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Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Depiction of Good and Evil in *The Stormlight Archive* and *A Song of Ice and Fire*

Master's Thesis

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Zásady pro vypracování

Závěrečná diplomová práce se bude zabývat žánrem fantasy, konkrétně ságami George R. R. Martina *A Song of Ice and Fire* a *The Stormlight Archive* Brandona Sandersona. V úvodní části diplomant stručně nastíní historii žánru a literární kontext (fantasy, young adult fantasy, apod.) a obě ságy do tohoto kontextu zasadí. Dále stručně pojedná o tematickém kontextu, tedy o problematice chápání dobra a zla tak, jak se ke zvoleným dílům tato složitá a víceméně odvěká diskuse vztahuje. Jádrem práce bude tematická analýza děl z hlediska jejich pojednání o dobru a zlu a rovněž literární analýza prostředků, jimiž jsou tato témata v dílech zobrazena. Analýzy bude diplomant dokládat ukázkami z primárních děl a opře je o relevantní sekundární zdroje. V závěru své analýzy shrne, obě díla zhodnotí a vzájemně porovná z hlediska zvolené tematiky a literárních prostředků k tématům a motivům využitých.

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Agrawal, Swapnesh. ʼEvil in Fantasy Literature.ʺ *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies* 15, no. 2 (July 2019): 313-319.
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Williams, Donald C. ʼMeaning of Good.ʺ *The Philosophical Review* 46, 4 (July 1937): 416-423.
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Prohlašuji:

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Annotation

This master's thesis deals with the depiction of good and evil in *A Song of Ice and Fire* by George R.R. Martin and *The Stormlight Archive* by Brandon Sanderson and how both authors modify or follow the depiction of good and evil by Tolkien. The theoretical part firstly introduces fantasy genre and young adult literature and shows how the selected series fit within them. After that it defines not only good and evil but also antiheroes and morally grey characters. The last part of the theoretical part describes the general conventions of the depiction of good and evil in fantasy and in Tolkien's *Lord of the Ring*. The analysis itself is done in four parts which focus on factions, author's concepts for depiction of good and evil, characters, and items with symbols along with the comparison of the authors with each other and also how they work with ideas of Tolkien.

Key words

Fantasy, young adult, good, evil, morally grey, antihero, Sanderson, Martin.

Název

Vyobrazení dobra a zla v *Archivu bouřné záře* a v *Písni ledu a ohně*

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá vyobrazením dobra a zla v *Písni ledu a ohně* od George R.R. Martina a *Archivu bouřné záře* od Brandona Sandersona a také tím, jak oba autoři modifikují nebo následují vyobrazení dobra a zla podle Tolkiena. Teoretická část nejprve představuje žánr fantasy a young adult literaturu do nichž zasazuje obě vybrané knižní série. Poté definuje nejen dobro a zlo ale rovněž i antihrdiny a morálně šedé postavy. Poslední část teoretické části popisuje obecné konvence vyobrazení dobra a zla ve fantasy a také v Tolkienově díle *Pán prstenů.* Samotná analýza je provedena ve čtyřech částech zaměřující se na frakce, koncepty autorů, které jsou v jejich dílech zásadní pro vyobrazení dobra a zla, postavy a předměty se symboly s porovnáním vybraných autorů mezi sebou a rovněž také s porovnáním jak pracují s nápady Tolkiena.

Klíčová slova

Fantasy, young adult, dobro, zlo, morálně šedé, antihrdina, Sanderson, Martin.

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Introduction

When someone says good and evil in fantasy, a picture that comes to one's mind could be Sauron, Gandalf or Harry Potter and Voldemort. Readers would imagine a hero on a quest to defeat the villain, but could it be different with modern series or do the authors still follow the footsteps of Tolkien, the father of fantasy?

The aim of this thesis is therefore to analyse how the selected series depict good and evil and whether they follow or modify Tolkien's ideas. The selected authors are Brandon Sanderson with his *The Stormlight Archive* and George R.R. Martin with his *A Song of Ice and Fire*. Martin does not hide his inspiration by Tolkien[1], however, Allison Flood says that Tolkien's influence might be important but Martin's style is different as it is "grittier, darker, much less heroic."[2] Sanderson believes that authors should build upon Tolkien's ideas and expand them.[3]

Both authors were selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, due to their current popularity, Alison Flood, for instance, describes Sanderson's first ever Kickstarter project became "the most-funded publishing project of all time."[4] This record was topped by his most recent Kickstarter project about publishing four secret novels (March, 2022). Martin, on the other hand, has become very popular since the TV show *Game of Thrones* emerged. Secondly, both authors are influenced by Tolkien and are from different eras as Martin started his series in the 90s and Sanderson in 2010 and therefore there might be a shift in how they depict good and evil. Thirdly, each author brings something different to the table, where Sanderson is hopeful, victorious, or noble, Martin is hopeless, defeated and corrupted. Sanderson creates a large epic and focuses on the grand good vs. evil aspect, while Martin focuses on conflicts between people rather than on the epic scale of conflict of good vs. evil. Furthermore, each series provides complex characters with either dark backstory, deeds or choices which puts

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[1] Thomas Quill, "George R.R. Martin Speech and Q&A at Trinity College Dublin (Audio)," posted August 30, 2019, YouTube video, 1:16:43, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYmJu600W8E.

[2] "George RR Martin: 'When I began A Game of Thrones I thought it might be a short story,'" Alison Flood, The Guardian, accessed February 2, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/nov/10/books-interview-george-rr-martin.

[3] "Why Don't You Use The Classic Races Like Elves And Orcs And So On?" Brandon Sanderson, accessed January 27, 2022, https://faq.brandonsanderson.com/knowledge-base/why-dont-you-use-the-classic-races-like-elves-and-orcs-and-so-on/.

[4] "Brandon Sanderson: 'After a dozen rejected novels, you think maybe this isn´t for you,'" Alison Flood, The Guardian, last modified July 23, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/jul/23/brandon-sanderson-after-a-dozen-rejected-novels-you-think-maybe-this-isnt-for-you.

them, presumably, hardly ever directly on the good or evil side. Lastly, they are both my favourite fantasy series and it is intriguing to examine them on a deeper level.

The theoretical part firstly puts series into literary context of fantasy genre and young adult literature. The second chapter focuses on general definition of good and evil and also describes antiheroes and morally grey characters. The third chapter describes conventions of depicting good and evil in fantasy genre and Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings.*

The analysis itself is divided into four parts. Firstly, the analysis covers factions, secondly, authors' concepts which are crucial for the depiction of good and evil, thirdly, the characters, and lastly items and symbols. At the end of the thesis is also a list of names and places for those who would need it.

1 Literary Context

1.1 Defining Fantasy and High Fantasy

Edward James and Farah Mendleson agree that "[f]antasy literature has proven tremendously difficult to pin down."[5] However, they point out that most of the critics agree that "fantasy is about the construction of the impossible."[6] This common agreement is supported by Peter Childs and Roger Fowler who define fantastic as "fictional works which use the supernatural or apparently supernatural."[7] In other words, fantasy writers do not have to obey Earth principles or science, physics etc. They create their own principles which, in terms of the real world, are supernatural. This fact departs it from science fiction which is bound to be scientifically possible.[8] Chris Baldick defines fantasy as "a general term for any kind of fictional work that is not primarily devoted to realistic representation of the known world"[9] confirming previous statements that fantasy uses the supernatural and author's own creations in order to depart from conventions of the reality.

However, more complex fantasy works such as Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* build "more homely and comprehensible" secondary worlds and, therefore, making them more real in the secondary world context rather than supernatural.[10] This is also supported by Kathryn Hume who discusses ideas of Brian Attebery who claims that work of fantasy is realized in "a vividly-realized secondary creation which gives readers the sense of its having a history beyond the fragments presented in the tale"[11] which is the case of Martin and Sanderson for whom the history of their worlds is essential and natural cycles of years long winters or giant storms and magic feel natural in their worlds. In other words, fantasy book is a piece of work which does not have to be set on Earth but in a supernatural secondary world and even if the work uses the real world as a setting for the story, it is not an actual picture.

The importance of a detailed secondary world is, according to C.W. Sullivan, essential when it comes to defining so called high fantasy as "it departs from contemporary consensus reality."[12] This is further supported by Gary K. Wolfe who defines high fantasy as a piece of

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[5] Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.

[6] James and Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*, 1.

[7] Peter Childs and Roger Fowler, *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 82.

[8] James and Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature,* 1.

[9] Chris Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 95.

[10] Childs and Fowler, *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 82-83.

[11] Kathryn Hume, *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western* Literature (New York: Routledge, 2014) 13.

[12] C.W. Sullivan III, "High Fantasy," in *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children´s Literature,* ed. Peter Hunt (New York: Routledge, 2004), 436.

work which takes place in a secondary world, while the low fantasy also uses supernatural elements, but it is set in the real world.[13] Another point, according to Eleanor Cameron and Sullivan, is that the secondary creation, characters and the supernatural are to be taken seriously by both the author and the reader.[14] Martin and Sanderson fit these claims with their complex secondary worlds and history of Roshar and Westeros with countless nations with detailed cultures, history, mythology and magic systems along with detailed and unique fauna and flora in case of Sanderson.

Sullivan further discusses that what makes high fantasy works real for the readers is that all these works are inspired by the old tales as "[t]he roots of high fantasy […] can be traced back to the most ancient of traditional literary impulses in Western Europe: myth, epic, legend, romance and folk tale."[15] In both series are visible inspirations by historical events such as fusion of post-colonial America and slavery in Sanderson with the parshmen being the natives of the world, but now they are slaves of their conquerors, that Knights Radiant may refer to the knights of the round table with their own Camelot being the secret city of Urithiru. Martin, on the other hand, is more interested in medieval Europe with the Wall referring to Hadrian's Wall or Aegon the Conqueror referring to William the Conqueror. In other words, high fantasy may be defined as a piece of work which is set in a secondary world with supernatural elements which are inspired or derived from the ancient and medieval mythology, folklore, and is taken seriously by the author and the reader.

1.2 Defining Young Adult Literature

The second genre which is connected with the selected series is young adult literature (YAL). Chris Crowe believes that "there seems to be some misunderstanding about what fits the YAL label and what doesn't."[16] In other words, it is difficult to define and canonize which books are considered to be YAL and which are not suitable to fit within this new category. Judith A. Hayn et al. try to find a solution by referring to Kaplan's previous works by saying that the research around YAL is still new as it emerged in the second half of the 20th century after J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* and "researchers are just getting to know this emerging body of

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[13] G.K. Wolfe, *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy: A Glossary and Guide to Scholarship,* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986), 52.
[14] "High Fantasy: A Wizard of Earthsea," Eleanor Cameron, The Horn Book Inc., last modified January 14, 2018, https://www.hbook.com/story/high-fantasy-wizard-earthsea.
[15] Sullivan III, "High Fantasy," 437 – 438.
[16] Chris Crowe, "Young Adult Literature: What is Young Adult Literature?" *The English Journal* 88, no. 1 (September 1998): 120.

literature."[17] Therefore, the main problem is that the study of this literary category is new and undiscovered territory in the field.

This novity of YAL might be connected with another problem discussed by Crowe who claims that it is connected with ambiguous literary categorizing for young adults as in the past "most books were divided into two general categories: children and adult."[18] Children literature now comprises of various genres from picture books to fairy tales as well as a wide range of age of the readers from juveniles to adolescents etc. which were also used as a category in children literature and provided even more ambiguity to the term YAL.[19]

Whether the overall confusion is because the genre itself is new in comparison with the classics or not, Crowe comes forth with his own view on what he sees under terms young adult and YAL. In his opinion, young adults are people approximately from 12 to 17 and the literature is comprised of works of all genres since the second half of the 20th century, which directly focus on this particular age group.[20] His definition is similar to the one presented by *Cambridge Dictionary* which states that YAL are "books written for readers in their late teenage years or early twenties."[21] As word definitions in the dictionaries are considered to be codified, it is fair to say that the YAL is a literature which emerged in the second half of the century, is comprised of all genres and focuses its content and messages on late teenagers and people in their early twenties.

YAL is often connected with a grim tone which follows in steps of J.D. Sallinger and other precursors. Hayn, Kaplan, and Nolen describe Sallinger's style as a work where young adults were no longer presented with wonderful worlds, first loves, achieving their dreams but with a grim and bleak reality and all its taboo topics.[22] The bleakness and destruction of taboos are, in Chris Crowe's opinion, the reasons why the people consider YAL to corrupt the young.[23] Belinda H. Louie and Douglas H. Louie present examples of such taboos such as "death among family members and friends […] incest and child abuse."[24] This proves that the confrontation

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[17] Judith A. Hayn, Jeffrey S. Kaplan and Amanda Nolen, "Young Adult Literature Research in the 21st Century," *Theory Into Practice* 50, no.3 (Summer 2011): 177.
[18] Crowe, "Young Adult Literature," 120.
[19] Crowe, "Young Adult Literature," 121.
[20] Crowe, "Young Adult Literature," 121.
[21] "Meaning of young adult in English," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed February 2, 2022, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/young-adult.
[22] Hayn, "Young Adult Literature Research," 177.
[23] Chris Crowe, "Young Adult Literature: The Problem with YA Literature," *The English Journal* 90, no. 3 (January 2001): 148.
[24] Belinda Y. Louie and Douglas H. Louie, "Empowerment through Young-Adult Literature," *The English Journal* 81, no. 4 (April 1992): 53.

with a merciless reality is an important theme in YAL works, which may be also a case of Martin's – *A Song of Ice and Fire*, where the characters are very often connected with the topics written above. Twins Jaime and Cersei have three children born out of incest, the house of Stark is continuously faced with death in their family with only four children remaining as of now with the world torn apart by war full of bleakness and the grim dark tone lurking behind every corner.

However, not all of the YAL works are bound to be only dark, which is explained by Louie and Louie who comment on a branch of YAL which uses the bleakness of its world in order to build up the expectation for the pay off – a character overcoming its obstacles and triumph.[25] This process should help the young readers to overcome their own troubles as they should be able to see their own stories in the books and therefore see a chance of success with their own problems. Sanderson's *The Stormlight Archive* is an example of this empowering aspect of YAL as every protagonist has a very dark backstory. Furthermore, problems of the past often mix with those in the present and yet, the characters find a way to overcome the troubles and move on. As for specific examples, Kaladin Stormblessed lost his brother in the past and it still haunts him until the present day. Furthermore, he fights with depression as well as PTSD, but after many trials he is always able to stand up and keep going. Another example may be Dalinar Kholin, who has a long history with alcoholism to hide his previous sins and fears. This demon appears once again in the present, but he overcomes the demon and faces his fears.

From all examples written above it is clear that young adult literature is a complex medium. Furthermore, it provides yet another tool for authors into their writing arsenal in the existing genres. For instance, Sanderson sees YAL as an essential enrichment to fantasy which made the genre more complex[26] and the themes of YAL are clearly visible in both authors.

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[25] Louie, "Empowerment," 53 – 54.
[26] "What Makes Young Adult Books So Popular?" Brandon Sanderson, accessed January 2, 2022, https://faq.brandonsanderson.com/knowledge-base/what-makes-young-adult-books-so-popular/.

2 Defining Good and Evil

According to Donald C. Williams "[t]he original meaning of 'good' is fit or suitable."[27] In other words, a person was considered good when he/she was suitable to do something or when a person was suitable for someone. This definition was not specific enough, however, as it contained definitions of more than just one word. *Cambridge Dictionary* provides a simple definition which says that good is "that which is morally right."[28] However, this still may not be the definite answer as what is considered moral or immoral might be considerably subjective. With such abstract definition J.S. Mackenzie wonders if abstract concepts that are known as good and evil are even definable due to their complexity.[29]

Both Williams and Mackenzie also refer to the work of G.E. Moore who connects the symbol of good with the colour of yellow.[30] To explain, Mackenzie provides a paraphrase of Moore's ideas where he states that: "[w]e know yellow when we see it [...] we do not confound with any other. In like manner [...] we recognize what is good when it is presented to us or conceived by us in a certain way; but we cannot further explain what good is any more than we can explain what yellow is."[31] In other words, the idea of good should be taken as absolute, just like yellow, there is no need to analyse it any further. The good is recognized when seen and thus no further thinking is necessary.

Donald C. Williams has a different opinion where he states that "[w]ith respect to the definition of words, the scientific authority is-the dictionary."[32] Which brings the idea of good back towards the definition codified in the dictionary. Furthermore, Williams also supports the dictionary definition with good being "the abstract property of being what a person" considers to be morally right and what he aims to achieve.[33] However, this still does not offer an objective answer to the question of what good actually is. For instance, what a part of Germany perceived as moral and good in case of Hitler and his genocides against the Jews, the rest of the world perceived as terribly evil. This importance of point of view is also discussed by Martin who

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[27] Donald C. Williams, "The Meaning of 'Good,'" *The Philosophical Review* 46, no. 4 (July 1937): 419.
[28] "Meaning of good in English," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed January 18, 2022, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/good.
[29] J.S. Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," *International Journal of Ethics* 21, no. 3 (April 1911): 252.
[30] Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," 253.
[31] Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," 253.
[32] Williams, "The Meaning of 'Good,'" 419.
[33] Williams, "The Meaning of 'Good,'" 423.

states that "the greatest monsters of history as we look back on them thought they were the heroes of their story. You know, the villain is the hero of the other side."[34]

The question of what it means to be evil is discussed by Robert L. Simon who defines evil as "a thick rope of many complex, twisted, and intertwined strands."[35] Furthermore he believes that evil is impossible to define.[36] *Cambridge Dictionary* provides two definitions, one for the adjective: "morally bad, cruel, or very unpleasant"[37] and the other for the noun: "the condition of being immoral, cruel, or bad, or an act of this type"[38] Both of these definitions provide three words in which they are the same – immoral, cruel and bad. In this way the definitions mirror the explanation of good which is focused on morality. This is in accordance with Marcus G. Singer's claim that "[t]he term is typically used as the generic opposite of 'morally good'."[39] Singer further specifies that the concept of evil is not only connected with individuals but also with whole organizations and groups of people sharing the same evil ideology.[40] Therefore, it can also be implied that it is the same for the good as well.

