 431), and returns to the story as a more powerful being – Gandalf the White (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 645). Humiliating Gríma, his only companion and servant, Saruman succumbs to a disgraceful death and turns into a formless ghost who vanishes in a gust of wind (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1335).

4.1.2 Elves

The relationship between Saruman and the elves changes due to the events of *The Silmarillion*. Saruman does not interact much with the elves in the trilogy except for a coincidental encounter with Galadriel after he escapes from Isengard (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1287). The elves are an incomprehensible nation to him, refugees, a vanishing race with no future; he does not understand the reasons or meaning of their nobility (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1288). However, while Saruman is vengeful to the last moments of his life, the elves are able to forgive him.

The elven passion for beauty, nature, and art is at odds with Saruman's technology, violence and intrigue priorities. The only thing Saruman seems to have originally valued about the elves was their ability to forge the Rings of Power. That was what he wanted to emulate. Saruman refers to himself as "Saruman Ring-maker" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 337) and wears a ring (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 337), of which the book is silent as to its origin and we do not know how he got it. He does not attain the abilities of the elves; where the elves show a flair for art and beauty, Saruman achieves only the mechanical skill of an imitator.

4.1.3 Hobbits

Saruman's relationship with the hobbits has undergone a significant transformation. Although Saruman describes himself as wise, his pride prevents him from giving the hobbits any importance, except perhaps for the tobacco he gets from them. They are an insignificant

nation of insignificant people (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 63). The hobbits begin to interest Saruman when he learns that perhaps the Ring has made its way to the Shire. From that point on, he makes much effort, sending goblins, crebains and spies to bring the hobbits into his power (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1431). Saruman's suspicion that one of the hobbits possesses the One Ring increases. The hobbits come to know Saruman in multiple forms, first as a mysterious hooded old man in a grey cloak, then as a generous paying buyer of their tobacco (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 733), later as a powerful adversary who commands the goblins and as a threat. In the final form, Saruman reveals himself as the Sharkey (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1332), a cunning destroyer of their home in the Shire, where he does harm to wreak vengeance on defenceless creatures (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1333).

It must be even more painful for Saruman to suffer his final defeat and humiliation from the hobbits defending their Shire. The fact that they let Saruman alive is probably the ultimate humiliation for him; he is not even worth retaliating to, he is insignificant to them (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1334). This attitude leads Saruman to reconsider his views, though he must grudgingly admit that he was wrong in assessing the hobbits. The roles have changed. This insignificant nation made him "wonder and respect and hatred" (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1334).

4.1.4 Ents

In the beginning, the ents, especially Treebeard, maintained good relations with Saruman and received his visits; he was polite to them and listened to them, appreciating their wisdom and valuable information (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 616). The turning point is Saruman's alliance with the orcs and the cutting down trees to strengthen Isengard and make weapons. Treebeard refers to Saruman as "a black traitor" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 616) and sees Saruman's actions as cause for retaliation. Saruman's relationship with the ents reflects Tolkien's negative attitude towards destructive technology and, on the contrary, his positive attitude towards pristine, unimpaired nature. This is also evident from the observation of Carpenter (2016, p. 40), Tolkien's biographer, who noted Tolkien's anxiety about nature, an idyllic setting that would one day be destroyed and become a thing of the past.

4.2 Saruman's Relationship Towards Evil Characters

Saruman's relationship to the evil characters is based either on the imitation of an unattainable role model or on Saruman's abuse of his unjustly acquired status. Saruman's

servants are merely a means for him to accomplish his goals; Saruman is calculating, and it seems he feels nothing human.

4.2.1 Sauron

Sauron is a challenge and subconscious inspiration for Saruman. Saruman sees him as his role model and his main adversary, whose defeat would give him unlimited power over Middle-earth. It could be argued that Saruman is a caricature of Sauron and seeks to emulate him – the impregnable fortress, the unlimited power over his subordinates, the desire to intimidate, defeat and enslave all free peoples (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, pp. 337, 338). Both followers of evil use coercion and threats instead of negotiation and diplomacy, are no strangers to black magic and misuse magical items like the palantír to enslave Middle-earth. Sauron and Saruman fight in a similar style, using orcs, birds and wolves to destroy their opponents (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2007, p. 339). They are indifferent to the lives of others, whether they are dwarfs, elves, ents or hobbits. They are united by their desire for the One Ring, with which they could take over the world.

