

ZÁPADOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V PLZNI

FAKULTA FILOZOFICKÁ

Bakalářská práce

**Contemporary British Fantasy Literature: An
Analysis of Selected Authors and their
Contributions to the Genre**

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Poděkování

Tímto bych ráda poděkovala vedoucímu diplomové práce PhDr. Ivoně Mišterové, Ph.D. a konzultantovi Mgr. Tomášovi Hostýnkovi za cenné profesionální rady, připomínky a metodické vedení práce.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of my Bachelor's thesis titled *Contemporary British Fantasy Literature: An Analysis of Selected Authors and their Contribution to the Genre* is to introduce the concept of fantasy and to introduce the most popular contemporary British authors who have been beneficial to the fantasy world.

I have chosen this theme mainly because of my own passion for this genre. I do not think I am the only one who likes fantasy and everything associated with it. Particularly at present, fantasy is a widely used term not only in children but also in adults. The magical supernatural world is attacking us from books and TV screens. We may ask ourselves why it is. Why is fantasy literature so appealing?

Each of us, whether in childhood or adulthood, has wondered what it would be like to live in a world where you can do whatever comes to your mind. Some of us dreamed of flying or of doing magic, others would visit a foreign land full of strange creatures.

The alternate world, which is one of the features of fantasy literature, is something which also attracts us as a magnet. Escaping the real world and escaping problems can be an opportunity that attracts both children and adults - especially now during the time of pandemic. This is exactly what J. K. Rowling enables us to do in a wizarding world full of magical beings and magic or J. R. R. Tolkien with his Hobbit heroes. To quote him: "*Courage is found in unlikely places.*"

It was thoughts of a better world that led me to choose a theme which would deal with the fantasy world.

The bachelor's thesis is divided into two parts. The first is devoted to the term of fantasy itself. I will analyse the development, the basic features of fantasy literature and I will introduce individual subgenres. The second part focuses on the life, authorship and themes of the most popular British fantasy authors. I have chosen the following ones: J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, J. K. Rowling. I will introduce those of their works which have been a major contribution to the fantasy world.

2 DEFINITION OF TERM FANTASY

Fantasy is a literary genre that is currently very attractive. This is evidenced by the infinite number of titles, which we can see in bookstores. In connection with their popularity, fantasy stories are increasingly appearing in a film form as well as in a form of computer games.

A great advantage of fantasy is that it appeals to a very wide readership, not only from the point of view of age (fantasy literature is popular with children as well as with adults), but also gender. As one of the few literary genres, it does not favour any gender, it is popular with both boys and girls.

Fantasy is a modern literary, artistic, cinematic and gaming genre that has been formed especially since the 1930s in English-speaking countries. The term fantasy was given to all the emerging adventurous, fabulous and fantastic works at the turn of the 60s and 70s, which did not come under the term science-fiction.

Sci-fi or science-fiction is a literary genre where are new discoveries of science and technology, unknown life forms, new natural phenomena and discoveries. The plot is situated in the universe, the future or in alternate history. *Cambridge dictionary* defines science fiction as follows: „, a type of writing about imagined developments in science and their effect on life esp. in the future”¹

The main point of fantasy is the supernatural element and magic. A very significant difference between science fiction and fantasy is the setting and the time in which it takes place. In fantasy, we encounter an imaginary world that is different from our real world. In the terms of time, fantasy refers to the past and not to the future, as it is in the case of science fiction.

Science fantasy is on the border between science fiction and fantasy. It is a mixed genre that contains elements from both science fiction and fantasy. Science fantasy, unlike science fiction, allows supernatural things to penetrate its world.

¹ *Cambridge learner's dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

According to the dictionary, fantasy is an imaginative or fantasy work dealing with supernatural characters, phenomena and events. C. N. Manlove gives a more precise and sophisticated definition of fantasy in his work *Modern Fantasy*:

„A fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of the supernatural with which the mortal characters in the story on the readers become on at least partly familiar terms.”²

The relationship between fantasy and science fiction can also be viewed as follows:

„Fantasy is a genre of art that uses magic and other supernatural forms as primary element of plot, theme or setting. The genre is generally distinguished from science fiction and horror by overall look, feel and theme of the individual work, though there is a great deal of overlap between the three (collectively known as speculative fiction).”³

Fantasy literature is a literary genre based on verbal art (folklore), based on myths and medieval romance. It is also thought that fantasy stories represent literary genres used in earlier times - fairy tales, myths, fables, knightly epics and others.⁴

Interest in the past and mythology can also be demonstrated on the texts by contemporary fantasy writers. They draw on several mythological areas. One of them, for example, is ancient Greek myths and legends. The characters of the gods Zeus, Hera, Appolóna and others appear together with demigods, gods, and mere mortals. Writers are also based on Celtic, Germanic, Scandinavian or Icelandic legends. The great source is also Jewish or Biblical stories. J. R. R. Tolkien drew the theme for his work *The Lord of the Rings* in the Christian medieval world. N. C. Manlove deals with the influence of the Middle Ages on fantasy literature in his work *The Impulse of Fantasy Literature*:

„Many modern fantasies draw part of their inspiration from the meaning of the medieval world order. ... The impulse is on the whole nostalgia for a world simpler, less populated, better ordered and more natural than the writer’s own, although this nostalgia may be

² MANLOVE, Colin N. *Modern Fantasy*. 1978.