Before moving on, it is important to note that the idea of defining good and evil based on morality was challenged in the past. It was during times when ideas whether it could be possible to have a world without good and evil started to appear. One of the main critics was Friedrich Nietzsche who is described by Brian Leiter as "a critic of any morality which shares the defining [...] traits of good/evil."[41] Mackenzie provides an overview of Nietzsche's idea of a world beyond good and evil, a world without evil. There Mackenzie presents Nietzsche's arguments where it is argued whether the values of morality are actually "absolute" and whether there would be evil without those values.[42] Mackenzie argues that the world without evil would not be good as the two are opposites, and one cannot exist without the other.[43]

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[34] Shagga Son of Dolf, "George R.R. Martin on Good and Evil," posted November 21, 2020, YouTube video, 2:12, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pq4jrSJ4E8.

[35] Dr. Robert L. Simon, "Serial Killers, Evil, and Us," *National Forum* 80, no.4 (Fall 2000), https://go.gale.com/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T002&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTa b&hitCount=21&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA68325518&docType= Article&sort=Relevance&contentSegment=ZONE-MOD1&prodId=AONE&pageNum=1&contentSet=GALE%7CA68325518&searchId=R1&userGroupName=la p36warren&inPS=true.

[36] Simon, "Serial Killers."

[37] "Meaning of evil in English," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed January 18, 2022, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/evil.

[38] Cambridge Dictionary, "Meaning of evil in English."

[39] Marcus G. Singer, "The Concept of Evil," *Philosophy* 79, no. 308 (April 2004): 185.

[40] Singer, "The Concept of Evil," 189 – 190.

[41] Brian Leiter, "Beyond Good and Evil," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 10, no.3 (July 1993): 268.

[42] Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," 252.

[43] Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," 267.

J. Angelo Corlett provides next opinion with his analysis of the concept of evil by Joel Feinberg with examples of evil from WWII and confronts it with his own prominent ideas where he argues that "American (Indian) Holocaust and the U.S. slavery of Africans also qualify as instances of pure evil."[44] Which is in accordance with the previously mentioned quote by Martin that every villain is a hero in their story as the USA usually ends up on the winning side defeating the villains, but what people tend to forget are the atrocities which they had done in connection with the native Americans, Africans or more recently Vietnam. Martin continues with his thoughts that "all of us have it within ourselves to be heroes and all of us have it within ourselves to be villains."[45] To explain, no person is born good or evil but rather with a toolkit to be both based on person's choices and actions. Furthermore, it is not only person's actions that characterize his or her character good or evil but also the perspective from which others observe the action because what some may consider to be good, others may perceive as evil.

In accordance with this, Corlett states in his work that "there is likely to be some reason or motive for [villain's] evil deeds. In general, the reasons and motives for pure evil become more apparent to us the more we delve into the depths of the circumstances of evil."[46] In other words, claiming that a person is evil based on the action alone is just scratching the surface. If one wants to judge another person's action, the observer has to analyse the context and understand character's motives behind the act as it may provide more information and explanation. To conclude, the more one knows about the context, the more he/she is able to define whether a person is either leaning towards good or evil.

The question of defining who is good and who is evil is supported by Martin in another interview where he discusses the idea of a battle between good and evil where he states that: "[i]n real life, the hardest aspect of the battle between good and evil is determining which is which."[47] The difficulty of deciding who is evil or good and how the point of view must be taken into considerations is also pointed out by Sanderson in an interview where he explains whether one of the characters from *The Stormlight Archive* is evil and he says that "by most definitions I think he would be called evil, but he certainly doesn't see himself that way."[48] Both examples stress the previously mentioned idea of the importance of point of view, that

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[44] J. Angelo Corlett, "Evil" *Analysis* 64, no.1 (January 2004): 82.
[45] Shagga Son of Dolf, "George R.R. Martin on Good and Evil."
[46] Corlett, "Evil," 83.
[47] "Sunsets of High Renown: An Interview with George R.R. Martin by Nick Gevers," Infinity Plus, accessed January 25, 2022, http://www.infinityplus.co.uk/nonfiction/intgrrm.htm.
[48] "New Brandon Sanderson Interview," Fantasy hotlist, last modified September 13, 2010, http://fantasyhotlist.blogspot.com/2010/09/new-brandon-sanderson-interview.html.

one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist, and that it may not be always easy to decipher which is which. However, is there something between good and evil?

As can be seen above, Martin believes that anyone can not only be a hero but also a villain as he further implies that all people have done morally right things but also "selfish things, cowardly things […] that we're ashamed of in later years."[49] In other words, every single person is not just good or evil but rather a mixture of these two and it is up to the person or the reader to decide where the character stands on the scales of good and evil. The idea that there is something between the good and evil is also discussed by Sanderson as he comments that he does not want to look at characters as either good or evil but rather looks at "who they are and what their motivations are."[50] Both authors do not seem to inherently follow the idea of only good and evil characters which implies that there is something between the two opposites.

The idea of good and evil forming some kind of a mixture somewhere between these two poles in literature is known by two terms. One of them is an antihero which, according to Baldick, means: "a central character in a dramatic or narrative work who lacks the qualities of nobility and magnanimity expected of traditional heroes and heroines."[51] *Cambridge Dictionary* further defines antiheroes as "the central character […which is] admired […] for what society generally considers to be a weakness of their character."[52] What comes out of this is a character with a flaw and with no traditional qualities or values which are connected with heroes. However, even with these character flaws, the characters end up being good at the end of the story. Therefore, they have both good and evil in them, but they try to do good in their own way.

 One of the more recent antiheroes may be Jack Sparrow from the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies, where it is clear that he lacks the traditional heroic traits such as courage or honour and has a lot of flaws in his character such as lust for gold or selfishness. Yet, he still somehow ends up doing good deeds when it matters the most, which lead him to the good side by the end of movies.

But what happens when there is a character which does both good and evil? Martin weighs in with his opinion in one of the interviews: "I've often said that I don't believe in great

[49] Shagga Son of Dolf, "George R.R. Martin on Good and Evil."
[50] Fantasy hotlist, "New Brandon Sanderson Interview."
[51]Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 13.
[52] "Meaning of antihero in English," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed January 25, 2022, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/antihero.

characters. I don't believe in black and white characters. I don't want to write the band of heroes on one side and the orcs on the other side [...] Some [characters] are very dark grey and some are mostly white, but they still have occasional flaws in them."[53] In other words, Martin believes that the story cannot be divided between heroes and villains but into a story of complex individuals with their own background, ambitions, flaws and morality or immorality. In his opinion, no character is purely good or evil but a complex individual. This is now used as something that is called morally grey character which, according to urban dictionary, is "a character who does too much bad to be a good character yet too much good to be a bad character. A character who is in between good and bad."[54] A character between the good and evil, undefinable because of the character's actions and qualities, too complex to define in which direction the character may go.

All in all, it can be said that the question of good and evil is rather a complex one and the answer is not easy at all as there are too many question marks. Whether it would be the question of what is moral and immoral, whether the reader's point of view is the correct one in the context of the story, and lastly how the ideas of antiheroes and complex or morally grey characters fit into the axis of good and evil. In Mackenzie's opinion "[t]he world, as we actually apprehend it, tends naturally to present itself to us as containing a conflict between the two, in which the victory is as yet undecided."[55] In other words, there will always be the two and there will be characters in between.

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[53] Aegon Targaryen, "George R.R. Martin on Writing Complex Characters," posted April 25, 2018, YouTube video, 3:04, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeROeVRiahU.
[54] "Morally Gray," Urban Dictionary, last modified December 25, 2018, https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Morally%20Gray.
[55] Mackenzie, "The Meaning of Good and Evil," 267.

3   Good and Evil in Fantasy

First of all, it was already stated that the fantasy genre is commonly connected with folklore and myths. These ancient tales often contain a clash between the good and evil as in Greece there are Gods and Titans, in Scandinavia there are Asgardians and the Frost Giants. The folklore is not an exception as well with Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf, but is this clash depicted in fantasy as well? Brian Horne is certain that it is true and believes that the clash between good and evil and its polarity are the core of fantasy.[56] To put it differently, in Horne's opinion, the ideas of good and evil and an eternal conflict between the two are some of the fundamental stones which form the fantasy like other elements such as mystery, supernatural etc.

Other authors such as Ria Cheyne and Edward James agree on the duality of good and evil in fantasy in their own works as well. In Cheyne's words: "Fantasy asserts that hope is justified, no matter how grim the situation may seem. Usually, good triumphs over evil, and villains or threats are vanquished."[57] What this means is that good is usually associated with hope, no matter the circumstances, the reader should have hope that the protagonist shall defeat the evil forces. Examples of this are visible across popular fantasy series such as Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* in battles of Helm's Deep and Minas Tirith or the Battle of Hogwarts in Rowling's *Harry Potter* where everything seemed to go downhill and the only thing that the reader could do was to hope for the protagonist to triumph over the dark forces, just as the reader would do in a real world.

Edward James supports Cheyne's idea about hope but also adds that "[f]antasy brings us Escape" from bleakness of reality in which the reader lives which is connected with another important point which is the happy ending.[58] Apart from the will to escape from reality, the fantasy genre, according to Cheyne and James, offers something which might not be that common in the real world and that is the happy ending, a triumph of good over evil. No matter how dire, monstrous or malicious the evil may be, the good wins in the end.

Despite good being usually triumphant it is evil that is more important in Horne's point of view as he claims that evil is "a basic component in the representation of [fantasy] worlds."[59]

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[56] Brian Horne, "On the representation of evil in modern literature," *New Blackfriars* 84, no. 983 (January 2003): 34.
[57] Ria Cheyne: *Disability, Literature, Genre: Representation and Affect in Contemporary Fiction* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press 2019), 111.
[58] James and Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*, 66.
[59] Horne, "On the representation of evil," 34.

This means that the concept of evil being present in fantasy is fundamental, even crucial, as without evil, there cannot be good as already covered in the previous chapter. Furthermore, without some sinister forces, there would be no conflict and challenge for the heroes to overcome and therefore the reader would not feel the satisfaction provided by the triumph over the foes and by the happy ending.

However, the idea of the happy ending is challenged by Horne, who claims that: "the conflict between good and evil is […] never completely resolved."[60] What this means is that Horne does not believe in the ultimate destruction of evil forces but does not challenge the idea of a triumph of the protagonist over the antagonist either. He only claims that the victory is not final and therefore the evil may return. The happy ending is momentary, not absolute.

The previous chapter also described and explained that the idea of good and evil cannot be divided just into two opposites. It is the same case for the genre of fantasy in Craig Clark's opinion which he explains on analysis of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. He claims that "[g]ood and evil in Tolkien are indeed antagonists, but they are not polarised. Indeed, there exist many 'grey areas' between the two."[61] Clark clearly believes that good and evil are concepts which appear in fantasy, but he does not believe that the two are absolutes. He claims that there are grey areas between good and evil which connect with the idea of morally grey characters described in the previous chapter. Furthermore, just like Horne even Clark believes that the triumph of the protagonist is not absolute. What is more, he even states that evil cannot be destroyed, just transferred into a different form.[62]

For the next few paragraphs, the concepts of good and evil are shown on Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* as both selected authors consider it a major influence during their career, as discussed previously. It is therefore interesting, to explore these grey spaces in *Lord of the Rings* as it is an important work for both selected authors, for different reasons, and therefore its influence could be seen in their own works.

3.1 Good and Evil in *Lord of the Rings*

Clark believes that characters in Tolkien's work are not just good and evil as every character has a potential within itself to be either good or bad, but most likely to be a mix of both.[63] One

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[60] Horne, "On the representation of evil," 34.
[61] Craig Clark, "Problem of Good and Evil in Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings,'" *Mallorn: The Journal of the Tolkien Society,* no.35 (September 1997): 15.
[62] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 15.
[63] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 15.

such example is examined by W.H. Auden, who focused on a character of Gollum, a wretched creature twisted by the power and lust for the One Ring. Auden says about Gollum that "[i]n part his very wretchedness is due to the fact that he has not become wholly evil. When he led Frodo […] he would have suffered less if he had only had one thought in his mind—how to steal the Ring -- instead of also feeling genuine gratitude to and affection for Frodo."[64] To put it differently, Gollum not only wanted to steal the Ring for himself but also struggled with his relationship with Frodo, this specific thing can be classified as one of the internal struggles between good and evil, that every character has to deal with. If he was purely evil, he would kill Frodo in any moment, but he did not for a long time in which he leant closer towards Frodo helping in his quest in the name of good.

Frodo himself is another example of both good and evil in characters provided by Clark. Namely an example of imperfection with Frodo being unable to destroy the Ring, which would be the case with Aragorn, Galadriel or Gandalf.[65] The ability of character to go either one way or another or imperfection, as Clark mentions, is described as the failure of destroying the Ring. What is more, even stronger and mightier characters on the good side of the pendulum admit that they would be also corrupted by the evil. All their real and possible fails are connected with one thing, the Ring of Power.

So far, the overview of good and evil in fantasy genre focused mainly on characters, but the characters may not be always the source of either of them. In *Lord of the Rings*, it can be easily said that the source of evil is not Sauron but the Ring itself, as without the Ring, there would be no Sauron and war. Clark is even more specific when it comes to the One Ring, as in his opinion, the ring is merely an embodiment of the true source of corruption and evil, namely "- the desire to wield power. We see this in […] Saruman, Boromir, Denethor and Gollum."[66] To say it differently, the Ring is a physical embodiment of power and desire for wielding it. The Ring is what can lead the protagonists from their path, however, with Boromir and Gollum it is visible that there exists a redemption. Boromir died in defence of his friends, while Gollum resisted the urge to usurp the Ring for himself to help Frodo get to Mordor.

It is, therefore, an important thing to note that evil may not be always present via the book's characters but also via symbols and motives, desires as is suggested by Singer in the previous chapter. Similar desire for power as a source of evil may be seen in other series such

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[64] W.H. Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN 'THE LORD OF THE RINGS,'" *Tolkien Journal* 3, no.1 (1967): 6.
[65] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 16.
[66] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 16.

as *Harry Potter* where Grindelwald and Dumbledore tried to find Deathly Hallows in order to rule the world over Muggles, but just as Boromir redeemed himself from desire, so did Dumbledore.

Another point connected with Singers's definition of evil is that it can be depicted through races, kingdoms, forces etc.[67] Tolkien had plenty of these in his work as also mentioned by Auden who divides these forces or organizations into two groups – redeemable and irredeemable.[68] The first group comprises of men, dwarves, hobbits, wizards and ents – forces depicted as good – who are "like us in that each individual is both good and evil: one may resist temptation more successfully than another, but even the best may fall, and even the worst may repent."[69] It is certain that his view on the organizations is the same as the previously described view on the characters – there is possibility to be both good and evil. To stress this idea, Auden writes about other human kingdoms which joined the evil forces (Easterlings and Haradrim), but he adds that if Tolkien added more context for these nations and their hatred towards western nations it would be more than possible "that Gondor was not completely innocent."[70] This supports the idea of grey spaces and complexity of the concepts mentioned previously and that no side is or can be completely good or evil.

However, Auden also mentions another group of races which are, in his opinion, depicted as irredeemable – Orcs and Trolls. What makes them irredeemable, in Auden's opinion, is the fact that they are "incapable of repentance" and therefore the characters are left with only one choice – to slay them.[71] This point counters the previously mentioned ideas, that no side can be either purely good or purely evil, but Richard Angelo Bergen provides a possible answer in his article. He believes that Tolkien does not provide enough context for the reader to identify with the Orcs, as the story does not provide any point of view from behind the enemy lines and therefore, they are seen only through the eyes of the protagonists, as cruel and hideous.[72] Bergen further claims that the only way to deal with the Orcs is to kill them which is a result of lack of context as the readers are not able to side with the Orcs, in spite of Orcs having similar behaviour as Men.[73] It is visible from the examples above that Tolkien keeps

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[67] Singer, "The Concept of Evil," 189 – 190.
[68] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 5.
[69] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 5.
[70] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR,", 5
[71] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 5.
[72] Richard Angelo Bergen, "A Warp of Horror: J.R.R. Tolkien's Sub-Creations of Evil," *Mythlore* 36, no.1 (Fall/Winter 2017): 116.
[73] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 116.

depicting the Orcs as forces of evil, ugly and cruel monsters, a necessary obstacle that the good needs to overcome, and the readers are incapable of any sympathy for them because of the lack of context. Therefore, it can be said that in the context of the story, the Orcs are purely evil, because the author does not provide any clues for the reader to think otherwise.

As for the nature of evil, Bergen describes that "[e]ven without the ring in his possession, Sauron and his forces appear stronger than the forces of good."[74] Therefore, the scales are already imbalanced at the beginning, and it seems throughout the majority of the novel that Sauron is stronger and protagonists' only hope is not letting him to get the Ring. The readers can imagine an unstoppable force,[75] which is distant from them due to the lack of the context as mentioned above, and can feel that evil is much stronger than the heroes.

However, according to Auden, evil is not flawless, and the flaws are its doom. Auden says that Tolkien "succeeds in convincing the reader that the mistakes which Sauron makes to his own undoing are the kinds of mistake which Evil, however powerful, cannot help making, just because it is evil."[76] In other words, what Tolkien does in his story is a generalization of this flawed evil through Sauron and convinces readers that evil makes mistakes and, therefore, is beatable. Another evil's flaw is that when evil makes an alliance with another force of darkness, the reader may expect it to fall apart sooner or later because, in the end, every evil doer stands for himself/herself which also leads to their inevitable downfall.[77]

The last important point stands for the situation between good and evil at the end of the story. It was already discussed previously by Horne that the triumph of the good is not absolute. Tolkien's work is no different as is discussed by both Clark and Auden, each with a different point of view and idea. From Clark's standpoint the good is still not an absolute winner and it even seems that good is actually much weaker at the end of the story and it is going to fade away even more after the actual end.[78] While Auden agrees that the victory is bittersweet he also adds a question whether the evil can return just like Sauron after the fall of Morgoth.[79] Sights of evil after the destruction of the Ring are quite visible when, at a time when it seemed impossible, evil entered the Shire with Saruman. It is, therefore, inevitable for the evil to return in some way. Clark also comments on the state of evil after the end of Sauron by saying that

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[74] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 107.
[75] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 113.
[76] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 7.
[77] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 7-8.
[78] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 16.
[79] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 8.

"[t]he evil of the Ring has grown until not even the destruction of the Ring can contain it."[80] What this means is that the evil is no longer bound to the Ring, it is set free and will return in some form one day as evil always finds a way.