There is distrust between Sauron and Saruman (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1165), with Sauron pursuing him through the palantír, which keeps the confident Saruman firmly in his control. From being a mere observer of Sauron's actions, Saruman unwittingly becomes his servant, though he cannot admit it (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1431).

4.2.2 Creatures and Animals

The animals serving Saruman have a sinister and negative connotation, they symbolize death, fear and misfortune. Neither the wolf nor the crebains have anything good in them, and Saruman takes full advantage of their negative qualities. Wolves serve as the equivalent of horses and are part of Saruman's army. Saruman's animal allies can generally be considered hostile creatures that fulfil all the characteristics of servants of evil.

Carpenter's observation that Tolkien considered orcs a symbol of slavery is based on their mutilation and affliction with evil (2016, pp. 173, 174); they are vicious and bloodthirsty, their ability to destroy and kill is essential to Saruman's needs. Saruman's attempts to interbreed orcs and humans, which he pursued in Isengard (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 616), seem to be a denial of the principles Tolkien revered. By creating stronger and more dangerous creatures that follow his instructions, Saruman blasphemously sought to become god and creator at the same time. In doing so, he overstepped the clear limits set by the Valar (Tolkien, *Unfinished Tales*, 1980, p. 389). Moreover, he showed himself to be their inept commander,

taking advantage of the orc preponderance, disregarding all rules, and letting the orcs fight and die in battles without putting himself at the head of his armies.

4.2.3 Gríma Wormtongue

Saruman turned the once brave Rohan warrior into a spy and informer, he bought his soul and stripped him of his character. Taking advantage of Gríma's weakness and his interest in Éowyn, he worked on Gríma's basest desires, which won him a submissive slave but not a friend (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 2007, p. 679). The pair of Saruman and Gríma prove that an evil and morally bad teacher cannot teach his pupil anything good. Both leave Isengard, and both attempt to destroy the Shire. Gríma commits cruel deeds, but until the last moment, he is not only Saruman's servant but also the only companion who respects him (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, pp. 1334, 1335). Gríma cannot leave Saruman, and the only way to break free from his addiction is to murder him. He avenges Saruman's latest betrayal with death, showing his long-suppressed hatred, even if it eventually costs him his own life (Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, 2007, p. 1335).

Saruman mostly underestimates the good characters and tries to deceive them and use them for his purposes. He feels a false superiority towards them and cannot admit that they could be better than him; this becomes fatal to him because pride comes before a fall. The characters standing on the side of evil end in the traditional way – they are destroyed and disappear or are defeated and retreat into the background, but in either case they fail to fulfil their goals and desires; in this, their fate is tragic. This is the fate to which Saruman is also subject, for evil can never be controlled or eradicated; it can only be minimized. Saruman wanted to take over the world with the help of evil, but, in the end, evil took over Saruman. Ironically, all the efforts of the negative characters led to the victory of good.

Conclusion

This bachelor thesis dealt with the character of Saruman in *LotR* trilogy. It was found that Saruman greatly influences the plot of Tolkien's story; his actions force the other characters to act, which contributes to the development of the plot. The thesis depicts the rise and fall of a wizard who betrayed good, letting down everyone and everything. It has been established that the cause of Saruman's downfall was his excessive greed for knowledge and learning. Tolkien's message suggests that evil cannot be countered by other evils, that forgiveness is a more powerful force than revenge, and that a prominent character can become insignificant if he strays from the right path.

The thesis attempted to answer the objectives set in the introduction, as evidenced by the content of the individual chapters. It was determined that the literary antecedent of Saruman is influenced by legends, myths and tales; Saruman adopts many characteristics of ancient literary characters. The first chapter also specified Saruman as a being who is endowed with exceptional qualities, be it knowledge, magic or the ability to control others. In this way Saruman resembles the gods, wizards, druids and smiths of ancient times. They are, therefore, very different from ordinary people.

It was shown that Saruman, as head of the Istari, was guilty of transgressing against their morals when he adopted the methods of his opponents and used violence. As a result, Saruman failed in his mission, betrayed and thereby enabled the development of an evil whose power he underestimated.

Subsequently, the thesis was able to reconstruct and record the actions of Saruman during the period of *LotR*. His open struggle against his former allies almost made possible the victory of evil, and only Saruman's fall, caused by his underestimation of his rivals, saved an almost hopeless situation.