³ Fantasy - Wikipedia. [online]. Dostupné z: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy>.

⁴ PRINGLE, David. *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. 1999.

extended to a mystic longing or even the belief that such apparently lost worlds are eternally co-present with this one.”⁵

Fantasy literature introduces an alternative reality to its readers. However, it is strongly influenced by folkloric motifs and traditional genres. C. S. Sullivan discusses in his article, the influence of folklore on fantasy:

„The writer of fantastic literature, the creator of impossible worlds, has need of and uses folklore to make those imagined world accessible to the reader. ... Inshort, fantasy and sci-fi authors use traditional materials, from individual motifs to entire folks narratives, to allow their readers recognize, in elemental and perhaps unconscious ways, the reality and cultural depth of the impossible worlds these authors have created.”⁶

2. 1 Origin and Development of Fantasy

Having regard to the above mentioned definitions, I can conclude that fantasy literature has its roots above all in myths and fairy tales. It corresponds to the fact that fantasy stories are characterised by fairy tales, the fight of clearly defined good against evil, typification of characters and the victory of good. For greater illustration, I explain the various common features of fantasy literature, myths and fairy tales.

2. 1. 1 Elements of Myth in Fantasy Literature

The myth itself is one of the oldest epic genres of literature, whose roots date back to the period before the invention of writing. The main hero of myths is most often a supernatural being - God, demon and the like.

The main character of classical fantasy literature and myth grows up most often in seclusion. He often has no idea of his origin. His peaceful life is disrupted by the realization that he is

⁵ MANLOVE, Colin N. *The Impulse of Fantasy Literature*. 1983.

⁶ SULLIVAN, C. W. *Folklore and Fantastic Literature*. 2001.

chosen for some great deed or mission. The main character is irreplaceable in his mission, only he must overcome the obstacles, find the way to the goal and accomplish his task. He is not alone on his journey, but accompanied by a fellowship. The composition of the group is either predetermined or the group forms spontaneously during the journey. Not only the main character, but also the entire company, overcome various dangers, often finding themselves in situations that at first sight seem insoluble. During the battles with evil, some members of the community are often lost or injured. During their journey, the main character and his company encounter obstacles, meet good and evil. These conflicts are very often changed. It is during the period of “peace”, when the community is safe, that the further progress of their journey may be revealed. The whole story escalates to the final great encounter. The fight most often takes place in the territory of evil, but it may happen that evil invades the hero's home. In this case, the final battle is placed in a setting that is close to the main character in order to purge the home of the hero from evil.

In the final battle, evil usually prevails over good in the beginning. The crucial moment is the use of a magical artifact that reverses the outcome of a battle in favor of good.⁷

Typical representatives, who created a world based on mythology, are J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis, who originate a fictional mythical world. As a result, these writers can be considered the founders of the classical form of fantasy literature.

2. 1. 2 Elements of Fairy Tales in Fantasy Literature

Fairy tales as a fun prosaic genre are essentially based on myths and folklore. Therefore, it is logical that they bring similar elements to fantasy literature.

The hero sets out for a journey, but often goes without a specific goal, or seeks happiness or experience. Along the way he meets random companions who support him or on the contrary, betray him and join the side of evil.

During the journey, the main character encounters evil and injustice. He is aware that he is the one who can correct the order of the world. So the plot leads to the final battle of good and evil, where good wins and evil is punished. In fairy tales, the symbolism of numbers is very

⁷ KUGLEROVÁ, Ivana. *Fantasy a narativita*. 1999.

important, especially number 3 and its multiples, or number 7. This symbolism also makes its way into fantasy literature.

As mentioned above, fairy tales and myths bring similar elements to fantasy literature, such as the struggle of good and evil, the motive of the journey and the community, the chosen one, the accomplishment of demanding tasks and the gradation to the final struggle. The difference between fairy tales and myths is the most obvious when it comes to death. In fairy tales, positive characters rarely die, because death is linked to ethics, when evil is to be punished by death. It comes from the fact that fairy tales have a powerful educational function. Death, on the other hand, is viewed differently in myths. It is not uncommon for a positive figure, such as a member of the company accompanying the main character, to die tragically. Death is associated with chance here and helps the good side with a stronger motivation to fight evil.