To conclude, it is visible that Tolkien himself does have a lot of grey complex characters and that every character has a chance to switch between good and evil as they have both in them. However, some factions, such as Orcs, are in the context of the story depicted as irredeemable – unable to be good. Through Orcs and other examples, it was found out that good and evil are depicted not only through the characters but also through motives, symbols, factions, organizations. Therefore, the sources of good and evil are plenty and often mixed up into these more complicated "grey areas."[81] It is going to be interesting how both selected authors work with or enhance Tolkien's formula, who was previously discussed as an important influence for both authors.

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[80] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 19.
[81] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 15.

4 Analysis

The previous parts of defining good and evil in fantasy literature and also in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* focused on a number of aspects such as how good and evil is depicted in characters, factions, or items. These three aspects along with essential concepts which both authors use for the depiction of good and evil are also focus of this analysis, namely how good and evil is depicted in factions, authors' concepts, characters, and items with symbols. The analysis covers Sanderson's *The Stormlight Archive* compared with Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* and both of them compared with Tolkien as well.

4.1 Factions

There are many factions in Sanderson's series, therefore, the analysis shows how Sanderson works with good and evil on carefully selected factions which are essential for the whole story and thus it can be said that they are crucial for how good and evil is depicted as well. The factions are Alethi (human) and their enemy Singers (parsh). The Alethi faction is analysed from the perspective of Houses of Sadeas and Kholin along with bridgemen who are stuck between the two factions. For Singers, the analysis focuses on Parshendi and parshmen. As for factions from Martin's series, which has far more factions than Sanderson, the analysis only covers those factions which are a fitting counterpart to Sanderson's factions.

The first faction of Britghtlord Sadeas is an example of a morally bad faction. The whole camp is seen from the point of view of Kaladin Stormblessed, a slave, who sees the slaves as corpses, not even alive as he says: "They still walked after [Sadeas] bought them, but they were corpses. The stupid ones refused to accept it, pretending they were alive."[82] The correlation of walking corpses with slavery is nothing new as Roger Luckhurst states that there was once a belief that zombies were slaves of magicians which was further connected with actual slaves and their master in Haiti during times of 'voodoo' superstitions.[83] The idea of slaves being turned into zombies and, most importantly, being enchanted is visible in another faction, the parshmen, later in the analysis. Martin also works heavily with the concept of slavery in Essos, one of the continents, where is an enormous slave trade in the Ghiscari kingdom. Unlike Sadeas, the Ghiscari use slaves mainly for profit as they sell them to other cities across Essos. Furthermore, Ghiscari may be seen even more immoral as a lot of their slaves are kept and

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[82] Brandon Sanderson. *A Way of Kings* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2020), 688.

[83] Roger Luckhurst, "The public sphere, popular culture and the true meaning of the zombie apocalypse," in *The Cambridge Companion to Popular Fiction*, ed. David Glover and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 79.

trained since their childhood turning them into bed slaves or castrated soldiers trained to have a zero reaction towards pain and who are also able to stand still for a day and night with no food or water under the scorching sun until their death.[84] Just as Sanderson's, even Martin's slaves may be connected to the concept of slaves being zombies as they also do not feel pain and obey their master.

As watching the Sadeas faction from a slave's perspective it is not surprising that depiction of the camp is negative. Furthermore, the soldiers acted violently towards the slaves when "[t]hey called insults at the bridgemen, laughing riotously,"[85] or when "one of [the soldiers] tossed the pit of a palafruit at Kaladin's head [and…] laughed,"[86] or when the soldiers made fun of the bridgemen and their bridge.[87] Mocking and laughing are, according to Bergen, connected with Tolkien's Orcs who are, because of the above attributes and a lack of context, perceived as irredeemable evil.[88] Violent acts towards the weaker, may it be peasants or prisoners, are used by some of the factions in Martin's works as well. For instance, Bloody Mummers – a mercenary company from Essos hired by Tywin Lannister for foraging and desolating the riverlands during the war – like to cut off feet to anyone who displeases them and to mock anyone in their way as one of the members – Shagwell – makes fun of Jaime and Brienne while they are on the run from Riverrun.[89]

Furthermore, there are more immoral things happening in the camp of Sadeas which the reader discovers from descriptions of the setting and soldiers. For instance, in one of the early chapters Kaladin sees "[h]alf-drunken soldiers in stained uniforms […] whispering in the ears of whores or boasting to their friends."[90] In another chapter viewed through the eyes of Navani Kholin, the Alethi queen, the camp is described in contrast to a camp of another Brightlord – Dalinar Kholin: "The camp was messy and poorly laid out. Pockets of merchants, whores, and workers made their homes in shanties […] It was a distinct contrast to the neat lines and scrubbed buildings of Dalinar's warcamp."[91] The overall idea of the camp is that it is messy and not easy to live in, as pointed out through the eyes of Kaladin. Furthermore, it is not pleasant to look at, which connects it once again with the ideas of evil Orcs being ugly and without a

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[84] George R.R. Martin, *A Storm of Swords* (New York: Bantam Books, 2011), 313.
[85] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 419.
[86] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 477.
[87] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 318.
[88] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 116.
[89] Martin, *A Storm of Swords*, 292.
[90] Sanderson*, A Way of Kings*, 419.
[91] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1182.

chance of redemption as they are seen from their opposition. It is quite similar strategy with Sadeas as the point of view characters are either slaves such as Kaladin or Teft, or his Kholin rivals.

Shallan Davar depicts the whole camp more like an animal den rather than a place built for humans as its inhabitants did not walk in groups but in "packs"[92] like animals, and thus lowered their existential status. Furthermore, she recognizes that the soldiers look wilder than in other camps with the "scent of sweat, of cheap drinks", and whorehouses clearly visible for anyone who entered.[93] Another thing to also consider is that Sadeas does not use parshmen but normal slaves[94] – immoral in both ways but from the point of view of the humans, and in accordance with Roshar, it seems more immoral to use human slaves rather than parshmen who are initially seen as a norm.

Martin, on the other hand, works with a messy and untidy setting in the faction of Daenerys Targaryen and her freed slaves where the slaves live in unorganized camp in poor conditions with bloody flux intoxicating the whole faction later in the story. Daenerys and her faction have been so far among the protagonists in the series as she freed the slaves, tried to live in peace and to make a better life for her new people. In this sense, the connection between Targaryen faction and the Orcs makes no sense, however, Daenerys herself already managed some morally questionable deeds such as watching her brother die without a blink, ransacking a city, or burning and executing slave masters. What is more, all of these questionable moves happen behind the curtain as Daenerys is depicted as an innocent child alone in a strange hostile world. The reader naturally roots for her faction. However, the bad conditions, army of slaves (zombies) and questionable deeds point out that her faction is or may be evil. Other possible reference may be in her crest depicting a dragon which, according to J.E. Cirlot, is viewed as a symbol of evil and sickness in its almost global appearance.[95] Other possible evidence may be the HBO's adaptation in which Daenerys becomes mad and evil, however as the book series is not finished yet, these are all nothing but speculations. For now, it is important to stick with Martin's own words as he believes that everyone is capable of doing good and evil and it is up to the characters to fight this battle within their hearts.[96]

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[92] Brandon Sanderson, *Words of Radiance* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2020.) 714.
[93] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance*, 714
[94] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance*, 715.
[95] J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1971), 86.
[96] Strombo, "George R.R. Martin on Strombo: Full Extended Interview," posted March 14, 2012, YouTube video, 21:49, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHfip4DefG4&t=478s.

Another point to discuss is to analyse actions of the Sadeas's camp as a whole. For instance, Sadeas and his army betray Dalinar who thought that Sadeas was genuine about the alliance and Navani trusted him as well.[97] This betrayal would mean a certain death if Kaladin and his crew did not help Dalinar. What makes the matter even more immoral is what Navani saw when she arrived at Sadeas's camp after the betrayal. She saw "[s]oldiers without any blood on their uniforms, men chatting and laughing"[98] seemingly not caring about the betrayal. In *Oathbringer,* Sadeas's army even turns against the heroes and attacks them.[99] Betrayal is also a theme in Martin's series where allies of the house of Stark such as Boltons and Freys not only betray Starks but also murder them at so called Red Wedding which is seen extremely immoral as the guest right (protection under ones roof) is considered sacred.[100] Boltons and Freys along with Karstarks, who also used to be with Starks, join the main antagonists the House Lannister later in the series.

Actions of Sadeas's faction are also connected with the ideas of Tolkien that evil seems stronger than good[101] and even if good triumphs, evil prevails. This is visible at the end of the first book, where Sadeas betrays Dalinar and even though Dalinar survives thanks to Kaladin,[102] he has to give Sadeas his Shardblade – a very precious and powerful weapon – in order to free the bridgemen.[103] Therefore, at the end of book one, Dalinar survived the battle and freed Kaladin from slavery, but his army numbers are devastated by the battle and his Shardblade is lost. Sadeas, on the other hand, has still a large army and also a new powerful weapon showing that evil is always seen in advantage and still present even if good triumphs. Martin has his own Sauron in some of the Lannisters who usurp the throne and appear stronger than the Starks throughout the whole series because of their allies, wealth and most importantly the power of the crown.

Both factions – Sadeas and Lannisters – are also an example of fragility of evil alliances which was explored in Tolkien as well where according to Auden "all alliances of Evil with Evil are necessarily unstable since, by definition, Evil loves only itself."[104] Sadeas has other Brightlords at his side, however, he loses some of them over time as they side with Kholins

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[97] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 410.
[98] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1182.
[99] Brandon Sanderson, *Oathbringer* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2020), 1150.
[100] George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons* (New York: Bantam Books, 2012), 638.
[101] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 107.
[102] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1196.
[103] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1196.
[104] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 7-8.

who are seen as the good side. Martin, however, follows Tolkien's pattern more closely as Lannisters are not afraid to cut off allies such as Cleganes or Bloody Mummers whom Tywin Lannister calls dogs.[105] The disintegration of Lannister alliance is clearly seen at the end of so far written books where Cersei Lannister through her lust of power and madness ends up in a prison with her allies abandoning or betraying her as evil loves only itself just as in Tolkien.

The prevalence of evil is present even after the death of Sadeas, when the mantle over his host is taken by Amaram and Sadeas's wife, and even after their fall and shattering of the whole faction, one of Sadeas's allies, Ruthar, still opposed Kholins.[106] In Martin's Lannisters it can be seen through the rulers as there was sadistic Joffrey, then cruel and fearful Tywin as a regent, and finally mad Cersei. Furthermore, both authors keep adding evil foes as obstacles for their protagonists as in Sanderson the evil god Odium dies at the end of the last book only to take a more sinister form, the same goes for Martin as evil in the north presented by wildlings and Greyjoys is taken over by the undead and Boltons.

As previously discussed, Tolkien did not leave any chance for the Orcs to be thought of anything else but the enemy. Sanderson, however, provides more context and makes Sadeas's faction more ambiguous and complex because it is revealed that Odium was influencing Sadeas's army for years.[107] Auden further says that the Orcs are "incapable of repentance."[108] This may not be the case with Sadeas's faction as when Kaladin survived the storm Sadeas's soldiers came to see him[109] which might suggest a willingness to change. However, Kaladin believes that all the mocking is because the soldiers know they should be better but are incapable of change.[110] Maybe the soldiers could not be better because of Odium's influence and thus even if they wanted to change, there was no way of achieving it. The incapability of repentance is much more visible in Martin's series with the already mentioned factions such as Cleganes, Bloody Mummers or Boltons with Freys who are particularly "long renowned for treachery and cruelty."[111] Unlike in Sanderson, these factions are not under the influence of a

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[105] Martin, *A Storm of Storms,* 292.
[106] Brandon Sanderson, *Rhythm of War (*New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2020), 640.
[107] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1149.
[108] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 5.
[109] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1040.
[110]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 988.
[111] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 884.

divine being and it is their own will to do evil. Furthermore, similarly as with Sadeas, Cleganes and Bloody Mummers are also downgraded to animals[112] and beasts.[113]

All of the examples shown above go hand in hand with Bergen's claims about the Orcs where he states that "[t]heir servitude to a tyrant, their gratuitous ugliness, their meanspirited joking, and their bullying of the hobbits all perjure them in the eyes of the reader."[114] In the case of Sadeas the tyrant would be Sadeas himself or Odium, the ugliness is depicted through the comparison of soldiers with the animals and the bullied ones would be the slaves while in Martin the tyrant would either be the commander (Vargo Hoat, Gregor Clegane) or the head of house Lannister which for the majority of the series is Tywin Lannister. The comparison with animals is also visible with the bullied ones being the protagonists and civilians.

All in all, Sanderson presents an enhancement of Tolkien's formula of evil forces as he makes the reader question their previous opinion. However, Sadeas's faction is still a force of evil (Odium) even though the readers discover that they were shackled by Odium. Martin, on the other hand, does not provide any kind of chance for a redemption for the selected factions and the reader does not have to think twice when encountering them in a fight just like in Tolkien.[115] Therefore, it can be said that the army of Sadeas can be seen as a force of evil throughout the first three books with which the heroes struggle on the human side of the conflict. By the time of the plot twist, the revelation is no longer relevant for the question of good and evil as Sadeas's faction does not appear any further in the story. For Martin, the selected factions are not only seen as an obstacle as in Sanderson, but also as a tool to depict Tywin Lannister and his faction as antagonists because he was behind every cruelty and betrayal of the selected factions. The Ghiscari are mainly used as an obstacle for Daenerys to overcome and to learn from as her ancestors had to fight with Ghiscari as well before their own rise to power.

It was already mentioned that the characters tend to connect Sadeas's camp with Dalinar's which was well organized, everyone was working, there were no slaves and even with small numbers after the betrayal the soldiers were well maintained. Dalinar's faction is connected with discipline, work and can be considered a shield that guards the realm from evil.[116] The discipline and organization are also discussed by Navani.[117] Kaladin also agrees

[112] George R.R. Martin, *A Clash of Kings* (New York: Bantam Books, 2012), 266; Martin, *A Storm of Storms,* 292.
[113] Martin, *A Storm of Storms*, 64.
[114] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 116.
[115] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 5.
[116] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 714.
[117] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1181.

with the mentioned points and adds that "[e]ven with the reduced army numbers, Kaladin passed three patrols as his men marched toward the gates. That was three more than he'd ever seen in Sadeas's camp."[118] Confirming that everyone had a job to do, and everyone had a meaningful place in the camp. Furthermore, "Dalinar had also approved most requests for families to be brought to the Shattered Plains,"[119] providing a sense of home for his men. Lastly, Dalinar's army did not use bridgemen, but large wooden bridge towers pulled by animals, which was slower but safer for everyone.[120]

In this sense the Dalinar's army seems to be a safe environment with the inclusion of families, rejection of slaves and keeping the camp clean and safe. It depicts a picture the reader can connect with. It is also an environment in which all main protagonists eventually meet and therefore Dalinar's army is seen as good when it comes to the human faction as all or most of the heroes eventually side with Kholins in order to save the world and defeat Odium. However, Kholins were not always the centre of discipline and morality as during Dalinar's young age, they were bloodthirsty conquerors. However, that was a long time ago and the faction has changed drastically since then. As of now, Dalinar's camp is opposite to Sadeas as Sadeas is greedy, Dalinar is humble etc. Furthermore, it is a safe haven for the main protagonists of *A Way of Kings* – Bridge Four and it is this particular group through which the reader witnesses both sides of the conflict (Sadeas/Dalinar) while watching them growing and evolving into something that can be close to the pure good.

Martin, on the other hand, seems to have two or three factions which, from the perspective of the story, seem to do good. The first one is the already mentioned Targaryen faction where Daenerys tries to save slaves and is also a destination where a number of characters travel in order to bring Daenerys to Westeros to restore peace, the implications of her possible downfall to evil was already discussed. Then there are Starks and the Night's Watch both of them connected through shared history.[121] The Starks are represented by all of their family members with most of them being children who have to learn to survive in a harsh world and similarly as Kholins, they too are depicted as the opposition against the Lannisters and in far smaller numbers especially after the Red Wedding. Starks have a direwolf in their emblem which according to Cirlot means: "valour among the Romans and the Egyptians. It also

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[118]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance*, 87.
[119]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 504.
[120]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 501.
[121]Martin, *A Clash of Kings*, 95.

appears as a guardian in a great many monuments"[122] which is depicted through Starks' history with the Night's Watch to guard the realm of men. Starks were also friends with the last king who died in hands of Lannisters and even after Starks' defeat it seems that a rebellion in the name of Starks is brewing.[123] Through the grim fate and perspective from every single family member, the reader naturally sides with Starks and perceives them as good which is right as the only part of the faction which did immoral deeds (Karstarks, Boltons, Freys) later joined Lannisters and therefore may not be seen as a part of Stark faction. The last but the most interesting faction, which can be considered good, is the host of Stannis Baratheon, the rightful heir to the throne. He fights against Lannisters, who as a faction are depicted as antagonists, saves the Wall from wildlings and is the only lord who cares about the threat of the Others – the ancient enemy of men.[124] However, he burns people at stake in the name of a foreign fire god and possibly used magic in order to kill his own brother.

Coming back to the definition of good – which is morally right – it is clear that Dalinar's faction is in alignment with the definition as all the points such as allowing the families with the soldiers, saving lives using animal driven bridges and keeping the camp secured are all qualities which are moral especially with the chaos and atrocities described in Sadeas's camp. The definition would also fit Starks who want to defeat Lannisters who usurp the throne and help Stannis to rule the Westeros. Furthermore, they supported Night's Watch for centuries, guarding the realm from the savages beyond the Wall. It was already described that, according to Clark, good and evil in Tolkien are antagonists yet not polarized as there are other grey areas and it may seem, however, that Dalinar and Sadeas represent the opposite poles. Daenerys and Stannis fit the definition of morally grey areas the best as both factions are capable of doing morally good and bad things and thus it is impossible to define them as either good or evil. The following section focuses on two quite similar factions which are also connected with most of the factions in one way or another – The Bridge Four and the Night's Watch.

The Bridge Four started as a group of slaves in Sadeas's camp, which was already depicted as evil, and slaves were also already connected with the idea of zombies. Since the very start of *A Way of Kings,* it is clear that the slaves are bought only to do what is asked of them and die. From this point onward it is clear that Sadeas's faction and the slaves are two different entities – the masters and subjects as the slaves are only good for creating a path for

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[122] Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols,* 375.
[123] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 429.
[124] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 1049.

the army no matter the cost. Furthermore, as slaves they have only one choice that they can choose freely: "The 'honorable' decision. Death."[125] The Night's Watch is a bit different as it is a faction which is neutral in all conflicts and its only task is to defend the realm from dangers beyond the Wall. The Watch is not made of slaves but of criminals who were sent to the Wall as a punishment or volunteers like Jon Snow who wanted to guard the realm of men. Similarly to bridgemen, the watchers are also on their duty until their death and their only free choice is desertion which ends with death. Furthermore, the mocking within the Night's Watch did not come from a lord like Sadeas but from members of the Watch itself.