The final chapter provided an assessment of Saruman's relationships to the other characters of the trilogy. Saruman tried to deceive the good characters and exploit their positive qualities, while he controlled the negative characters through violence and intimidation. It was determined that Saruman's actions were purely pragmatic, as he was only pursuing his interest, and egoistic, as he did not care about others and only thought of himself.

Saruman evolved from a propagator of good and nobility to a servant of darkness. Therefore, his fate was tragic, and it should be a warning to others. However, just as we need positive heroes as role models with whom we want to identify or whom we want to admire, so

too is Saruman important, he showed what could happen to the world if the good were defeated and the bad became victorious.

It must be said that without the character of Saruman, the entire trilogy would have been a simple story that would not provide the reader with any sudden twists and unexpected plot episodes. The principle of the duality of good and evil works in classic stories, but Saruman represented an individual who has the power to engage the reader with his unpredictability and changeability. The reader can only guess how the story will end because he does not know whether Saruman will eventually rejoin the side of good or remain in the role of an antihero.

Following the storyline of Tolkien's narrative is not always easy because although Tolkien mostly follows a chronological progression, he very often retrospectively returns to events that happened in a previous time. He also uses parallel narratives, where two different events take place at the same time. Besides, we can notice that he is aware of this situation, linking successive events with a brief summary of the recorded action and anticipating how the plot will continue in the next chapter of the narrative.

The work was complicated by the fact that Tolkien, while writing, often considered different variants of the story's development and reconsidered even minor connections. It is evidenced by the comparison of *The Unfinished Tales* and *The Silmarillion*, where it is possible to find differences, even though they are mostly subtle and do not affect the whole plot. Saruman is a literary character who certainly deserves his place in world literature.

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Resumé

Bakalářská práce monotematicky zpracovává Sarumana jako jednu z Tolkienových postav, která se objevuje v období Třetího věku Středozemě, aby společně s dalšími čaroději řádu Istari čelila Sauronovu zlu a poté zásadním způsobem zasáhla do událostí boje o Prsten. Saruman je povahově se měnící literární postava obdařená vyšší mocí, která však kvůli svým negativním povahovým vlastnostem ztrácí vliv a podléhá zániku. Chronologicky byl zachycen vývoj Sarumanovy proměny z kladné literární postavy v charakterový opak. Je zde ukázán i morální úpadek jinak výjimečného hrdiny. Na základě rozboru Sarumanova jednání byly nalezeny důvody Sarumanova vzestupu a mocenského pádu a analyzován Sarumanův vztah k přírodě, technice a živým bytostem, který odráží Tolkienovy myšlenky, zkušenosti a poznatky získané literárním bádáním. Saruman je varováním pro každého, kdo v touze vyniknout opomíjí morální stránku svých činů.

Annotation

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Rok obhajoby:	2022

Název práce:	Postava Sarumana v Pánovi prstenů od J.R.R. Tolkiena
Název v angličtině:	The Character of Saruman in The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
Anotace práce:	Bakalářská práce se zabývá úlohou Sarumana v trilogii Pána prstenů. Umožňuje poznat specifika této Tolkienovy postavy a chronologicky i vztahově určit úlohu Sarumana v ději Pána prstenů. V práci je zachycen příchod Sarumana do Středozemě, jeho postavení v řádu Istari a Bílé Radě a postupný úpadek Sarumanova vlivu, který končí jeho zánikem. Práce se zabývá také charakterem Sarumana a literárními postavami, které mohly Tolkiena při vytváření tohoto literárního hrdiny inspirovat.
Klíčová slova:	Tolkien, Saruman, Pán prstenů, Společenstvo Prstenu, Dvě věže, Návrat krále, Istari, Prsten Moci, Středozemě, zlo, dobro
Anotace v angličtině:	This bachelor's thesis deals with the role of Saruman in The Lord of the Rings trilogy. It enables to discover the specifics of Tolkien's character and to determine chronologically and relationally the role of Saruman in the plot of The Lord of the Rings. The thesis depicts Saruman's arrival in Middle-earth, his position in the Istari and in the White Council, and the gradual decline of Saruman's influence, which ends with his doom. The thesis also focuses on the character of Saruman and the literary

	characters who possibly inspired Tolkien in creating this protagonist.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Tolkien, Saruman, The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, The Return of the King, Istari, One Ring, Middle-earth, evil, good
Přílohy vázané v práci:	
Rozsah práce:	36 s.
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