2.3 Subgenres of Fantasy Literature

Dividing fantasy literature into subgenres is not easy, because different types are very often mixed. For an overview, I will present the basic types, which are based on houghtsonfantasy.com and above all on the work of *The Sub-genres of British Fantasy Literature* by A. J. Dalton.

1. **High or epic fantasy** - High fantasy can be regarded as the only true fantasy. Because it does not mix different worlds, but takes place exclusively in a fantastic fictional world where good and evil are clearly reserved. The plots and themes of this subgenre are usually spectacular and wide-ranging. It focuses on a single, full-fledged hero or a group of heroes like Frodo Baggins and his companions in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, and the plot is set into a mystical world with its own rules and laws of physics. The stories are mostly lengthy and epic. Extensive expeditions involve many characters and the destiny of the world is here in the hands of the hero. The typical example from the latest books would be *A Game of Thrones* by G.R.R. Martin.
2. **Low fantasy** - A fantasy with magical or supernatural elements that takes place in the real world or in something very similar to the real world. Characters usually find

secret magical power or supernatural beings in so-called normal environments. The Harry Potter belongs to this subgenre.

3. **Magical realism** - Magical realism characters, including those in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's classic *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, embrace fantastical elements like levitation and telekinesis as a natural part of their otherwise realistic universe.
4. **Sword and sorcery** - It is a subgenre of high fantasy that focuses on magic, sorcery and sword-wielding heroes like the titular barbarian in Robert E. Howard's Conan pulp fiction novels, as well as magic and sorcery. The sword and sorcery fantasy literature is characterised by a pseudo-historical setting and a large number of action scenes.
5. **Dark fantasy** - It combines elements of high fantasy and horror, superhero fiction and sword and sorcery fantasy. The purpose of this subgenre is to make the reader feel nervous and feel scared.
6. **Fables** - Fables, as those found in *Aesop's Fables* and *Arabian Nights* are used for moral lessons through personified animals and supernatural things.
7. **Superhero fiction** - Unlike stories in which the main character gains special abilities by scientific means (e.g. exposure to radiation), the abilities of these heroes are supernatural.

Other subgenres, although not as good as high fantasy, join the basic enumerated subgenres of fantasy literature, which in recent years have attracted a lot of attention from young readers.

1. **Urban fantasy** - It is difficult to describe because it has been used in a variety of contexts, and it is often used interchangeably with other fantasy subgenres like low fantasy and paranormal fantasy. Although it usually refers to a fantasy set in an urban setting or culture, it has also become synonymous with current fantasy – a fantasy set in the real world today.
2. **Young adult fantasy** - The main characters are young adults. This subgenre is specifically targeted and sold primarily to young adult readers. For example, this category includes *The Twilight*, *Vampire Academy* or *Throne of Glass*. This type of

subgenre of fantasy literature is also called soft fantasy, which highlights the fact that fantasy literature is here enriched with elements of the red library.^{8 9}

2.4 Fantasy Features

In previous subchapters, I defined the concept of fantasy, introduced its development and history, and focused on its genre division. Now I will combine previous information and show the basic characteristics of fantasy literature.

Worlds in fantasy literature

Fantasy literature most often operates with two worlds - fictional and real. To enter the fantasy world, heroes use different entrances (gateways). It might be the fantasy world which represents an imaginary world with no connection to our world, or the fantasy world which is a world parallel to ours (for example, Lewis). Or it could be an entry into the pseudohistory of our world. The gateways to these worlds can be different, here it depends on the creativity of the author. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, such a tool was a wardrobe or a painting. Harry Potter used several gates, the most famous is platforms 9 and 3/4. Besides the famous train platform, a telephone booth or fireplace served as a gateway to the magical world, too.

Magic plays a dominant role in the imaginary world. The company here is usually pre-technical. Religious motives and questions also play an important role in many works. We can see the influence of Christianity, for example, in the mentioned *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which brings a message introducing young readers to allegorical stories about J.C. in a fragmented mosaic form.

⁸ Common Fantasy Sub-Genres | Thoughts on Fantasy. *Thoughts on Fantasy | a blog about the worlds, conventions, and curiosities of fantasy fiction* [online]. Dostupné z: <https://thoughtsonfantasy.com/2015/12/07/17-common-fantasy-sub-genres/>

⁹ DALTON, A J. *The Sub-genres of British Fantasy Literature*. 2017.

Magical beings and objects

The entire imaginary world of fantasy literature is interwoven with magic and spells, and with it the existence of magical objects and beings.