In the theoretical part the correlation between good and hope in fantasy was discussed, as with the advantage of evil at the beginning of the story, the readers have to hope for a change in the darkest part of the story. For instance, in Dalinar's case it was at the end of the first book with Sadeas's betrayal and the need of hope appears continuously before the end of each book right before the good triumphs. For Kaladin, however, it was the moment of his attempt to commit suicide as he did not see a way out or a way to help the others and himself.[126] He prevails, however, and decides to help the others one last time and the changes start to appear quite soon. In Martin, it is time when Jon Snow attempts desertion, but he realises that his place is with the Watch.[127]

Dalinar Kholin, for instance, thinks that the bridgemen "were the lowest in the army, and yet they bore the weight of kings."[128] This foreshadows not only the future union of the bridgemen and Kholin family but also his admiration of the bridgemen which is the first positive thing that the reader gets to read about the bridgemen. The Watch is depicted differently in the eyes of other characters as Eddard Stark calls it "a shadow of what it once was."[129]Instead of praise and foreshadowing of better days like Sanderson, Martin comments on its continuous downfall.

After some time, both factions started to change, Bridge Four had fewer casualties[130] and they started to train with Kaladin, to be an inspiration for the others.[131] The Night's Watch started to change as well as Jon had more friends, and his voice and influence grew stronger among the Watch. Members of both factions slowly formed a tight bond within its members

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[125] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 186.
[126]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 189.
[127] George R.R. Martin, *A Game of Thrones* (London: HarperVoyager, 2014), 759.
[128]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 291.
[129]Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 42.
[130]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 390.
[131]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 500.

and formerly a group of strangers became a team helping and respecting each other. The bond and trust can be seen in a little speech that Kaladin gives about their plan to escape: "We're Bridge Four[…]We'll make it through this, and we'll do it together."[132] The discipline and inspiration was also transferred to some of the soldiers as well.[133] The sense of unity is also seen in the Night's Watch when they face the wildlings as they have all become watchers on the Wall and brothers. However, the watchers still had more smaller factions which were against each other after the battle.

The Bridge Four, on the other hand, had much brighter future after helping Dalinar at the end of the first instalment.[134] The fate of bridgemen with Kholins has been tight ever since with the Bridge Four established as Dalinar's bodyguards.[135] Furthermore, more Dalinar's soldiers came to spend time with the Bridge Four and even Dalinar's sons, Adolin and Renarin, are connected with the Bridge Four.[136] To fully embrace the embodiment of good, the bridgemen ascended to Knights Radiant – an equivalent to the knights of the round table or Jedi Knights – organization built to serve, keep the land in peace, and help others in need. The Night's Watch is supposed to follow very similar ideal in which they guard the realm of men. This vow was made to guard men against the Others, but the true meaning has been forgotten long ago and the Watch fought only against the wildlings. This changed with Jon in command who says that Wildings are men just like them and they should be helped.[137] This change to higher ideals, however, costs him his life when he is killed by other members of the Watch and the fate of the Watch itself after its incapability to change is unknown.

It was already demonstrated that Sanderson did not exactly manage to redeem Sadeas's faction and therefore they maintained evil throughout the story. However, Dalinar and Sadeas are not the only factions in the story as both of them fight against another race called Parshendi, who are introduced as villains, because the Alethi declared war against Parshendi who supposedly assassinated Alethi king. In the first book, the conflict is mainly seen from perspectives of Kaladin and Dalinar in later chapters and from other point of view characters in later books. Parshendi are depicted very similarly with one of Martin's factions – the wildlings.

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[132] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 965.
[133]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1083.
[134]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1141.
[135]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1229.
[136] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 565, 935.
[137]Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 784.

The analysis of these factions is conducted chronologically as reader's opinion changes drastically with more knowledge and context.

As already mentioned, *A Way of Kings* does not provide any point of view from the perspective of the Parshendi and so the reader is left only with what Sanderson provides him/her from the perspective of human protagonists. It is very similar with wildlings as well as for the first two books, the reader is left only with rumours and tales of other people who live south of the Wall. Kaladin perceives Parshendi as "far more muscular, far more solid. They had the bulky build of soldiers [...s]ome wore dark red and black beards tied with bits of rock, while others were cleanshaven."[138] They were equipped with weapons which are described as "excellent bow[s] to use for killing a group of bridgemen."[139] Lastly, Kaladin describes the start of the battle as: "[n]ow, finally, the real nightmare began."[140] The whole scene is depicted in a horrifying manner with unarmed bridgemen running towards an inhuman army, which "calmly"[141] shot an arrow after arrow. Furthermore, what gives Parshendi even more alien look is the fact that "[t]he Parshendi were singing [...] Parshendi always sang as they fought."[142] Martin depicts his wildlings in a horrifying manner as well when he describes them as "slavers and slayers and thieves"[143] or that they worked with mythical beasts and monster and that they copulated with the Others.[144] Furthermore, they live far beyond the Wall where is no civilization and they are known to come down south to raid, rape and kill. Both of these factions are depicted as merciless inhuman killers as Parshendi are another race and wildlings are "more beast than man."[145] The connection between these factions and the Orcs is from the given examples quite visible, as the reader initially sees them only as an enemy with no further context and thus no reason to sympathize. They are simply just an enemy who tries to kill the innocent, therefore, they could be classified as irredeemable evil at this point of the narrative, because the readers are initially given no opportunity to think otherwise.

However, the inhuman aspect is slowly taken away by thoughts of human characters such as when Dalinar felt "a grudging respect for the Parshendi"[146] or when he recognizes similarities between their faces and human faces while he sees himself as "a faceless monster

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[138]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 121.
[139]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 121.
[140]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 121.
[141]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 122.
[142]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 466.
[143] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 11.
[144] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 11.
[145]Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 572.
[146]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 970.

in impervious armor."[147] To put it differently, Sanderson humanizes the alien race as the book progresses and dehumanizes humans, as faceless monsters or immoral selfish beings such as Sadeas. Martin provides more context for his wildlings when it is said that they are humans as those who were born south of the Wall and that they have both good and bad people among them just like the southerners.[148] The humanizing context is added more and more by both authors when Sanderson's characters recognize that Parshendi are not "savages" as people tend to think[149] and that they are more honourable than men.[150] Martin, however, is more careful with idealizing his wildlings than Sanderson with Parshendi. He lets the reader get to know wildlings through Jon Snow as a nation running away from the undead, thousands of children, women, old men who are depicted as courageous.[151] However, the reader is repeatedly reminded that not all of them are innocent[152] which goes hand in hand with the previous comment of wildlings having both good and bad people among them.

To put it differently, the readers were led to believe that the initial conflict is about good humans and evil Parshendi, but as already described through analysis of Sadeas's faction it is not the case as most of the evil doing is initially done by humans instead of the presumable barbarians. In Martin, it is not as complicated because he changes the wildlings from barbarians to humans that the reader already knows and the only thing that makes them different is the place where they were born. Both authors manage to turn around reader's expectations and unlike in Tolkien where the Orcs were depicted as primitive forces of Sauron with no further context and thus the reader thinks of nothing less but how to kill them.[153] In Martin and Sanderson, however, the reader is able to side with both sides of the conflict as is shown on the examples below.

One of already briefly discussed examples is that the Parshendi have values which were expected from humans.[154] For example, when they win a battle, they never follow those who were defeated in order to kill them.[155] Sadeas, on the other hand, has no mercy with the defeated side.[156] In this way, Sanderson challenges reader's opinion and makes him ask who is good and

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[147] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1122 – 1123.
[148] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 297.
[149] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 9.
[150] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1166.
[151] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 409.
[152] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 743.
[153] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 116.
[154] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1231.
[155] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings* ,1176.
[156] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 405.

who is evil, because when taken as whole – Human/Parshendi – it is the Parshendi who are morally better than humans as they are in the eyes of human characters more honourable than their own race. In Martin, the wildlings are same as us, not better, not worse as already described, there are only few raiders who pillage and then there are hundreds of innocents who just want to live which allows a question whether the Watch acts honourably when it does not allow the wildlings to cross or whether the wildlings as a faction may be morally right even with the smaller raider faction. It was already said that when someone does moral things then he/she is good. Does this mean that the Parshendi or wildlings are good and humans and the Watch are evil? It is not that simple as humans have already mentioned Bridge Four and Dalinar's faction and the same goes with the wildlings and the Watch as was already demonstrated. It is not so simple with the Parshendi as well.

Words of Radiance¸ provides more context about Parshendi, mainly through a Parshendi point of view characters Eshonai and Venli, something which Tolkien did not do with his Orcs. Throughout the books, the readers learn that not all Parshendi want to fight, Eshonai - a Parshendi general - wants peace with Alethi.[157] She recalls that once they were many but now they are few only because they stopped Alethi king from returning gods of Parshendi – gods from which they once escaped.[158] Eshonai also comments on the mental state of her people by saying: "Step by step, storm by storm, depression claimed her people."[159] The depression is connected with the ongoing war in which "[s]o few remained. The humans were relentless in their pursuit of vengeance. She didn't blame them."[160] The first glimpses of their low numbers were also already seen in the first book.[161] This is in contrast with the already covered Bergen's theory that armies of evil are seen as bigger and more formidable than the forces of good.[162] Martin demonstrates his own evolution of Tolkien's concept that he keeps wildlings in much larger numbers than the Night's Watch, however, he stresses that wildlings are "[n]o soldiers. A few hundred heroes, drunk most like, amidst a great horde of women, children, and thralls."[163] In this way Martin keeps great numbers in a faction which was at first presented as evil but fills the numbers with thousands of harmless human beings. However, he still stays true to Tolkien's idea with the undead Others and Lannisters who are formidable and great in numbers

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[157] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 188.
[158] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 187.
[159] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 182.
[160] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 183.
[161] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 711.
[162] Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 107.
[163] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 626.

throughout the whole series. Could it be that Parshendi and wildlings are not evil at all as they both twist the idea of a stronger and bigger evil force and could the Parshendi be more morally good than some of the humans (Sadeas)?

What is more, could both sides be still blamed for the past? Parshendi for the assassination of Alethi king and wildlings for being raiders for centuries? At this point, it can be said that the Parshendi are good with all things and history considered as even humans consider the crime of assassination long gone with those "involved in Gavilar's death […] might not even still be alive."[164] It is quite similar with wildlings as the Watch still remembers notorious raiders but Jon Snow urges them that Tormund (one of the leaders who wants to cross the Wall with his folk) is not like the raiders from the past and that his people only want to survive.[165]

For both selected factions it would seem that both selected factions will form peace with their opposition. However, in Sanderson, by the end of the second book, the situation changes as Parshendi, driven into the corner, make connection with their once abandoned old gods and transform themselves into monsters.[166] In the following battle, which was supposed to end the war once and for all, the Parshendi started to glow, red lightning appearing around them and started to sing a long-lost rhythm of war and destruction. Instead of Parshendi, Alethi were faced with a new enemy as it is suggested that the Parshendi are no more as their spirits have been taken over by their gods. In this battle, the Alethi alliance has to retreat, and the battle ends with a human defeat and a new storm of the enemy which is changing world slaves – parshmen – into this new force. Martin works similarly as the Watch under the command of Jon Snow takes wildlings in and starts gaining in numbers against the living dead, Jon Snow dies by the hands of his brothers in arms and the peace might die with him as he was the only thing holding both sides working together. A war between both factions may prove to be fatal for both of them as the army of the dead slowly approaches the Wall. What really happens is unknown for now as no sample chapter from the next instalment depicts what happens at the Wall. The similarities between both situations are striking as the hope of peace is crushed by evil deed and a new larger threat lurking behind the corner.

Before briefly discussing parshmen and another faction from Martin, it is essential to assess the current situation because now, the new Parshendi are in a difficult situation, because

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[164]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 608.
[165]Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 572-573.
[166]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance.* 79.

when it comes to the concept of good and evil, it was already proved that they do not want to fight anymore. At the end of *Words of Radiance*, however, the Parshendi are stronger that humans, furthermore, they have vast numbers of troops with the transformation of parshmen and with their rhythm of destruction it is clear that they want to destroy humans. Suddenly, their motivation is not about survival but about destruction. All of these points point towards them being evil as they want to hurt all of the protagonists, their cause is not moral anymore and their force of destruction is seen far stronger than the Alethi force and even though the situation looks grim, the readers can hope because the order of Knights Radiant (protectors of men) is recreated at the end of the book. In Martin, on the other hand, there is no hope as all other protagonists which could help with the situation on the Wall are miles away with the wildlings in smaller numbers and the main threat presented by the undead army of the Others.

As was already mentioned parshmen were human slaves throughout the first two books. In fact, they were "perfect slaves. Docile, obedient. [The] society has become far too reliant upon them."[167] With such obedient slaves it is no surprise that they were treated as animals as "[p]arshmen might cost more than most slaves, but so did a chull. In fact, the comparison was a good one, because parshmen were worked like animals."[168] And as humans breed animals so they breed the Parshmen "like animals […] Everyone knew it."[169] The correlation between slaves and animals is very similar to the slavery of African people in America, where they were also bred like animals and for work. Furthermore, parshmen were no ordinary slaves, they were perfect slaves and because of that "[p]eople often ordered parshmen to do such menial work— something to make sure all of their time was spent earning money for those who owned them."[170] In other words, people – Alethi included – treat parshmen as a working force in inhuman conditions comparing parshmen to animals. It was also briefly discussed that parshmen are an embodiment of the original idea of zombies as they are obedient and do as their master's command. In the original meaning, the masters were magicians which can be implied here as well because parshmen lost their intelligence when ancient men magically imprisoned a spirit which granted parshmen power and wisdom.[171] All of these points definitely show the immorality of their masters – the humans. Therefore, pointing towards humans being

[167]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 121.
[168]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 816.
[169]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 179.
[170]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 241.
[171] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 848.

evil once again. Before making final conclusion about humans being either good or evil there are a final point discuss, that is the situation of parshmen after their transformation.

It was thought that parshmen would turn into red glowing beasts as to what happened to Parshendi, the answer is different however, they regained their mind. Something similar happens in Martin's series as well with so called sparrows who are described as: "the humblest and most common of men"[172] who started to spread across the land as "[a] plague"[173] seeking justice for their master (the king) in the name of faith just as parshmen found their lost reason so did the sparrows after the already mentioned Red Wedding.

Kaladin travels with a group of the parshmen for some time and the reader thus gets more context about the parshmen which is also relevant for the topic of good and evil. One of the parshmen says: "I have spent my entire life living in a fog, […] knowing I should say something […] clutching my daughter, wondering why the world seems to move around us in the light—while we are trapped in shadows. They sold her mother. Sold her. Because she had birthed a healthy child, which made her good breeding stock."[174] It is clear that the parshmen were inhumanly and brutally treated by their human masters, breeding them like a stock just to tear the family apart in order to make a better profit. What makes this matter even worse is that the parshmen were aware of everything but unable to resist. The situation is very similar with the sparrows or, in other words, the peasants who, especially in riverlands, were treated inhumanly by villains such as Gregor Clegane or Bloody Mummers who were already described. In these perilous times the sparrows tried to reach the Faith, but its temples were ransacked by Clegane's men as well[175] with the last straw being the massacre at the Red Wedding. It feels like they, similarly to parshmen, regained their reason and started to act in order to change their life which was in grasps of their masters.

It is therefore not surprising that the parshmen and sparrows revolt against their masters (humans and Lannisters) as they are morally right in this case. Suffice to say that the discussed group of parshmen lived in lands of Sadeas who was already described as evil, however, the parshmen revolt not only in the lands of factions which are related to evil but also in the whole world. In this particular case it can be said that humanity itself is evil as there can be hardly anything else more immoral than slavery. Kaladin and Jasnah understand parshmen side of the

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[172] George R.R. Martin, *A Feast for Crows* (London: HarperVoyager, 2011), 72.
[173] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 401.
[174] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 180.
[175] Martin, *A Feast for Crows*, 468.

story by saying that "[t]hey just want to live better lives."[176] In Martin, the sparrows appear primarily in riverlands and crownlands – lands ruled by the Iron Throne – the Lannisters, whose former (Clegane) or future (Bolton, Karstark) vassals in one way or another destroyed and plundered the peasantry in the riverlands. If the focus of both these factions suggests the evil doer, then the humans in Sanderson and Lannisters in Martin are evil. Furthermore, Jared Sexton recalls Nietzsche's claims that "the enslaved, in their unearned worldly suffering, are deemed morally good in the eyes of God and their enslavers are deemed morally evil"[177] which goes hand in hand with all of the above-mentioned points.

However, the parshmen are not without immorality as they let people outside of safe bunkers when the high storm approaches, in this regard, Kaladin urges them to keep humans safe as they are in charge of the town and if they want to take "any kind of moral superiority" they should treat their captives better than humans treated the parshmen.[178] Furthermore, one of the human characters named Moash witnesses parshmen whipping a parsh slave.[179] It is clear that even though the former slaves are morally right with their revolt, their identity is so connected with the one of their former masters that they do not care about safety of their human prisoners. It is also clear that not all of the parshmen are that different from their masters as they do what the humans once did not only to humans but also to their own kind - a thing which was preferred by evil factions such as Sadeas.

In spite of the examples above being immoral, parhsmen are connected with the lack of their own identity as throughout the years they have acquired the same identity as the community in which they lived. The lack of their own identity is further exploited by Odium – the main villain. Odium orders Venli (one of the remaining Parshendi) to tell her story to parshmen "[a]t least the version of it that Odium had instructed her to tell."[180] Exploiting their newly found freedom and twisting their motives, ideals and ideas about the world. The sparrows in Martin are victims of an identity exploit as well because they are unable to live on without a master, therefore, they find a new master in the Faith which trains them into its own soldiers and through an ocean of sparrows gains more and more power just like in the old days when the high septon called Targaryen children born of incest "abominations" and started to rebel.[181] It is very similar to the recent events where Lannister children are accused of the same sin of

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[176]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 423.
[177] Jared Sexton: "Affirmation in the Dark," *The Comparatist* 43 (October 2019): 97.
[178]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 325.
[179]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 501.
[180]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 865.
[181]George R.R. Martin, *Fire and Blood* (New York: Bantam Books, 2018), 71.

being born out of incest with the rise of faith militia referring to Martin's concept concerned with world's history which is discussed in more detail later. The sparrows are used by the Faith just as they were used by nobles. What is intriguing is that both factions are exploited either by a divinity (Odium) or by servants of divinity (High Sparrow).

In conclusion, the main goal of parshmen and sparrows – to break free and live a better life – is as moral as one can be, however the lack of their own identity with the assimilation of identity of their captives or exploiting the lack of identity by Odium or servants of the faith led both factions to do immoral things. All in all, it can be said that the parshmen are good, but their deeds are twisted due to the lack of their own identity which characters such as Kaladin and Dalinar try to help to form. Kaladin tries to teach them to be better than humans[182] while Dalinar tries to persuade them to get rid of the Odium's influence when he talks with Venli in one of his visions. Sparrows are morally right as well but they unknowingly stay in an enslavement by different masters using them as their force.

4.2   Concepts of Change and Cycle

However, the transformation of parshmen and Parshendi is connected with them presumably being Voidbringers, the ancient enemy of men and it is important to explain and uncover the true identity of Voidbringers. Are they the parshmen, or something else entirely? Furthermore, it was already mentioned that some events in Martin keep repeating themselves throughout the history. The following section describes what is meant by that and how Martin's concept is connected with a concept of change by Sanderson, how both concepts are important for the depiction of good and evil, and if they somehow connect with Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings.*

Throughout the story, the readers encounter ancient myths and folktales about so called Voidbringers, but the information about them is really scarce as the reader gets only tiny glimpses of what the Voidbringers would look like. For instance, in *A Way of Kings*, Shallan recalls the description of Voidbringers as "with bodies of stone."[183] Another gossip is that "Voidbringers [are] looking for flesh to feast upon."[184] Dalinar later believes that he encountered some of the Voidbringers in one of his visions, bloodthirsty creatures or beasts where Sanderson plays with the horror of the unknown as the reader does not get to see much of the creatures for a big part of the chapter. Even after the vision concludes, Dalinar is not sure

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[182]Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 325.
[183]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 75.
[184]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 83-84.

what they were, his only idea is that they were "[t]he Voidbringers. Was that what these things were? Myths. Myths come to life to kill him."[185]

Voidbringers have indeed become more of a myth rather than a real danger. In one of the Kaladin's flashbacks, it is visible that the common folk uses Voidbringers to scare children from doing things which were considered bad.[186] Martin has ancient enemies of his own too called the Others who initially are a mere myth to scare children as well.[187] Unlike in Sanderson, Martin provides the answer to whether the Others are real right from the beginning of book one where they can be seen in the prologue. Their army grows with every fallen man as they add the dead into their army and similarly as Tolkien's Orcs and other evil creatures in Tolkien's world, "[t]he Others never come when the sun is up."[188]

In Sanderson, however, the question of Voidbringers is not so straightforward. Another opinion is provided by a famous scholar Jasnah who says that "[n]obody knows for sure. […] theologians accept them as counterparts of the Almighty - monsters that dwelled in the hearts of men, much as the Almighty once lived there."[189] It is pointed out that according to the religion, Voidbringers are merely a part of men a part which can turn them into monsters. One of the ardents - servants of faith - says that nobody knows who or what the Voidbringers are, but they are always connected with immoral and evil things and with them being a power that can make good people do evil.[190] The perception of Voidbringers changes throughout the story as in the first book the general idea of Voidbringers being something that is not real and serving only to scare off the children or to explain the unexplainable.

At the end of the first book, however, Shallan and Jasnah discover that the Voidbringers were not destroyed but enslaved[191] which connects the Voidbringers with parshmen. From this point onward, the parshmen and Parshendi are seen as an existential threat – an ancient evil waiting to be unleashed.[192] From the reveal of parshmen and Parshendi possibly being the Voidbringers it might seem that the reader is presented with a straight border between good and evil.

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[185] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 368.
[186] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 178.
[187] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 233-234.
[188] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 1021.
[189] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 783.
[190] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 784.
[191] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1225.
[192] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 32.

However, it has been already described in detail that Parshendi do have more honour than some of the Alethi and that they are not essentially evil as they do not follow already described criteria such as being in advantage against the protagonists or being immoral. The same applies to parshmen who are described as victims to Odium's schemes which exploit their lack of identity. On one hand, the reader is led to believe that these alien creatures are forces of evil coming to destroy humans and that is true to some extent as by the end of book three, they truly follow Odium's promises of a better tomorrow. On the other hand, Sanderson provides so much context about the Parshendi and parshmen that it is easy to feel sorry for them as they did not choose this fate, they only wanted a better life as already described. The Others in Martin, however, are straightforward so far as the only thing that the reader knows is that they are marching south, killing everything standing in their way and that is it. This may be due to the focus on war between human factions rather than the existential fight of good vs evil. So far, however, the similarity between the Others and the Orcs is striking as in Martin, the enemy goes from north to south while in Tolkien the Orcs go from east to west, they both do not like sun and just like the Orcs the Others are not provided with enough context to think of them anything else than an enemy to kill.

Sanderson's Voidbringers are finally revealed at the end of the third instalment where it is revealed that humans are the Voidbringers as they once invaded the world and took it from parshmen.[193] This enormous plot twist invites the reader to ask other questions concerning good and evil. In this light, humans not only betrayed the welcome of the natives (parshmen) which was over the millennia twisted into a fairy tale[194] where the gentle farmer killed by a Voidbringer was in fact not human but a parshman, but also enslaved the parshmen. The natives (parshmen) after their transformation only take what is rightfully theirs.

Before any conclusion is made, it is essential to point out few points out of the same chapter as the story about the farmer (see above) as it is here where lies the truth when it comes to the question of good and evil in Sanderson. When describing the Voidbringers, the ardent says that they were "created from hate."[195] Furthermore, he clearly states that: "The Voidbringers were an embodiment of evil."[196] Both of these quotes use past simple which is very important as it might suggest that Voidbringers exist no more which is correct as the human savages who came, betrayed and conquered are long gone. In their place now live millions of

[193] Sanderson, *Oathbringer*, 1096.
[194] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 784.
[195] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 788.
[196] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 789.

people who call Roshar their home for generations and who want to live in peace. The situation is different for parshmen as well as they do not essentially fight for retaking the land that once was theirs but for their freedom even though there are still some of the primordial parshmen called the Fused with their hatred towards humankind.

So, is history important when it comes to the depiction of good and evil? Yes and no. It is not important simply because the factions are different than they used to be and that they changed throughout the actual story as well with examples of the Kholin faction being conquerors years ago but now being the main force of good. The same goes with the parshmen who enslave humans as well as their own kind but are instructed by Kaladin to be better. That is also a reason why the history is important as without it, the characters and factions would not learn from it and change. Furthermore, as was already pointed out in the examples, it is not the deeds done years or ages ago that define the characters and factions but how they are willing to change and how they act in the present. History is also very important in Martin as the history in his world tends to repeat itself with Daenerys' crusade against the Ghiscari mirroring her ancestors at the beginning of their reign,[197] or that Boltons fought against Starks in past,[198] or that Starks march south once the king executes lord Stark, or the already mentioned example of faith getting power and many more. The repetition of history is clearly forming a cycle of never-ending acts of revenge, betrayal, killing and all other immoral things. The only way out is breaking the cycle by changing the way the characters act as Martin believes that every human being is able to act good and evil.[199]

The ability of the characters to act both good and evil was already described in the theoretical part, and it is also discussed by Sanderson in *A Way of Kings* where one of the ardents says: "Suffice it to say that the Almighty's pure goodness created the Voidbringers, but men may choose good without creating evil because as mortals they have a dual nature. Thus the only way for good to increase in the cosmere is for men to create it—in that way, good may come to outweigh evil."[200] It is clear that Sanderson plays with ideas that if there is good there has to be evil as was already discussed in the theory. It is also clear that with all provided context the concept of Voidbringers is a potential evil what lies inside one's heart as it is "created from hate."[201] However, what is important is that the men may choose between these two poles

[197] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 311.
[198] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 248.
[199] Strombo, "George R.R. Martin on Strombo: Full Extended Interview."
[200] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 788.
[201] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings* ,788.

because of their dual nature as was dealt with in the second chapter. The evil deeds will not disappear, they will be a part of character's life, but what matters the most in *The Stormlight Archive* is the ability to change one way or another as some of the characters turned good while others turned evil. The ability of acting both ways was shown in Martin as well as in Tolkien according to Craig Clark.[202]

However, it was already described and explained that Sanderson's perception of the concept of good and evil is not about what happened over the past but about willingness to change and do good as is nicely visible on the examples of Knights Radiant who had shady past only to rise again as a better person with Teft being an addict, Shallan killing her parents, Dalinar burning his wife etc. This is also in accordance with the empowering theme in YAL described in the first chapter as the characters have to overcome grim obstacles to triumph. The whole ideology about Knights Radiant and the series itself is all about a journey of change and of being better. This is nicely reflected in one of Dalinar's ideals where he says: "'Journey before destination,' Dalinar said. 'It cannot be a journey if it doesn't have a beginning.'"[203] In other words, what matters is the change and transformation the characters and society are going through and there cannot be such a change without a shady or immoral past due to inner Voidbringers created by hatred.

Learning from the past or history is also important in Martin where he demonstrates that the society cannot change unless it breaks the cycle of repetition. Some of the characters already tried to break the cycle, such as Jon Snow and Stannis Baratheon who allow wildlings to cross the Wall in order to help them and also guard the realm of men. Jon Snow, however, faced a grim fate with his death and Stannis was pulled back in the cycle with his lust for the Throne before the war against the Others. This goes hand in hand with the description of young adult literature in which the protagonists are faced with grim and "unforgiving reality."[204] It seems that some of the characters such as Jon Snow are ready for a change, to rework the morals within the society, but society itself is not ready yet and therefore the world is stuck with some evil factions (the Others, Cleganes, Boltons), with a lot of grey factions (Stannis, Sparrows, Targaryens) and a very few or no good factions as it is very questionable whether a quest for vengeance by Starks or Martells are morally good or not. The only faction which leant towards good was the Night's Watch under the command of Jon Snow as it started to break the cycle

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[202] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 15.
[203] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1194.
[204] Hayn, "Young Adult Literature Research," 177.

and do what is morally right – to save and protect all men, but even the Watch is tainted by the assassination of Jon.

In Sanderson, the change is visible in every book not only through the Knights Radiant but also by their enemy – the primordial parshmen called the Fused who are "[a]ncient souls put into a modern body, which extinguished the soul of the host completely."[205] Filled with hatred, they serve Odium and want to defeat human kind which makes them a prototypical force of evil just like Tolkien's Orcs as for a long time, there was no further information other than that "[m]any Fused were some variety of unhinged: vengeful, destructive, conceited."[206] However, by the end of *Rhythm of War* some of the Fused help humans against their own kin as it is the right thing to do.[207] The change towards good among the Fused is also infused by Venli (one of the Parshendi) becoming a Knight Radiant – she is a symbol of the beginning of the journey for the Fused as there was no Knight Radiant among the parshmen for millennia and the spren only choose those characters in which they see potential to do good.

In conclusion, it is visible that anyone is able to change one way or another as not only humans but also parshmen have good and evil – Voidbringers - in them and it is up to the characters how they deal with it. Martin works with the same concept and even though he has the Others with their undead as a force of evil he does not believe that they are the main focus of the story when it comes to good and evil as he says: "Is there an external evil in the universe? Is it Sauron or Satan or Cthulhu or is it our own fucked-up human natures?"[208] it was also shown a number of times that he believes that "the battle for good and evil is waged within the individual human heart."[209] The focus on being both good and evil is a follow up of Tolkien's work but Sanderson's and especially Martin's characters are more grey rather than pure evil or pure good as could be the case of Gandalf, Aragorn or Sauron.

The whole *The Stormlight Archive* series is based on learning from the past, letting it go and move forward in order to be a better person which is nicely visible on the described factions as those who are willing to change end up triumphant and morally right while those who stagnate with the change or turn evil are defeated sooner or later. The liberation from the past and using it to learn to be better and triumph in the end is also a perfect example of the

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[205] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 152.
[206] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 419.
[207] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 1142.
[208] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin and Stephen King on the Nature of Evil," posted April 10, 2018, YouTube video, 6:55, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ky8C5Sga_EM.
[209] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin and Stephen King on the Nature of Evil."

empowerment through YA literature as already described at the beginning of the thesis. Martin uses the history and past as an important tool as well as the only way out of the endless cycle of repetition is to break the cycle which is not easy for the characters as can be seen either on Jon Snow, Stannis and other characters which are analysed later.

4.3 Characters

The next section analyses five pairs of characters which present the already described ideas of characters being able to do both good and evil and which represent the established concepts of change and breaking the cycle. These characters also represent types of characters which are important for the depiction of good and evil – namely villains, guides, heroes, antiheroes and morally grey characters.

The first two analysed characters are two of the biggest villains in the selected series, Littlefinger in Martin and Taravangian in Sanderson. There is a number of connections between the two such as showing the world a false image of themselves as Littlefinger "[pretends…] to be everybody's friend, to be always helpful, always smiling, always joking."[210] Taravangian is likeable too as he is "[a] beloved monarch, known for building and maintaining hospitals in his city. It was known as far away as Azir that if you were sick, Taravangian would take you in […] The king loved all."[211]

Furthermore, both characters are depicted as harmless as Taravangian is old with a mental illness and despite being a monarch he is not a "powerful king."[212] Littlefinger, on the other hand, is known for being "slight and short"[213] and "of such undistinguished birth, one step up from a hedge knight, he was not a man to fear. He had no banners to call […] no great stronghold, […and] no prospects of a great marriage."[214] When compared to Tolkien, Sauron has a physical condition as well with the lack of physical body, unlike the selected characters, however, Sauron has thousands of Orcs behind him, Taravangian and Littlefinger do not have any great force behind their backs, at least initially.

What both characters have as their weapons is knowledge and information which they use for their goals. Taravangian hopes to save his tiny kingdom against the power of Odium by

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[210]Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on Littlefinger," posted June 14, 2020, YouTube video, 3:14, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_77_RWUmCU.
[211] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1216.
[212] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 660.
[213] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 161.
[214] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 272.

sacrificing the rest of the world.[215] Through his machination as "a political genius"[216] leading the world to chaos, he rose to power. Dalinar sees him as much more formidable foe than Sadeas in "every respect."[217] Littlefinger, on the other hand, plays a game of thrones for his own profit – to sit on the Iron Throne at the end, which is in a way a form of breaking the cycle as he would be the first low born to sit on the Throne. He manipulates kingdoms into the war. For instance, it was him who orchestrated the whole war between Starks and Lannisters[218] putting the land into chaos. Martin himself says that Littlefinger "thrives on chaos because in chaos there's an opportunity for advancement."[219]

They have various means of how to get information, for instance, Littlefinger has a large spy network across the country and a lot of men at important positions are his men.[220] Taravangian has a spy network too, along with a book of possible future events called the Diagram. Having eyes all around their opponents is also visible with Sauron as he himself is an eye, always watching what is happening in the world. Furthermore, according to Edward Lense, in Tolkien "there are spies everywhere, ruthless and efficient."[221] Lense also adds that despite being watchful, Sauron "has been blind all along" as he focused only on armies that might defeat him while missing out on little things such as Frodo and Sam leaning closer towards his domain.[222] The blindness is detectable in Sanderson as well as Taravangian is obsessed with Dalinar, whom he wanted to get on his side or to destroy him, but Taravangian underestimated him and his Knights Radiant as he was sure that events depicted in the Diagram are set in stone and therefore he focused on other matters. Littlefinger may fall into the same trap as well with Sansa Stark, in whom he sees his only love Catelyn Stark, as he teaches Sansa the game of thrones and thus, it could be Sansa who would ultimately outplay her master by the end of the series.

As eyes are important for Sauron, they are important for both characters too as the eyes show their true nature with Littlefinger having "grey-green eyes that did not smile when his mouth did"[223] which only adds to his pretension of always smiling. Taravangian is described

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[215] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 772.

[216] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War*, 266.

[217] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War*, 275.

[218] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 1114.

[219] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on Littlefinger."

[220] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 272.

[221] Edward Lense: "Sauron is Watching 'You:' The Role of the Great Eye in 'The Lord of the Rings,'" *Mythlore* 4. No. 1 (September 1976): 6.

[222] Lense: "Sauron is Watching 'You,' 6.

[223] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 288.

with either "keen"[224] or "sorrowful"[225] eyes which depends on which personality is at helm of his body at the moment.

The question of identity and personality is another thing that is quite similar between the two characters, as they both use two different personalities. Taravangian's personalities are bound to his intellect which changes every day because of his illness. Simple Taravangian is passionate, sympathetic etc. while smart Taravangian is a heartless political mastermind. Dalinar calls him murderer "[a] man like Dalinar himself,"[226] Taravangian even calls himself a "monster who will save this world."[227] However, Dalinar was able to change into a hero, while Taravangian stagnated in his beliefs and stagnation in Sanderson leads to evil, as already described. Littlefinger, however, has personalities bound by history, Petyr Baelish, his true name, is a young man who dearly cares for Catelyn Stark and therefore, for Sansa as well, while Littlefinger "loves [only] Littlefinger"[228] and "[l]ying comes as easily as breathing" to him.[229] The duality of their personalities is quite similar with Smeagol and Gollum in Tolkien as one is harmless, and the other is wretched. Furthermore, Bergen describes that by sparing Gollum, he was given "the opportunity to negotiate with himself in an inner psychomachia for redemption."[230] It is similar with the selected characters as well when Brandon Stark spared young Petyr and Kholin alliance spared Taravangian. It remains unknown whether Sansa will be Littlefinger's redemption or downfall. In Sanderson, however, the situation is clearer with Taravangian as he is "[n]o longer on the edge [between good and evil]. [Dalinar's] friend [...] had stepped off the cliff."[231] This is even more emphasized with him ascending as a god Odium where seemingly his smart side shuttered the simple one in his urge to not only save Roshar but also whole cosmere (a shared universe created by Sanderson for his fantasy young adult series). What is more, just like Sauron's and Gollum's lust for the Ring, Littlefinger lusts for the Iron Throne and Taravangian for safety of his kingdom no matter the cost.