And objects with magical powers (artifacts) are one of the cornerstones of the fantasy story. The whole story unfolds around the artifact. Perhaps the best example is Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, where a magic ring is central to the storyline. Its existence is linked to the fundamental mission of Frodo Baggins and his fellowship. In *The Harry Potter*, we might consider Horcruxes to be such essential artifacts. We do not know of their existence as such until the sixth volume - *The Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. If we take the whole saga as a whole, we realize that it all leads to reveal the Horcruxes and destroy them. We have already met the first Horcrux in the second book called the *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* without knowing that it was this kind of magical object.

Except for essential artifacts, other powerful magical objects appear in the story, they help heroes overcome complications, or conversely create a trap or obstacle in their further quest for purpose. These items may include magical weapons, means of travel (brooms, transporters), jewellery, clothing (invisibility cloak) and other everyday objects, which may be a magic wand for a wizard.

In fantasy literature, the main character himself can be a magical being - a hobbit, a wizard. Besides him, other supernatural characters appear in the works, forming a retinue of the main character, helping him or representing enemies. In *The Lord of the Rings*, we meet other hobbits, wizards, dwarves, or elves in Frodo's company. Apart from them, goblins, dragons, dark knights (spirits of men - Nazgûl) and others appear in the work. In *The Harry Potter*, in addition to wizards, we encounter basilisks, house-elves, werewolves, bogeymen, dementors, ghosts and others. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, we most encounter animals that speak and act like humans. There is also the minotaur Asterius or the white witch.

Good and evil

Based on the aforementioned origins of fantasy literature, we must not forget fairy tales. Fantasy literature takes the motifs of fighting good and evil from the fairy tales. Here, good ultimately prevails and evil is defeated, too. Both good and evil are usually clearly defined -

they are represented by specific features that are easily identified by the reader. Of course, unlike a fairy tale, the characters can change the side they fight for. One example would be Draco Malfoy, who is one of the negative characters in the first six volumes. In the sixth volume of the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, we feel that this character commits evil primarily out of fear. In the seventh volume, there is a transformation when Draco Malfoy, Harry Potter's longtime enemy, changes the side. In the free sequel *the Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, Draco is already ranked among the positive heroes.

The main representative of evil does not usually take part in the fight; others - his entourage or army - fight for him. At the very end, when the story graduates, the positive main character must confront and overwhelm the main representative of all evil.

Characters

The characters in fantasy literature are often schematic, the reader is able to distinguish between a positive and a negative hero. But as I have mentioned, supporting characters can change sides.

The main character is often an outsider in the real world, or a character who doesn't stand out. Only in the fantasy world he becomes a hero who is exceptional, brave and only he can defeat the great evil.

I have also already mentioned that the main character does not usually overcome obstacles alone. He always has a mate (helper) or companion who supports him and helps him overcome the pitfalls. The group is composed of diverse elements that complement each other and only together they lead the main character to the final battle, where evil is defeated.

The number of members of the company often carries magical significance - we most often work with the numbers three, five seven or multiples of the number three (nine, twelve, etc.) Number three tends to be the most common, because the connection of the magic of number three can be found in connection with Christianity and the trinity - God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The opposite of the main character is the person portraying the main evil of the work. As I have already mentioned, even the main negative figure is surrounded by himself with a

company or an army that fights for its leader until the final confrontation, when the main representative of good meets the main representative of evil.

Another typical character for fantasy literature is the person of the master who leads the main character. It helps him improve his skills and strengths and shows him the possible direction of his journey. He is his so-called spiritual leader. For example, Dumbledore for Harry Potter or Gandalf for Frodo Baggins.

Theme of the journey

The theme of the journey is a core element in fantasy literature. The main character travels to a specific destination with his retinue, which arises at the beginning of the journey, or is formed during the journey. A lot of adventures and obstacles await them along the way. The hero performs various, apparently unsolvable tasks that allow him to prove his uniqueness, wit and courage. The journey is connected to the hero's mission in life, which only he himself is just learning.

This journey can be thought of directly, when the main character along with his friends embark on a particular journey. Alternatively, the journey may be symbolic. In the Harry Potter, the main character commits certain adventures in each volume that take place in or around Hogwarts. It's not until the last episode of *The Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* that the hero with his friends Ron and Hermione set out on a quest for the Horcruxes. However, the previous episodes, together with the seventh, form a symbolic journey of heroes, which leads to the destruction of Lord Voldemort as a representative of evil in the wizarding world.

However, the journey does not just mean travelling of the main character. It also hides the maturation and completion of the character of the main hero, who is emotionally mature thanks to the experience he has gained. In some cases we also encounter the adolescent adolescence of the main hero, see the adolescence of the main characters in the Harry Potter.