All in all, both of the characters present similar traits to Sauron (Eye, physical defect) and Gollum (split personality) with their lust for something. However, they differ in others such as lack of brute force to do their evil doings. Their true weapons are lies, intrigues and they

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224 Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1218
225 Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 1221
226 Sanderson, *Rhythm of War*, 771.
227 Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1223.
228 Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 311.
229 Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 320.
230 Bergen, "A Warp of Horror," 117.
231 Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 771

always strike from shadows while in struggle with their other personality seeking redemption as Petyr wants to save Sansa and simple Taravangian wants to save everybody.

The next two characters may be considered better in terms of good as they both act as guides for some of the protagonists, these characters are Varys and Wit. Both characters are quite mysterious as Varys serves as the master whisperer, a head of a large spy network which may connect him with the Littlefinger but as Baelish is "an agent of chaos,"[232] Varys wants the realm to be in peace.[233] Wit, on the other hand, does not want to save only the realm but the whole cosmere,[234] therefore it is not surprising that Wit is present as a guide or an observer in other Sanderson's works as well.[235]

Both of these characters are depicted in a guide role which is defined by Charles W. Nelson as a person "who usually assists a major character on a journey or quest often to unusual and distant places […] instructs his young champion and imparts wisdom or advice which contributes to the shaping of the heroic character or his destiny."[236] Nelson further suggests that the guides in Tolkien are characters like Gandalf or Gollum.[237]

Wit, even with an extremely mysterious background and motives, is an important guide for the already mentioned heroes of the story - Kaladin and Shallan – as he visits them when they need help the most. He provides them with wisdom and guidance via a storytelling through which he leads Kaladin towards being responsible,[238] facing the truth[239] or not giving up[240] and Shallan towards accepting the truth[241] and her true identity.[242] Lastly, he is also a companion to Jasnah, the current ruler of Alethi, offering her guidance.[243]

Varys, on the other hand, is more subtle in his guidance as he has a problem trusting people[244] and even his allies as is the case with Tyrion.[245] He offers guidance to Eddard Stark

[232]Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on Littlefinger vs Varys," posted June 3, 2019, YouTube video, 8:07, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-CSXa9iCtQ&t=74s.
[233] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 610.
[234] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings*, 934.
[235] Brandon Sanderson, *Warbreaker* (Gollancz, 2011,) 373.
[236] Charles W. Nelson: "From Gollum to Gandalf: The Guide Figures in J.R.R. Tolkien's '*Lord of the Rings,*'" *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 13. No.1 (2002): 47.
[237] Nelson: "From Gollum to Gandalf," 50.
[238]Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 1006.
[239]Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 877.
[240] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 920-921.
[241] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War*, 631.
[242] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 818.
[243] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War*,761.
[244] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 311.
[245] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 242.

during his investigations[246] and after his imprisonment urges him to join the Watch to save his life for the good of the realm and the innocents, as they suffer the most during war.[247] After that, he offers guidance to Tyrion, who, according to Patricia Monk, is on a Hero-quest,[248] when Varys tells him a riddle to show Tyrion that he, in spite of his physical defect, can change the world.[249] Furthermore, he accompanies Tyrion to an exotic Essos preparing him on his journey to the east just like guides tend to do as mentioned above.

The wisdom is also present in both characters as Varys is known to have "ways of learning things that no man could know"[250] but "did too little" with all the knowledge.[251] This is similar to Wit who also knows a lot of things but tries not to physically intervene as it is for men to decide the fate of their world. Wit, however, intervenes through his stories when the characters need them the most, when they are on the brink of giving up and his stories guide them towards the light. Nelson also says that guide such as Gandalf in Tolkien "is supposed to be a power in the world as well"[252] which contradicts both of the selected characters who are, similarly to the mentioned villains, players in the shadows and their power is seen mainly through the characters whom they guide. This is also explained by their physical conditions as Wit, according to Sanderson "cannot physically harm people."[253] While Varys is an eunuch who "[giggles] like a little girl"[254] and "was plump, perfumed, powdered […] and on his feet were pointed slippers of soft velvet."[255] Depicting him as weak and soft and even though he kills Kevan Lannister at the end of book five, he is perceived as physically harmless unlike Tolkien's powerful Gandalf or strong Aragorn.

What is more, even though the role of a guide in Tolkien such as with Aragorn and Gandalf is to help the hero, it is quite different with Martin and Sanderson as Varys instead of being a bringer of peace, as his goal, he is also a bringer of war as in the past it is suggested that the madness of the mad king leading towards the war was strengthened by Varys[256] and he also

[246] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 312.
[247] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 612.
[248] Patricia Monk: "Tyrion Lannister: A Fulcrum of Balance in George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire,"* *Mythlore* 36. No.2 (Spring/Summer 2018): 6.
[249] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 132.
[250] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 194.
[251] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 466.
[252] Nelson: "From Gollum to Gandalf," 53.
[253] "DAWNSHARD | Stormlight Archive Megathread - No RoW Spoilers," r/Stormlight Archive, Reddit, last modified November 6, 2020.
https://www.reddit.com/r/Stormlight_Archive/comments/jowewq/dawnshard_stormlight_archive_megathread_no_row/gbb8ml4/?context=3.
[254] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 168.
[255] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 167.
[256] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 962.

helped to bring another candidate for the Throne with his army across the sea. He believes that everything he does is for the good of the realm but some of his deeds are shady and his motives seem to be giving the crown to Targaryens, who already proved to be wrong rulers throughout the history. Wit, on the other hand admits that his goals are not the same with goals of the heroes and even though he wants to help, he would watch the world being destroyed if it helped his own goals[257] which is later seen with the contract against Odium as Dalinar observes.[258]

The lust for achieving their own goals is similar to another guide, Gollum, in Tolkien who "wants the ring back and will do anything to get it."[259] Which is visible with both Wit and also Varys who says that "there are many like you, good men in service to bad causes"[260] while killing Kevan Lannister who did nothing morally bad throughout the whole series but is killed by Varys only because he was not suitable for Varys's goal.

Both of these guide characters are quite similar to each other as they help the heroes via stories or riddles. Furthermore, they are a fusion of more than one guide character from Tolkien (mainly Gandalf and Gollum) and, therefore, elevate the role into a more complex guide character. As for the questions of good and evil, both characters would be considered good as in their heart they truly try to do what is best for the innocent along with few shady decisions which represent the struggle of good and evil within the heart of men, which is typical for both authors.

With the guides already covered, it is essential to analyse heroes with Renarin in Sanderson and Tyrion in Martin. Both characters just like the previous ones have a physical defect with Tyrion being a dwarf, with too big head for his body, each eye with a different colour and being referred as "by far the ugliest" Lannister.[261] Renarin, on the other hand, wears glasses,[262] has what seems to be an autism as he does not like to be touched by others[263] and is "epileptic."[264] Both of these characters do not fit within their family of warriors where Tyrion's father and brother are warriors and it is the same with Renarin, both of them are physically unable to do what is expected of them by their family. Renarin feels that he does not fit because of his illness

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[257] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 959.
[258] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 1175.
[259] Nelson: "From Gollum to Gandalf," 54.
[260] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 1049.
[261] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 48.
[262] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 220.
[263] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 670.
[264] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 563.

but he is loved by his family although it took some time to connect with Dalinar.[265] Tyrion, on the other hand, is loved only by his brother and hated by his father, sister and nephew.

According to Ria Cheyne "Tyrion is constantly judged and interpreted not on the basis of his actions or intentions but in accordance with a metanarrative in which his physiology inevitably signifies villainy."[266] Furthermore, Tyrion even claims that he "[has] been on trial for being a dwarf [his] entire life."[267] Renarin, similarly, was bullied not only when he was a child[268] but also in the present when he is mocked by Sadeas and others for not being brave enough.[269] When compared to Tolkien, his hobbits are also physically unable to be a large threat as their weapon is their wit, however, they do not have any problems in their family apart from notorious Sackville-Baggins.

However, similarly to unlikely heroes like hobbits, both Renarin and Tyrion are slowly constructed as unlikely heroes as well. Renarin, for instance, is depicted by already analysed Wit as "less fragile than you think him"[270] or by Zahel (a hero from another series)[271] saying that Renarin is going to surprise everyone.[272] Tyrion is depicted a number of times as a man with a big shadow by Varys[273] and Moqorro,[274] or as "a bigger man" by Garlan Tyrell,[275] and "large" by master Aemon.[276] Both of them are depicted by other non-antagonistic characters in a better way than their physical appearance and their perception of themselves actually is.

Renarin soon becomes a part of the Bridge Four which is a large change as he is a noble and yet he washes dishes every day[277] or carries a bridge with others[278], something which other nobles would never do. Furthermore, he is the first Radiant to bond a corrupted spren ever, according to Sanderson.[279] The corrupted spren are seen as manifestations of Odium and therefore evil but Renarin is not evil. It is significant even more when Renarin foresaw Jasnah

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[265] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1191.
[266] Cheyne: *Disability, Literature, Genre,* 118.
[267] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 963.
[268] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1191.
[269] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 279.
[270] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 237.
[271] "Skyward Chicago signing" Arcanum: The Brandon Sanderson Archive, Coppermind, accessed May 25, 2022, https://wob.coppermind.net/events/373-skyward-chicago-signing/#e12060.
[272] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 300.
[273] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 132.
[274] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 479.
[275] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 389.
[276] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 199.
[277] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 635.
[278] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 965.
[279] "Dragonsteel Mini/con 2021" Arcanum: The Brandon Sanderson Archive, Coppermind, accessed May 25, 2022, https://wob.coppermind.net/events/479-dragonsteel-mini-con-2021/#e15146.

(his cousin) killing him when finding out about the corrupted spren. However, she recalls Renarin as "[a]lways misunderstood"[280] and she stops her blade as she is also able to change herself and the future depicted in the vision as well. Renarin is therefore not only the one who changes but also a catalysator for others to change.

Tyrion is quite the opposite when it comes to appreciation by his family and others as "[d]espite consistently acting for the greater good [...]he is hated 'most of all.'"[281] Tyrion is further depicted as "one of only a few characters in the series not ruled by self-interest and the desire for power."[282] This is true as he tries to help the Night's Watch by sending them more men, helping Bran creating a saddle, protecting Penny or protecting the capital where he even leads a charge despite being a dwarf, even though he has a negative relationship with his sister and nephew.

The family drama is escalated when Tyrion kills Tywin, his father, which paradoxically, according to Joseph Rex Young, "provides fertiliser within which a new regime can germinate. Having started this process, Tyrion then begins his long journey to join forces with Daenerys and thus link her with the thinned land she must heal."[283] In this way Young connects Tyrion with a role of a guide for Daenerys, which is in contrast with Monk's claim that "[i]n association with the Hero myth in which Tyrion shares, the dragon represents what Tyrion is going to face as his final challenge."[284] To put it differently, she believes that Tyrion will not help Daenerys but rather challenge her as a final obstacle in his way for the Throne. The answer is probably somewhere in between as Tyrion does not desire power, however, he is frequently associated with being bigger and higher than he seems, foreshadowing great future for him and as he is "constantly thinking outside the box in a rigorously hierarchical boxed-in feudal world"[285] it would suggest that it would be he who breaks the cycle.

It is quite similar with Renarin as he is also associated with being full of surprises which may still come in a book which focuses directly on him[286] as happened already with Kaladin, Shallan, Dalinar and Venli. Renarin tends to think about himself as a coward[287] but his deeds

[280] Sanderson, *Oathbringer*, 1191.
[281] Cheyne: *Disability, Literature, Genre*, 118.
[282] Cheyne: *Disability, Literature, Genre*, 118.
[283]Joseph Rex Young: "Useful Little Men," *Mythlore 39. No.1 (Fall/Winter 2020):* 92-93.
[284]Monk: "Tyrion Lannister: A Fulcrum of Balance*,"* 19.
[285] Monk: "Tyrion Lannister: A Fulcrum of Balance*,"* 11.
[286] "Oathbringer Glasgow signing" Arcanum: The Brandon Sanderson Archive, Coppermind, accessed May 25, 2022, https://wob.coppermind.net/events/262-oathbringer-glasgow-signing/#e8786.
[287] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 390.

say otherwise as he helps Adolin in the arena when no one else did, supported Dalinar at the peak of his addiction when everyone else feared him[288], and also helped Rlain to bond and ascend to Knight Radiant when it seemed that no spren would bond with him. Renarin's moments will come in future books, but he already proved his bravery and goodness in the acts already done despite bonding a presumably evil spren.

The already mentioned bravery of both characters and no desire for power may be connected to another hero from Tolkien – Aragorn, who also does not desire power, yet he took the crown when the land needed it, the same could be with Renarin and Tyrion as Renarin may become a head of his order and Tyrion already took the mantle of power as a hand of the king. However, both characters are much more complex than Aragorn due to their physical defects and complexity as Tyrion, for instance, is not as honourable as he visits brothels quite often and murders his father.

All in all, it can be said that both of the characters are good as they face the adversity in spite of their physical restraints and furthermore, both of them act selflessly and do the deeds of good and even the evil act of Tyrion murdering his father, as suggested, opens a way for a better regime to rise of which Tyrion is probably going to be a part of.

When thinking about antiheroes and Tolkien, one cannot think about anyone else than Boromir, a knight of Gondor, wishing to help the world and yet trying to get the Ring to Gondor even if it would result in a disaster. The lust for the Ring leads him to betraying Frodo, feeling guilty and ultimately redeeming himself by sacrificing in order to save Merry and Pippin. A hero with a flaw, who in the end does the good thing.

In both selected series are two characters which are good but with a flaw just as Boromir. They are Jaime Lannister and Adolin Kholin. Their families were already described as warrior and power houses in which previously mentioned Tyrion and Renarin do not fit. Both Jaime and Adolin are described as "rash and headstrong"[289] and with "hotheadedness"[290] which is fuelled by their flaw – for Jaime it is his love for Cersei and for Adolin hatred for Sadeas.

Adolin is advised by characters such as Renarin[291] or Dalinar[292] to stay away from Sadeas as they feel like something bad may happen which proves to be right as Adolin murders Sadeas

[288] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 932.
[289] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 401.
[290] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 289.
[291] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 220.
[292] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 270.

at the end of *Words of Radiance* which has great consequences, almost leading to the destruction of Kholin family. In a similar manner, Jaime tries to murder Bran Stark, a child, in order to keep love relationship with his twin sister a secret, however, that eventually leads Eddard Stark to uncover their secret and it is also a significant spark for the war between Starks and Lannisters.

Apart from that, Jaime is also known for murdering the mad king Aerys Targaryen, whom he swore to protect and from that day onward he has been known as the Kingslayer, a dishonourable "false knight who profaned his blade with the blood of the king he had sworn to defend."[293] Adolin, on the other hand, is depicted by Kaladin as "[d]ismissive and spoiled, but straight."[294]

The perception of these characters changes throughout the book. For Jaime, the essential moment was losing his hand and opening up to Brienne, whom he tells the truth about murdering the mad king to save the city from being burned. He also wonders about his own identity as his sword hand that once made him Kingslayer is gone.[295] Since then, he thinks of himself not as a Kingslayer but as Jaime[296] starting what seems to be his redemption arch as he later saves Brienne, whom he previously hated, from the bear pit and gives Brienne a sword to find Sansa Stark as she is his "last chance for honor."[297] What is more, similarly to Tyrion he does not desire any power[298] as is also recalled by Tyrion.[299] His new desire is to find lost honour so "one day men might call [him] Goldenhand after all. Goldenhand the Just."[300]

Adolin, on the other hand, is seen in the eyes of others as a good person before[301] and even after the murder as Kaladin says: "You should have been the surgeon, Adolin […] Not me. You care about people."[302] His moral and good deeds can be found throughout the whole series as in the book one, he saves a girl from Sadeas's soldier,[303] later he stays with Kaladin in prison because he believes that Kaladin was wrongly imprisoned.[304] Furthermore, in *Oathbringer*, after the murder, he is helped by his Shardblade, which is in fact a dead Radiant spren, when

[293]Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 601.
[294] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 769.
[295] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 507.
[296] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 508.
[297] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 1009.
[298] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 59.
[299] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 308.
[300] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 450.
[301] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 1028.
[302] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 310.
[303] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 822.
[304] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 934.

she tells him her name (Maya) and lets herself be summoned in seven heartbeats instead of ten.[305] This is a very interesting situation as Knights Radiant can summon Shardblades instantaneously while ordinary shardbeares in ten heartbeats and what is more, Adolin is the only protagonist who is not a Knight Radiant yet. So far, he seems to be in the middle of the way. That is also very intriguing as Adolin's fate is not yet set as with other Knights Radiant and therefore, he still may not have won over the anger that led him to murder Sadeas. However, he has already done so many moral deeds and the growing relationship between him and his Shardblade Maya, who fights alongside him in the last instalment,[306] only proves that he is on the right track to become a hero, so it can be said that he is an antihero character and not a morally grey character or hero just yet.

It is very similar with Jaime who, as already suggested, changes once he lost his hand into something greater than the identity of the Kingslayer as Brienne depicts him when telling her the truth about the origin of the Kingslayer as "half a corpse and half a god"[307] depicting his transition from immoral Kingslayer towards Jaime. Furthermore, his lust for Cersei starts to deteriorate as well as Cersei is "sick of looking at that ugly stump of [his]"[308] and Jaime starts to see more madness of Aerys in her[309] with the final departure from their relationship being the refusal of fighting as her champion.[310]

Both of the characters try to redeem themselves like Boromir by protecting others after acknowledging their foul deed. Similarly to Boromir, who switches from obsession with Gondor to saving his hobbit friends, Jaime starts to do what is right not for Cersei but what is right for others and for the realm. Jaime's story may suggest that the cycle of history repeating itself approaches with him possibly being thrown into a role of Kingslayer once again with Cersei being the new incantation of the mad king Aerys, whether he will be enchained in the cycle or will try to break it, remains to be seen. Adolin, on the other hand, tries to manage his anger and focuses more on helping his Shardblade Maya to regain her life and also joins a diplomatic[311] and a rescue[312] missions instead of participating in the war. Even with the cold-hearted murder of one of the antagonists, Adolin remains good, however with that immoral

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[305] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1229.
[306] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 452.
[307] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 149.
[308] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 265.
[309] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 260-261.
[310] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 761.
[311] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 273.
[312] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 425.

deed and not being a Knight Radiant like the other heroes, his path is still full of possibilities. He can either continue with the redemption arch or take a more sinister turn. For now, as Jaime, he remains an antihero due to the murder which was seen as immoral and evil.