The beginning of the journey is associated with leaving home or a place where the main character feels safe. He goes into a setting where evil rules. During the journey, the hero and his companions encounter beings who fight on the side of evil and try to thwart the group. The path is never straight, it seems insurmountable, the main character often has to choose alternative solutions to achieve his goal. The main character can also get into a situation

where he is on the edge of his powers and all seems to be lost. This usually precedes the main confrontation to which the story escalates.

Mission and task

The mission is closely related to the motive of the journey, because its mission is the reason why the hero sets out on it. The mission of the main character is destined to fight evil and save the fictional world.

Before fulfilling his mission and conquering evil, he must complete a series of arduous tests and tasks. These obstacles are set primarily by the lord of evil, who tries to thwart or hinder his path. However, in some cases, the main character is tested by his master and through overcoming obstacles he learns, gains experience and acquires the knowledge needed in real fight. The importance of these trials is also that the hero proves his bravery, his fearlessness, his pure character, and confirms that he is the right person to fight against evil. Among other things, he shows his dedication, thanks to which he is able to lay down his own life for his company and his mission.

Despite the fact that the main character is helped during the journey by a dedicated company. He must complete the very mission that is predestined for him.

Theme of Death

As I have mentioned, fantasy literature is based on myths and fairy tales. Just like in fairy tales, good wins. But the approach to death is different. In fairy tales, at the very least, one of the main characters dies. Death is ubiquitous in fantasy stories. This means that to die is common for supporting characters, but also for some of the characters who are very close to the main hero (member of his retinue, member of the family). For example, the heptalogy of *Harry Potter*:

Death has followed the main character since birth. The death of his parents determines his direction in childhood. Harry's character still has to deal with the death of his newfound godfather, the death of his master, or the killing of the faithful owl and innocent house-elf Dobby. Mainly, the latest episode of *The Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* is interwoven

with the motive of death. It is the graduating momentum that escalates in the apparent death of the main character.

In general, the death of one of the great characters in the work encourages the other heroes to be more motivated and determined to continue on the indicated journey.^{10 11}

¹⁰ KUGLEROVÁ, Ivana. *Fantasy a narativita*. 1999.

¹¹ MOCNÁ, Dagmar a PETERKA, Josef. *Encyklopedie literárních žánrů*. 2004.

3 THE MOST POPULAR BRITISH AUTHORS OF FANTASY LITERATURE AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION

The following chapter will be focused on the great British representatives of fantasy literature, who have already been mentioned in the general section. For the following analysis, I have selected such authors who had and have had a pivotal influence on the development of fantasy literature. I will present the life and work of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, Clive Staples Lewis and a contemporary author Joanne Rowling.

3. 1 J.R.R. Tolkien

3. 1. 1 The Biography of the Author

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born on 3 January 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. He lived in the state, which is now called the Free State of South Africa, until he was three. His Father Arthur Ruel Tolkien was the head of the bank branch there, his mother Mabel Tolkien could not get used to the different climate and returned with her son to England in 1895. At first they lived with relatives at Bag End Farm, which later became inspiration for Tolkien's work. Tolkien's father never returned to England, because he contracted rheumatic fever in Africa and died.

Therefore, the mother and her two sons moved to today's Birmingham. Tolkien spent a lot of time with his brother. The old water mill at the residence or marsh in Moseley, where the brothers participated in various expeditions, which became a rich source of inspiration for the work of this eminent writer.

A great influence on Tolkien's education came from his mother, who led him to study languages from an early age. She also brought her son to Christianity. After her death at the

age of 34, another important figure appeared in the lives of both brothers - the priest Francis Xavier Morgan, who was entrusted with the education of the boys. He took care of them in a tall building of Perrot's Folly, which is, together with the tower of the waterworks, reflected in Tolkien's work as various dark towers - for example, Saruman's residence - the Orthank Tower.

After successful studies at Oxford University, Tolkien volunteered for the army and joined the First World War, where he participated in the Battle of the Somme, but due to illness he was brought to England where he was treated. He was no longer able to participate in the fighting due to his health. Historians say that the fact that he did not stay at the front probably saved his life.

After obtaining a professorship, he returned to Oxford, where he worked as a professor of English and literature. His hobby was generally linguistics, the study of Norse mythology and the Nordic languages. He also expanded his interest in inventing new languages. He approached this work responsibly and with precision; invented languages must have had a structure, logic and their own history. Some of the most famous languages he invented are quenya and sindarin. These elvish languages can be found in *The Lord of the Rings*. In his lifetime, Tolkien received an honorary doctorate in literature from Oxford University Order of the British Empire from Queen Elizabeth II.

J. R. R. Tolkien had one wife all his life. He met the love of his life at the age of 16. Edith Bratt became a role model for the Elven Princess Lúthien, whom we can meet especially in the work of *Silmarillion*. The fact that Tolkien had the name Lúthien carved on Edith's tombstone is the proof of the connection between this fictional character and his wife. He and his wife raised four children. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien died on 2 September 1973 and is buried in a place closely linked to his career - Wolvercote Cemetery, Oxford. Even his name is supplemented by the name of a fictional character - Beren, who is the fateful love of Lúthien.

3. 1. 2 The Authorship and Contribution

With his stories, J. R. R. Tolkien has undoubtedly become one of the most influential authors of fantasy literature ever. In essence, this eminent English writer is considered the founder of this genre and an unsurpassed creator of fantasy literature by a lot of experts.

The common connection between Tolkien's stories is space-time. It takes place in an imaginary Middle-earth inhabited by supernatural beings (hobbits, elves, dwarves, dragons, and others) and humans. Learning languages and mythology helped Tolkien concoct the history and language of Middle-earth. His works were drawn in every detail - the history of the fabled land, the map-based geography, the science. Thanks to many details, such as calendars and character lineages, the reader feels that Middle-earth really exists.

The Hobbit, or There and Back Again

The author originally did not write the story for the general public. He did not expect fictional stories set in a fictional country to attract adult readers, so he originally wrote them only for the amusement of his own children. The turning point came in 1936, when the unfinished manuscript fell into the hands of a publisher S. Dagnall, who was impressed by the story and persuaded Tolkien to agree with the publication. And so, the first edition of this novel was published in 1937. The book was immediately popular not only with children, but especially among adult readers. I have chosen *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* for the following analysis, because it was especially this work that caused the author's fame.

J. R. R. Tolkien found inspiration in Norse mythology from where he took the names of dwarfs, for example. Specifically, he used a poem by Volusp that we would find in the epic *Edda*. But it is not just Norse mythology, the author found the inspiration for some of the plots in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* in the Old English medieval epic poem *Beowulf*.

An unknown creature appears in the main role - a hobbit. David Colbert states in *The Magical Worlds of the Lord of the Rings* that there were various theories about how the word "hobbit" originated. Some mentioned a possible combination of the words "human" and "rabbit". It

would be consistent with the partial human appearance of hobbits and the place where these beings live - just as rabbits inhabit burrows. But the reality is much easier. Tolkien himself set the history of the term "hobbit" straight. He was bored while correcting the work of his students, so he just wrote: "*In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit,* " on a blank sheet of paper and coincidentally, this is exactly the sentence that begins his future novel. Tolkien's interest in Old English also had an influence on the naming of the main character and the creation of the fictional being, because the term "holbytla" in Old English refers to the builder of the burrows.¹² The term "hobbit", with which Tolkien enters literature, has become so original and popular that the work was included in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1970. Under the headword The Hobbit we can find the following description "... *hobbits are small, friendly creatures with big feet.*"¹³

As I have mentioned, the story takes place on a fictional continent - Middle-earth. Tolkien's mythical continent gives the impression of a country that predated Eurasia and Africa. As the author himself says in one of his letters, he puts the story into the 3rd age, a period roughly 6,000 years ago.

„I imagine the gap (between the Fall of Barad-dûr and modern times) to be about 6000 years... ”

Tolkien goes back to Norse mythology and Medieval English to name the space. Carter Lin in *Tolkien: A Look Behind The Lord of the Rings* presents the author's comments on the name Middle-earth, where he himself refers to an archaic name of the world. Carter also states in the publication that Middle-earth in the 3rd Age is much like Europe in the Middle Ages. What he sees as different is that humans inhabit the world with beings such as hobbits, goblins or dwarves.¹⁴ In *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, Hobbits are described as:

They are (or were) a little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded Dwarves. Hobbits have no beards. There is a little or no magic about them, except ordinary everyday sort which helps them to disappear quietly and quickly when large stupid folk like you and me com blundering along, making a noise like elephants which they can hear a mile off. They are inclined to be at in the stomach; They dress in bright colours(chiefly green and

¹² COLBERT, David. *The Magical Worlds of Lord of the Rings: The Amazing Myths, Legends and Facts Behind the Masterpiece*. 2002.

¹³ WILSON, F. P. *The Oxford dictionary of English proverbs*. 3rd ed. 1970.

¹⁴ CARTER, Lin. *Tolkien: a Look Behind the Lord of the Rings*. 1977.