The last pair of characters are examples of morally grey characters or as previously defined – characters that do too much good and evil that they are undefinable for either side. The selected characters are Sandor Clegane – the Hound, and Szeth – the assassin in white. As most of the previous examples, both characters have a physical defect as Hound's face is burned by his brother[313] and Szeth leaves "a glowing afterimage when he moved: a sign of his soul's improper reattachment."[314] Both of these examples represent a fracture in their character as one half of Clegane is burned/dead and Szeth has splintered soul with part of it being already in the afterlife. Similar fracture can be seen in Tolkien's Gollum who has splintered personality which according to David Callaway "becomes a personality consisting of two distinct parts, one which is the Ring, and another which is what remains of pre-Ring Smeagol."[315] In Sandor, the burned part may represent his Hound identity while the unburned part the innocent child he once was. In Szeth the afterimage may represent Szeth in a blind servitude to his masters while the physical part represents Szeth reborn.

As Gollum is bound to the Ring, the selected characters are for some time bound to evil doers as well. For instance, Szeth is bound by a sacred stone to whoever possesses the stone and is also bound to obey his master.[316] This leads him to an identity of the assassin in white used by his masters to kill kings, firstly by the Parshendi, as previously mentioned, and then by Taravangian. Even though he obeys his commands he is not fine with them as he mourns[317] and is sorry for the victims.[318] Furthermore, he hates himself for what he has done[319] but still obeys the power of the stone as he believes that he has no other choice which is later proved to be wrong as it was just a stone and he realizes that he can make a choices of his own.[320] Sandor is also bound to his master king Joffrey and king Robert as a dog when he ran down a boy called Mycah just because Joffrey told him, or when he fought with his brother but knelt instantly after the command and just as with Szeth, everyone fears him through his service.[321] However,

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[313] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 293-294.
[314] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 904.
[315] David Callaway: "Gollum: A Misunderstood Hero," *Mythlore* 10. No.3 (Winter 1984): 17.
[316] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 214.
[317] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 889.
[318] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 440.
[319] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 888.
[320] Sanderson, *Oathbringer,* 1163.
[321] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 866.

Sandor does not obey Joffrey as devotedly as Szeth obeys his masters. For instance, Sandor is the only member of the kingsguard who never hurt Sansa even though Joffrey commanded his kingsguard to hurt her,[322] Sandor also orders other guards to stop hurting her,[323] and also deserts the army during battle because of his fear of fire and tries to rescue Sansa even though Joffrey commanded him to fight.[324]

This commitment to Sansa and also Arya later in the series is similar to Tolkien's relationship of Gollum with Frodo as through Frodo a better side of Gollum emerges as his master was changed from the Ring to Frodo, which is also supported by W.H. Auden who says that the "feeling of genuine gratitude […] and affection for Frodo" proves that Gollum was not completely evil.[325] Which is also seen in Sandor's relationship with Sansa whom he protects on a multiple occasions from his master. It is a bit more complicated with Szeth who obeys no matter how he feels or what he thinks. Later, however, Szeth demands some answers from Taravangian[326] and also accepts the killing blow by Kaladin even though he can still fight and finish his task. However, his turn towards good is more visible at the end of *Oathbringer* where he has to decide whether to serve Odium or Dalinar and he chooses Dalinar and his Knights Radiant.

From that day onward Szeth obeys Dalinar, however, he kills Taravangian which was not an order as Taravangian was in prison and actually harmless which led to Taravangian's ascension as Odium. Sandor is his own master since his escape from capital and tries to get Arya to her family serving as her guide and teaching her how to survive. In spite of all good deeds, he pays for his past sins, namely killing Mycah, when Arya leaves him to die in the wilderness and even though there are hints that he might still live as an apprentice in a septry, Sandor found his peace.[327]

As for whether he is good or evil he is truly somewhere in between as he calls himself "the butcher,"[328] killed a lot of men, and Sandor himself admits that it maybe "makes [him] some monster."[329] However, he also claims that he saved Sansa[330] which was proved on the

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322 Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 39.
323 Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 488.
324 Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 866.
325 Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR, 6.
326 Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 1097.
327 Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 519-534.
328 Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 756.
329 Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 657.
330 Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 657.

previous examples. What is also interesting for good and evil is why he does not want to be a knight. According to Martin, he does not want it because of his brother[331] who is "the real monster in House Clegane."[332] Martin says that knighthood is "the concept of chivalry and knights defending the weak, protecting the innocent […] and yet Gregor is a knight, this brute, this savage […] who kills and maims without a thought."[333] This does not apply only to Gregor, however, as the kingsguard hurt Sansa, the folk tries to rape her yet only Sandor helps her when knights run away and was gentle to Sansa on more than one occasion.[334] In this way Sandor Clegane is more of a knight than most of the knights in Westeros and yet he "had been hard and brutal."[335] One thing is certain, he is an example of breaking the cycle of knighthood as the label does not make you an honourable man, the deeds do.

It is also difficult to put Szeth on either side as even Sanderson himself does not know whether he is evil or not.[336] The fact is that he killed even if he did not want to even though he had a choice which he did not want to see. Furthermore, it is implied by other characters that even though Taravangian was behind the assassinations, it was Szeth who did them.[337] On the other hand, Kaladin spared him out of "pity"[338] just as Bilbo did with Gollum as he had a large role to play later in the story, which is the case of Szeth too with him joining Kholins and helping them to win a battle. Kaladin is also going on a quest with Szeth in the fifth book just as Frodo with Gollum and he might end up a hero as the ability to change is essential in Sanderson.

All in all, both of the selected characters present morally grey characters as they are hard to define as good or bad characters with their physical appearance being torn into two halves just as Gollum's own personality, one representing good and the other representing evil. There are many more interesting characters to analyse in both series, but these were selected to show examples of different roles connecting good and evil with villains, guides, heroes, antiheroes and morally grey characters.

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[331] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on the Hound" posted December 4, 2020, YouTube video, 4:55, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ed9xgwHgXmk&t=231s.
[332] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 511.
[333] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on the Hound."
[334] Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 486; Martin, *A Clash of Kings,* 488
[335] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 511.
[336] "What's The Difference Between Writing Good And Evil Characters?" FAQ, Brandon Sanderson, accessed May 27, 2022, https://faq.brandonsanderson.com/knowledge-base/whats-the-difference-between-writing-good-and-evil-characters/.
[337] Sanderson, *Rhythm of War,* 227.
[338] Sanderson, *Words of Radiance,* 1256.

4.4 Items and symbols

The last part of the analysis covers the role of items and symbols in good and evil. This part covers the items, symbols of emblems, and lastly the symbolism of colours. The analysis of both the emblems and colours is done together as those two categories intertwine and it is more suitable to analyse them together.

In Tolkien there was, in Clark's opinion, one true source of evil and that is the Ring of power which is an embodiment of "the desire to wield power" to which some of the characters succumb.[339] Auden also comments that some of the characters such as Galadriel or Gandalf are able to resist the temptation while others cannot.[340] In Martin, it is the Iron Throne, a seat of power in Westeros for which a lot of characters lust as it is the embodiment of power. Unlike Tolkien's golden ring the Iron Throne is nothing pleasurable to look at as it is "ugly […and] asymmetric"[341] as it is "a seat made from melted, twisted, beaten, and broken blades of all [Ageon's] fallen foes"[342] with "the ribbons of twisted steel, the jagged ends of swords and knives all tangled up and melted."[343] Even more connections to the Throne being evil provides definition of evil by Robert L. Simon who says that "[e]vil is a thick rope of many complex, twisted, and intertwined strands"[344] which fits to the description of the Iron Throne which is also twisted and full of intertwined malformed blades.

In Sanderson, however, there is no central throne or an object for which the sides would fight, if there is an item which stands for evil it might be the Shardblades at the beginning of the story. After the fall of Knights Radiant long ago, they left their dead spren in a form of Shardblades for humans who took them and started killing each other as Shardblade represents power.[345] The power through Shardblades can be seen in the present too with Sadeas trying to get a Shardblade to be more powerful, the loss of Dalinar's own Shardblade seen as his downfall as power is measured by the number of Shardblades. The struggle for Shardblades also escalates with Adolin's battle at the arena against more shardbearers almost resulting into his and his brother's death, all in the name of lust for power. Unlike Martin's hideous Iron Throne, the Shardblades are described as wonderful and beautiful creations. However, "[a] Shardblade did

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[339] Clark, "Problems of Good and Evil in Tolkien," 16.
[340] Auden, "GOOD AND EVIL IN LOTR," 7.
[341] Aegon Targaryen: "George RR Martin on how the Iron Throne is supposed to look," posted May 3, 2018, YouTube video, 4:43, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHnpD0sbXZs.
[342] Martin, *Fire and Blood,* 26.
[343] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 496.
[344] Simon, "Serial Killers."
[345] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 910.

not cut living flesh; it severed the soul itself"[346] while the Iron Throne only dealt physical damage.

Furthermore, throne as a symbol represents the centre[347] which is the case with the Iron Throne as well as not many characters care about the Others and their undead army, most of them care about who sits on the Iron Throne as that is the centre of the story, the centre of power and, therefore, the centre of evil as well as the lust for wielding its power leads people to do evil things (Littlefinger) or characters, such as Gregor Clegane, to do evil things in the name of those who want the power (Lannisters). All of this is very similar in Tolkien's story where the Ring of Power is the centre of the story as well with all the mentioned points for the Iron Throne. In Sanderson, there are more than one Shardblades and they are not a centre of the story by any means as the centre of evil remains the god Odium.

Another thing that can be seen in Tolkien is that the power of the Ring corrupts and twists its bearers such as Gollum who used to be a creature similar to hobbits, but he changes into a twisted creature with the Ring in his possession. Similar situation may be seen with Martin as well with the character of Cersei who has been already mentioned as turning more and more into the mad king Aerys with her being paranoid as she sees enemies behind every corner, which might be empowered in the next instalment after her imprisonment. Furthermore, she is not only similar to Aerys but also to her dead husband, king Robert Baratheon who started to drink heavily after the start of his reign which is similar with Cersei who drinks a lot after her father's death – beginning of her regency. Sanderson, on the other hand, does not play with the corruption, on the contrary, as was described in Adolin's relationship with Maya, Sanderson uses the Shardblades as a way to help the characters as is the case with Adolin and also uses the Shardblades as a catalysator for the characters to deal with their own Voidbringers, also already discussed, as it is up to the characters whether they do good deeds or if they let themselves to be controlled by their inner Voidbringer. This is visible with the Knights Radiant where most of them have Shardblades but do not misuse them to do evil.

Lastly, the One Ring is also known to be personified[348] as it has its own will and acts just as the characters. It is the same case with the Iron Throne as it is said that king Maegor was murdered by the Throne,[349] or that "the blades [of the Iron Throne] tormented [king Aerys]"[350]

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[346] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 15.
[347] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 341.
[348] J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring,* London: HarperCollins*Publishers,* 2007, 71.
[349] Martin, *A Storm of Swords,* 496.
[350] Martin, *A Feast for Crows,* 261.

and that the Throne will murder Daenerys.[351] Just as with the Ring of Power, the Iron Throne chooses the one who sits upon it. The personification may be seen in Sanderson too as the reader soon discovers that the Shardblades are nothing but dead spren / spirits and the spren who are alive can bond with people and parshmen and form new living Shardblades, letting them use their power and also talk with them. What is more, it is visible with Adolin that even dead spren such as Maya can talk and maybe be even brought back to life.

Both authors have done similar things as Tolkien with his Ring of Power, however, it is more visible with the Iron Throne as it is the centrepiece of the series, it chooses its master, corrupts and is the centre of evil in Martin's series. Sanderson, on the other hand, uses the item or object as a tool for people to choose between good and evil in their hearts. Furthermore, he provides so much context that the Shardblades become real characters through their spren form and are not to be thought of as an item anymore.

As for the analysis of colours and emblems in both series only some of the factions and characters which were already described are chosen for this part of the analysis. For example, the Kholins have a tower and a crown in their emblem with their colour being blue. As for what this means, Cirlot provides a definition of a tower and crown as symbols, he says that "the tower is symbolic of ascent"[352] and the crown "symbolizes, in the broadest and deepest sense, the very idea of pre-eminence."[353] It is quite connected with their colour as according to Michael Ferber "blue is traditionally the color of heaven, of hope, of constancy, of purity, of truth, of the ideal"[354] which connects nicely with the House Kholin being the sanctuary for the protagonists, the Knights Radiant and their ideals, they search for the truth as was already shown in the Voidbringers section. Kholins are also a beacon of hope through their Knights Radiant and the characters, who are either a part of the family or connected with them, such as Kaladin, are willing to change and therefore ascend. The whole house is also more important from the point of good and evil than any other faction.

However, in Martin there is a completely different association with blue as it is mainly seen with the undead of the Others whose eyes are "deeper and bluer than any human eyes."[355] The Others are also associated with white while the Night's Watch with black. According to

[351] Martin, *A Dance with Dragons,* 80.
[352] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 344.
[353] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 72.
[354] Michael Ferber, A *Dictionary of Literary Symbols,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 31.
[355] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 9.

Cirlot, "[t]he conception of black and white as diametrically opposed symbols of the positive and the negative,"[356] which is the case with the Others and the Watch with white symbolising death in China. Therefore, it is quite fitting for the undead with the Night's Watch as its opposite in black.

Sadeas, on the other hand, has a similar emblem to Kholins with a tower and a hammer and his troops wear green uniforms. Cirlot says that green "is the colour of vegetation (or of life, in other words) and of corpses (or of death)"[357] with the symbolism of hammer usually being connected with smithing.[358] With the knowledge of the story from previous parts it is clear that the symbolism here is not only for Sadeas but for Bridge Four as well with the colour of life and smithing as the whole group grows in Sadeas's warcamp while the corpses may imply the dead bridgemen or the foreshadowing of the grim end of House Sadeas with it being extinct by the end of book four.

Two colours that are in both series are red and gold. Red is described by Michael Ferber as "the color of the devil"[359] and it is associated with Lannisters who have a golden lion on a crimson field in their emblem and Odium whose colours, according to Sanderson, are red and gold.[360] Lannisters as a faction and Odium as a villain are the main antagonists in their series and red was associated with the eye of Sauron in Tolkien as well. Furthermore, both examples are connected with gold which "is a spiritual danger, a cause of wickedness."[361] Spiritual danger may be with Odium being a god and being able to enter people's mind to influence them just like he influenced Sadeas and the Fused. The cause of wickedness is appliable for both as Lannisters are the primary source of ransacking of riverlands and also the incest between Cersei and Jaime may be seen as morally bad while Odium tries to enslave the whole planet for his upcoming cosmic war. Furthermore, Lannisters' symbol lion represents "the strongest and most dangerous […] beast"[362] and is connected with fear and pride[363] which is also present in the story as Tywin wants others to fear Lannisters[364] with the pride being depicted with his obsession of ensuring family legacy. Furthermore, Lannisters have the largest and strongest

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[356] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 56.
[357] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 56.
[358] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 137.
[359] Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols,* 169.
[360] "ICon 2019," Arcanum: The Brandon Sanderson Archive, Coppermind., accessed May 30, 2022, https://wob.coppermind.net/events/395-icon-2019/#e13074.
[361] Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols,* 87.
[362] Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols,* 118.
[363] Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols,* 119.
[364] Martin, *A Storm of Storms,* 292.

army for a big part of the series connecting it with the symbol of their emblem. Red is also associated with Targaryens who were already mentioned with their emblem being evil dragon, the colour itself as seen above may be another indication that Daenerys will turn evil.

An interesting fusion of colours is used in the case of Sandor Clegane as he wears "soot-grey armor"[365] and "olive green cloak."[366] Green was already associated with life and death both of which can be seen in his identities as Sandor and the Hound. Furthermore, grey is a combination of white and black which were already defined as opposing symbols of the good and bad.[367] With Sandor already described as morally grey character, it fits nicely that he wears armour that represents his character. Lastly, with him being the Hound, black dogs were usually associated with the devil[368] placing him in his grey armour somewhere between the hell and heaven.

Similar association with the colour and character is visible in Sanderson with Taravangian who wears orange and white clothing.[369] According to Cirlot orange is "a colour which in the view of Oswald Wirth is actually a symbol for flames, ferocity, cruelty and egoism"[370] which fits with Taravangian thinking that only he can save the world and that through his ferocious and cruel political machinations, such as the assassinations, turned the world into chaos to achieve his goals and his goals only.

There are many more factions, characters and symbols that did not make it into the final thesis. Hopefully, however, the concepts of good and evil in both series were explained and it was described how intricately both authors work with their factions, characters and even symbols and colours and how they either go in Tolkien's footsteps or how they modify, evolve and elevate his concepts of how good and evil is depicted in fantasy. The final results of the analysis are described in the following paragraphs.

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[365] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 301.
[366] Martin, *A Game of Thrones,* 301.
[367] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 56.
[368] Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*, 60.
[369] Sanderson, *A Way of Kings,* 92.
[370] Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols,* 55.

Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to analyse how the selected series depict good and evil and whether they follow Tolkien or modify his ideas, which was done in two parts the theoretical part and the analysis.

The aim of the theoretical part was to put genres of the selected series into a literary context and to define good and evil and their depiction in fantasy and Tolkien. The first chapter provides not only the literary context of fantasy and young adult literature but also how the selected series fit within them. The second chapter provides the overview of what can be imagined upon the concepts of good and evil along with the definition of antiheroes and morally grey characters. The third chapter delves into conventions in depiction of good and evil found in fantasy and in Tolkien, which are then used in the analytical part.

The analysis itself is divided into four parts focusing on factions, authors' concepts, characters and items with symbols. When it comes to factions it was revealed that both authors provide much more context for the antagonist faction than Tolkien did with his Orcs. The examples may be seen with Sanderson's Parshmen and Parshendi and with Martin's wildlings or even Lannisters with characters such as Tyrion and Jaime. Both authors, however, still keep some factions which follow Tolkien's footsteps where evil faction is an obstacle the hero has to destroy to progress as can be seen with Sadeas in Sanderson and Gregor Clegane's troops with Bloody Mummers in Martin. Some other factions are similar such as Bridge Four and the Night's Watch formed of prisoners, slaves and other expandable people forming a bond over time to save people, with Martin's Watch being more immoral than Sanderson's bridgemen as the Watch kills its commander Jon Snow.