*yellow); wear no shoes, because their feet grow natural leathery soles and thick warm brown hair like the stuff on their heads (which is curly)); have long clever brown fingers, good-natured faces, and laugh deep fruity laughs (especially after dinner, which they have twice a day when they can get it).*¹⁵

The novel begins in the Shire, a peaceful hobbit home that refers to the traditional English countryside. This is where the main character Bilbo Baggins lives, a hobbit who is respected and popular among others. The fact that he is financially secure is also evidenced by the name Baggins, which could be compared to the purse where the money used to be carried. Bilbo wants no adventure and wants to live a tranquil life. Like other Hobbits, he has a penchant for eating and smoking pipes. Therefore, a hobbit is considered an allegorization of a typical Englishman. We learn from Bilbo that he is from the House of Took, and so he has a little closer to adventure than the other hobbits. At first Bilbo Baggins shows to be an antihero, who is rather an outsider in the group, who prides himself primarily on his comfort. However, the cleverness and cunning of the little hobbit shows itself during the story, for example by outwitting Gollum or in the final battle with the dragon Smaug.

In general, the main character evolves and changes during the adventure. Bilbo Baggins initially accepts his role in the group because he is promised a big reward. However, he stops thinking about himself and his well-being during the journey and he even saves lives for himself and his new friends several times. The most fundamental transformation comes in the final battle to which the work is directed. Here Bilbo Baggins voluntarily gives up the promised reward in the hope that there might be peace in Middle-earth. So the fearful, selfish antihero becomes the brave, good-hearted hero who takes part in defeating the great evil represented here by the dragon Smaug.

*“Bilbo was now beginning to feel really uncomfortable. Whenever Smaug’s roving eye, seeking for him in the shadows, flashed across him, he trembled, and an unaccountable desire seized hold of him to rush out and reveal himself and tell all the truth to Smaug. In fact he was in grievous danger of coming under the dragon-spell. But plucking up courage he spoke again.”*¹⁶

¹⁵ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. 2002.

¹⁶ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. 2002.

The fact that an individual, who is weak in the beginning ultimately saves the world is a typical feature of fantasy literature. The key character who brings the main character the task is Gandalf, referred to as Gandalf the Grey. In the work he appears by the name Mithrandir (name among elves) or Tharkun (name among dwarves). At first glance Gandalf might appear to be an ordinary old man in a grey cloak, leaning on a staff. The opposite is true. He is a very powerful character of the wizard, who, as Carter says in *Tolkien: A Look Behind The Lord of the Rings*, is the sole bearer of all information. Therefore, we can consider Gandalf the Grey as a so-called master. It means the person who helps the main character with his direction, guides him, teaches him and believes in his uniqueness.¹⁷

*“All that unsuspecting Bilbo saw that morning was an old man with a staff. He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a silver scarf over which a white beard hung down below his waist, and immense black boots.”*¹⁸

No less important characters are the other members of the expedition - the dwarves. Gandalf interrupts Bilbo's peaceful life by bringing 13 dwarves (we can point out one of the magic numbers here) into his hobbit hole. Dwarves are here as presented small-sized beings (120-150 cm) that are very combative, stubborn and brave. Here appear the dwarves: Thorin Oakenshield, Balin, Dwalin, Kili, Fili, Dori, Nori, Ori, Oin, Gloin, Bifur, Bofur and Bombur. Their goal is to bring back their treasure, which is hidden in the Lonely Mountain. To obtain the treasure, however, it is necessary to defeat the main evil - the dragon Smaug. The red-gold dragon drove Thorin's ancestors from the Iron Mountains. It is very dangerous and vicious, his main weakness is greed.

The character, who also appears in Tolkien's next work is Gollum. A being that was originally also a hobbit. In *The Hobbit*, Gollum is depicted as follows:

*“Deep down here by the dark water lived old Gollum, a small slimy creature. I don't know where he came from, nor who or what he was. He was Gollum - as dark as darkness, except for two big round pale eyes in his thin face.”*¹⁹

¹⁷ CARTER, Lin. *Tolkien: a Look Behind the Lord of the Rings*. 1977.

¹⁸ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. 2002.

¹⁹ TOLKIEN, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. 2002.

He is one of the first owners of Sauron's ring after his fall. Rather than being the owner, Sméagol (Gollum) is a slave to the ring that means all the world to him. Gollum avoids the light and therefore lives in a cave. This is the place where Bilbo meets him. He proves his cunning and guesses Sméagol's riddle. It is in this scene when the ring is stolen from Gollum and the hobbit Bilbo Baggins becomes its new owner.

The group encounters the elves during the expedition. Tolkien depicts them here as beautiful, slender and longing for peace. The first meeting comes in Rivendell, where they have a good experience with elves. Second meeting - in Mirkwood, on the other hand, is an obstacle to the expedition, because the elves there are not friendly to them, they even capture them. Other negative characters that are an obstacle to the expedition include wargs, ogres or goblins.

The main theme of the work is the theme of the journey, which is already indicated in the title of the work. Bilbo Baggins, along with the dwarves, sets out on a long and difficult journey to steal Smaug's treasure and return it to its original owners. As I have already mentioned their guide, the mentor Gandalf helps them not to stray.