The analysis of factions also discovered two important concepts of both authors which is the concept of change in Sanderson and the concept of cycle in Martin. For both authors is important history of their characters and worlds as Sanderson uses the immoral deeds of the past for factions and characters to change, learn from them and be better. Martin uses it to show how history tends to repeat itself with Boltons rising against Starks, or Daenerys conquering Ghiscari just as her ancestor did. Some of his characters, however, are able to break the cycle such as Jon Snow with the Night's Watch letting the wildlings go south. Not all characters and factions, however, are ready for the change which can be seen with the Watch killing Jon. Sanderson works with change as a sign of good as when the faction or character can learn from the past, they rise better than before and the past is not important anymore when it comes to good and evil. Kholin faction for instance was once a group of bloody conquerors but

throughout a number of changes it has become a sanctuary for all protagonists and world's biggest hope. The concept of change is also visible with the Fused who join forces with men, their sworn enemies. Stagnation, however, leads to evil and corruption as can be seen with Sadeas who wants to usurp the throne, the lust for throne is seen in Martin as well.

The third part of the analysis focused on characters and namely on five types of characters – villains, guides, heroes, antiheroes and morally grey characters. It was revealed that almost every selected character has either a physical or mental defect, which is true for many other characters in the selected series as well. Often, characters also have more than one identity or personality, nickname or a name which represents the battle between good and evil in characters' hearts which both authors try to achieve. Both villains, unlike Sauron, do not have any great armies and they have to strike from shadow through intrigue and political machination. The guide characters are also not as virtuous as they used to be in Tolkien, as both selected guides help the protagonists for as long as it is good for their own plan and both of these characters are not afraid to get rid of the hero once it would help their own goals. The heroes are quite different for both authors as in Sanderson, the heroes usually do something immoral in the past and the actual story is about their change, while in Martin's case Tyrion murders his father and visits whorehouses. In Martin's case the good characters are usually connected with them not wanting the power, which is connected with the last part of the analysis, while in Sanderson good characters are those who seek change. The antihero examples are quite opposite to each other as Jaime Lannister does an evil deed at the beginning of the series and then starts to change on his way for redemption while Adolin Kholin murders Sadeas at the end of the second book. However, unlike with Jaime, the reader may find Adolin likeable right from the start of the series as he has his own chapters while Jaime gets his chapters in the third book. Lastly, the morally grey characters both have physical defect which leaves them between life and death, both of these characters do good and evil alternatively, so it is impossible to decide which character is good or bad.

The last part of the analysis focused on symbols and items. With the items it was found out that Martin's Iron Throne is very similar to Tolkien's Ring of Power while Sanderson does not have such a central item which would either be good or bad, he only provides weapons (Shardblades) as tools for people to decide whether to attack or protect and as a catalysator for a change as can be seen with Adolin and his relationship with Maya. Both authors also work a lot with colours which support findings from previous parts of the analysis.

All in all it can be said that both authors work similarly in some ways (more context for antagonists, physically or mentally weak characters) and differ in others (Iron Throne – the source of evil, Shardblades – the tool and a catalysator, honourable hero), however, they both elevate Tolkien's concepts of how he worked with good and evil with providing much more context so it is difficult for the reader to choose a side (most of the time). Furthermore, both authors are able to make the reader rethink who is good and who is evil as was shown in the examples which is yet another thing that Tolkien did not try to do. To conclude, both authors elevate the concepts of good and evil in fantasy through aspects of young adult literature, great plot twists (Voidbringers, wildlings) and also sometimes even fanatical complexity and context for not only the heroes but also for the villains so their work is not black and white but more like points of black and white on a shadow canvas.

Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na vyobrazení dobra a zla v knižních sériích George R.R. Martina a Brandona Sandersona, jmenovitě série *Píseň ledu a ohně* a *Archiv bouřné záře.* Tito autoři byli vybráni z několika různých důvodů, například, že oba autoři jsou v dnešní době velice populární což u Sandersona představují rekordy trhající úspěchy na Kickstarteru a u Martina zase narůstající popularita z posledních let díky seriálu *Hra o trůny* od HBO. Dále se také každý z autorů zaměřuje na jinou oblast z hlediska dobra a zla, neboť Sanderson se zaměřuje na epické rozměry dobra a zla, kdy proti sobě stojí legendární rytíři, kteří dokážou ovládat magii a proti nim stojí zlovolný bůh, Martin na druhou stranu míří boj mezi dobrem a zlem do jednotlivých konfliktů mezi různými postavami, lordy a jejich nohsledy, zatímco pradávné zlo v podobě Jiných je schované v pozadí. Dále také bylo zajímavé vybrat zrovna tyto dva autory, neboť každý začal psát svou sérii v jiné době, Martin začal svoji ságu psát v 90. letech, zatímco Sanderson přišel se svou ságou na trh v roce 2010. V neposlední řadě tyto dvě série patří k mým oblíbeným a bylo pro mě vzrušující poznat je více do hloubky, než by se tak stalo při klasické četbě.

Již v úvodu práce je popsáno, že tyto dvě série budou také porovnány s J.R.R. Tolkienem, který je obecně známý jako otec fantasy, a tudíž je nasnadě porovnání, zda se i novodobí autoři stále drží v jeho stopách, nebo zda posunuli jeho vyobrazení dobra a zla zase o kousek dál. Martin i Sanderson se nijak nesnaží skrývat fakt, že je Tolkien ovlivnil na jejich spisovatelské cestě. Cílem diplomové práce tudíž bylo zanalyzovat vybrané série z pohledu vyobrazení dobra a zla a zda následují či modifikují Tolkienovy nápady. Tento cíl byl dosažen skrze dvě části – teoretickou část a analytickou část. Cílem teoretické části bylo vydefinovat dobro a zlo a jak je konvenčně vyobrazováno v žánru fantasy a v Tolkienovi. Samotná analýza poté měla za cíl zjistit, jak autoři vyobrazují dobro a zlo, a jak se liší nebo neliší vzhledem k Tolkienovi.

První kapitola se zaměřuje na definování žánrů fantasy a poté young adult literatury a zasazení vybraných sérií do tohoto literárního kontextu. V prvním bodě je nejprve definován žánr fantasy a jmenovitě tzv. high fantasy do kterého obě vybrané série zapadají. Ve druhém bodě se řeší definování young adult literatury a jak oba autoři zapadají do této kategorie, kdy každý přistupuje k motivům young adult trochu jinak.

Druhá kapitola se zaměřuje na samotné vyobrazení dobra a zla, kde jsou porovnány názory několika různých autorů a ve druhé části jsou také popsány role antihrdinů a morálně šedých postav ve vyobrazení dobra a zla, neboť rozdělení jakéhokoliv příběhu pouze na dobro

a zlo by bylo velmi simplicitní a tudíž je potřeba mít i další rozdělení, které by zaplnilo prostor mezi dobrem a zlem.

Třetí kapitola se již soustředí na konvence v žánru fantasy, kde se například řeší důležitost naděje v situacích, kdy zlo má navrch, neboť dobro na konci příběhu většinou zvítězí nad zlem, což je propojené s tím, že fantasy žánr poskytuje čtenáři možnost útěku z reálného krutého světa a také poskytuje satisfakci z dobrého konce, který by se v realitě nemusel stát. Tato kapitola ovšem také poukazuje na fakt, že zlo nikdy kompletně nezmizí a pouze se objeví v jiné formě. Druhá polovina této kapitola se zaměřuje na Tolkienovo vyobrazení dobra a zla v *Pánovi prstenů*, kde se popisuje dobro a zlo skrze postavy, frakce a také předměty. Kapitola například rozebírá, že Tolkien neposkytl skřetům téměř žádný prostor, a tudíž i kontext pro čtenáře, aby v nich viděl něco jiného než pouze bezduché zlé poskoky ve jménu Saurona. Dále se také například řeší prsten moci jakožto zdroj zla a korupce, které se přenáší na postavy jako je například Frodo nebo Glum, kteří jsou v této kapitole také popsáni.

Vzhledem k rozsahu obou vybraných sérií se samotná analýza mohla zaměřit pouze na některé aspekty a pouze na několik pečlivě vybraných příkladů. Analýza je proto rozdělena do čtyř částí, které se navzájem doplňují. Těmito částmi jsou analýza frakcí, konceptů, které oba autoři využívají pro vyobrazení dobra a zla, postav a předmětů se symboly.

V první části zaměřené na frakce se ukázalo, že oba autoři přidávají svým antagonistickým frakcím mnohem více kontextu jako například u Paršendů a divokých, kteří jsou v úvodu obou sérií popsáni jako padouši, ale později vyjde najevo, že obě frakce se pouze snaží přežít a že Paršendi v době, kdy zavraždili lidského krále byli v právu, neboť chtěl přivézt zpět jejich dávného zlého boha, před kterým kdysi utekli. U divokých se naopak ukázalo, že to jsou pouze lidé, stejně jako ostatní postavy, kteří dostali nálepku padoucha podle toho, na jaké straně Zdi se narodili a podle pár jedinců, kteří dělají nájezdy jižně od Zdi. Některé další frakce jako třeba Sadeasova strana či nohsledi Gregora Clegana nebo Krvaví handlíři jsou příklady frakcí, které slouží pouze jako překážka pro hrdiny a které má čtenář nenávidět podobně jako u Tolkienových skřetů. Tato část analýzy má mnohem více zajímavých příkladů, které se dají v první části analýzy dohledat.

Prvek, který ale z analýzy vyčnívá jsou koncepty, se kterými autoři pracují, kdy u Sandersona se pracuje s konceptem změny, kdy nezáleží na tom, jaké špatné věci někdo kdysi udělal, ale na tom, zda se z nich dokáže poučit, změnit se a být lepší, což je vidět u rodu Kholinů, kteří byli známí pro své dobyvatelské výpravy a oblibu ve válčení. To se ovšem změnilo

v aktuálním dění, kde bojují ne pro zisk, ale pro mír a jsou rovněž domovem pro drtivou většinu hrdinů. Podobně to je vidět i u Žhnoucích, kteří po tisíciletí bojovali proti lidem s neutuchající zlobou a nenávistí, což se změnilo na konci čtvrtého dílu, kdy se skupina Žhnoucích přidala na stranu lidí, protože to tak bylo správné. Stagnace naopak u Sandersona vede ke korupci a přechodu ke zlé straně, což bylo vidět u Sadeasovy frakce, která chtěla neustále válčit, tak jako za starých časů a dříve nebo později uzmout trůn, který náleží Kholinům. U Martina je zase vidět koncept cyklu, kde rovněž pracuje s historií, ale trochu jinak než Sanderson, neboť u Martina se minulost neustále opakuje jako například s Boltony bojujícími proti Starkům, Starkovský pochod na jih kvůli smrti lorda, Daenerysina křížová výprava proti Ghiskarcům atd. všechny tyto příklady se již v minulosti staly, a tudíž se opakují. Celý svět se tak točí ve velkém bludném kruhu a svět nejspíš stále není připravený na změnu, což je vidět na příkladu smrti Jona Sněha, který jako první pustil divoké na jih, aby spolu žili v míru, ale část jeho bratří z Noční Hlídky ho ubodá k smrti, protože nedokážou tuto změnu akceptovat. Oba autoři rovněž pracují s ideou, že každá postava má ve svém srdci schopnosti na to být zlá i dobrá a právě v lidském srdci se v jejich sériích odehrává hlavní souboj mezi dobrem a zlem, což je vidět i v následující části analýzy.

Ve třetí části bylo analyzováno pět párů postav, kdy každý pár reprezentoval jeden typ postavy, jmenovitě padoucha, průvodce, hrdiny, antihrdiny a morálně šedé postavy. Na většině příkladů byla vidět buď nějaká fyzická nebo psychická vada, ale také rozdvojená identita či osobnost, což ukazuje již zmíněný souboj mezi dobrem a zlem. Například u obou padouchů Malíčka a Taravangiana je jedna identita citlivá a ochranitelská, zatímco druhá je chladná, vypočítavá a smrtonosná. Průvodci zase nejsou tak čestní jako Tolkienův Gandalf a nebojí se hrdiny podrazit, pokud to bude vyhovovat jejich vlastnímu cíli. Hrdinové jsou také komplexnější než u Tolkiena, neboť mají již zmíněné vady a jmenovitě u Martina a jeho Tyriona jsou vidět i některé pochybné skutky, které by Tolkienův Aragorn nikdy neudělal a čtenář by s tím ani nepočítal.

Poslední část se v rámci analyzování předmětů a symbolů zaměřila na železný trůn, který se velmi podobá Tolkienovu prstenu, kdy trůn je centrum dění, a tudíž i zla skrze válku a zrady, které přináší. Sanderson na druhou stranu nemá žádný předmět, který by byl centrem dění i zla, jeho střepkordy, neboli magické zbraně, slouží hlavně jako nástroj k tomu, aby se jedinec rozhodl zda s ním bude páchat dobro nebo zlo. Dále slouží jako katalyzátor k tomu, aby se postava dokázala změnit, což je případ Adolina, jedné z analyzovaných postav. V této části jsou rovněž analyzovány symboly použité v rodových erbech různých frakcí a rovněž i barvy,

které se spojují jak s frakcemi, tak s postavami, kde nálezy podporují to, co již bylo objeveno v částech předešlých.

Závěrem lze říci, že oba autoři obohacují vyobrazení dobra a zla ve fantasy skrze aspekty z young adult literatury, velké zvraty, které vedou čtenáře k přemýšlení a přeskupování pomyslných figurek na šachovnici mezi dobrem a zlem (Divocí, Paršendi, Pustonoši) a v neposlední řadě také někdy až k fanatické komplexnosti a kontextu nejen pro hlavní postavy ale víceméně pro každou důležitou i nedůležitou postavu díky čemuž není dobro a zlo rozděleno na tyto dva póly ale spíše na ostrůvky dobra a zla v šedém moři.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Dictionary of Names and Places

A Song of Ice and Fire

Essos - The eastern exotic continent with plotlines of Daenerys Targaryen and Tyrion Lannister later in the series.

Ghiscari - An empire in Essos focused on slave trading, the enemy of Daenerys Targaryen

Hound – Sandor Clegane, with half of his face burned by his brother, a guard to king Joffrey, tries to help Sansa and Arya Stark.

Lannisters

- One of the oldest and also the richest houses in Westeros in war with Starks and Stannis, Lannisters are the current royal house, the members of the house are described below.
  - o **Cersei** – queen regent, mother of king Joffrey (dead) and king Tommen
  - o **Jaime** – queen's twin brother, they have love relationship together and Joffrey with Tommen and Myrcella are their children, known as the Kingslayer for killing his king Aerys Targaryen, known for his warrior skills.
  - o **Tyrion** – younger brother of Jaime and Cersei, known as the Imp, because he is a dwarf, hated by his father and sister, loved by his brother, very clever.
  - o **Tywin** – head of Lannisters, great warrior and tactician

Littlefinger – Petyr Baelish, master of coin, has a large spy network, tries to find a way to bet he king through intrigues and betrayal.

Sparrows - Peasants who try to find justice and help in faith

Stannis Baratheon – the rightful heir to dead king Robert Baratheon, worships a new fire god, helps the Night's Watch against the Wildlings.

Starks

- One of the oldest houses, in war with the Lannisters because they killed lord Eddard Stark.
  - o **Eddard** – the head of Starks, tries to find out who murdered his friend and also who hurt his son (Jaime)

- o **Jon Snow** – bastard son of Eddard Stark, member, and commander of the Night's Watch.
- o **Sansa** – daughter of Eddard Stark, kept in safety by Littlefinger.

Targaryens

- Former rulers of Westeros, defeated by the alliance of Baratheons, Starks and later Lannisters
- **Aerys** – Mad king, killed by his guard Jaime Lannisters
- **Daenerys** – daughter of king Aerys, in exile in Essos in war against slavery.

The Night's Watch - Wardens on the Wall, usually formed of prisoners and volunteers, serving to guard the realm of men from danger.

The Wall -A giant Wall made of ice in the north of Westeros built initially against the Others, but now serves to stop the wildlings, the Wall is home of the Night's Watch.

Varys – master of whispers, he has a large spy network and is supposed to help the king and the realm.

Westeros - The western continent where the main conflicts for the Iron Throne are situated, It is home of important houses such as Stark or Lannister

Wildlings - People who live behind the northern side of the Wall, known for their raids south of the Wall.

The Stormlight Archive

Alethi – a nation of men from which most of the protagonists come.

Bridge Four – Kaladin's slave squad in the camp of Sadeas, later the Windrunner order of Knights Radiant.

Kaladin – a slave in camp of Sadeas, then Dalinar's guard, Knight Radiant.

Kholins – royal Alethi house, sanctuary of Bridge Four and other protagonists

Dalinar – a general in a war, burned his wife in the past, head of Knights Radiant.

Adolin – son of Dalinar, a warrior

Renarin - son of Dalinar, he is not a warrior but is very clever, Knight Radiant.

Jasnah – niece of Dalinar and later Alethi queen, scholar, Knight Radiant.

Navani – sister-in-law and later wife of Dalinar, scholar, Knight Radiant.

Odium – the main villain, god of passion, rules the Fused, tries to enslave the world for his cosmic war.

Parshendi – Parshmen who managed to keep their reason and hid themselves away from their god Odium, later assassinate Alethi king, who wants to bring Odium back, in the war with humans.

Parshmen – another race, used as slaves by humans because they lost their mind and therefore obey whatever their master wants, later find their lost knowledge, and are revealed to be the natives to this world with humans being the conquerors.

Roshar – the world

Sadeas – used to be a friend with Dalinar but now they are opponents, lusts for the crown, betrays Dalinar and uses slaves in the war.

Shallan - a fiancé of Adolin, scholar, Knight Radiant.

Shardblades – either dead or living spren transformed into a magical weapon that can cut through everything in ease.

Spren – spirits who bond with people to create Knights Radiant, can also transform into weapons

Szeth – assassin in white who killed many rulers across the planet, even Dalinar's brother, currently serves Dalinar and is Knight Radiant.

Taravangian – king of a city state Kharbranth, known for his hospitals and kindness, however he has two identities, one of which is evil, he owns assassin in white, tries to save his city and the world, later ascends as Odium.

The Fused – ancient immortal parshmen serving Odium coming to life to fight humans over and over again to regain their lost land.

Wit – occurring character throughout other series connected with *The Stormlight Archive*, king's fool, Knight Radiant. Tries to help characters when they are about to give up.