The journey itself begins in the peaceful home of Bilbo Baggins - Shire. Along with the expedition, we come to the Wilderness, Rivendells, the misty mountains, Sklabbu, Mirkwood to Lonely Mountain. Tolkien provided his work with a map that makes the work real and the reader can orient himself well.

An important feature of fantasy is the presence of magic. This is controlled primarily by the wizard Gandalf the Grey, but also by Beorn, at whom the group stops. The main magical artifact in the work is the ring, which allows its owner to become invisible. His negative magical powers will be fully reflected in *The Lord of the Rings*. Besides the ring, there are other magical objects in *The Hobbit*, such as weapons that can draw attention to the presence of Orcs. It is the sword that had the ability that saved Bilbo Baggins from Gollum in the cave. Instead, they got to the riddles. The motif of the sword may refer us to Arthurian legends.

In the work we also encounter a forest motif, which represents the Mirkwood. Tolkien paints it as a dark place full of strange, dangerous creatures. The members of the expedition are strongly warned before entering Mirkwood.

As I have mentioned earlier, the period of childhood when J. R. R. Tolkien lived in the English countryside, influenced the author's strong relationship to nature. This element also appears in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. You can understand from the story that even Hobbits have a strong positive relationship with nature. The colour of their clothes suggests this, as they prefer green and yellow, and they are engaged in agriculture.

The Lord of the Rings

After the great success of the fantasy novel *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, a trilogy is created that incorporates the following works: *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), *Two Towers* (1954) and *The Return of the King* (1955). J. R. R. Tolkien had originally intended the work to consist of six books published in one volume. However, due to the pressure of the publisher, Lord of the Rings is ultimately conceived as a trilogy.

Like *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* is set in Middle-earth. Here we can find other connections with the first work of the author. The main character again becomes the hobbit of the House of Baggins - Frodo Baggins, who, like Bilbo, embarks on a difficult journey. He is also accompanied by a faithful company, and his mentor is the wizard Gandalf the Grey, who in the course becomes Gandalf the White. What is different in the trilogy is the composition of Frodo's company, which consists of three other hobbits (Samwise "Sam" Gamgee, Meriadoc "Merry" Brandybuck, Peregrin "Pippin" Took), two people (Boromir, Aragorn, the dwarf (Gimli) and the elf (Legolas). We can also see the work with magic numbers - seven accompanying members, nine members in all. In the trilogy we also meet the character of Gollum, who is constantly trying to get a powerful ring for himself.

The evil in *The Lord of the Rings* is represented by Sauron and his powerful ring, which we have already met in *The Hobbit*. The purpose of the community is to protect the ring from Sauron and his army, to bring it to the place where it originated - Mordor. Compared to *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, the trilogy is far more complicated and dark. The change of target group is consistent with this, as *The Lord of the Rings* is already intended for adult readers.

Silmarillion

Although the first ideas for Silmarillion came back to 1917, the book did not reach the market until 1977. Tolkien's son Christopher is behind its publication because J. R. R. Tolkien did not finish the book in its complete form.

Tolkien wanted to publish Silmarillion after the success of his first book originally. But he was rejected and asked to write a sequel to *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*. So he devoted himself to the creation of *The Lord of the Rings*, where he included a lot of stories that were originally the part of Silmarillion. These are references to an earlier past.

Given that the work focuses on the history of Middle-earth from the earliest times, it can be considered as a chronicle.

3. 2 C.S. Lewis

3. 1. 1 The Biography of the Author

Clive Staples Lewis was born on 29 November 1898 in Belfast, Ireland, as the second son of Albert James Lewis and Flora Augusta Lewis. But he is known more as Jack. He chose that name because of a sad incident that happened when Lewis was four. It was at this age that Lewis's dog Jacksie died because he was hit by a car. At an early age, the boy showed an interest in literature. Not only he read a lot, but he liked to create. He liked to complete his stories about animals with his own illustrations. His inspiration for the following works was mainly Nordic songs, Nordic, Irish and Greek mythology.

His studies at Oxford University College were interrupted by his entry into the British Army and participation in the First World War. After being discharged from the army, he returned to Oxford in 1918. This place was fatal for Lewis because he became a professor of English and met J. R. R. Tolkien here. He also belonged to the informal literary group Inklings.

Christian faith followed Lewis throughout his life. It was also influenced by the origin of his mother, who was the daughter of an Irish Anglican pastor. During puberty, he stopped believing in God and became an atheist. Under the influence of the creation of George MacDonald and Tolkien, he returned to the faith at the age of 33 and joined the Church of England. Thanks to this he met an American writer Joy Gresham, who was of Jewish origin but after a period of atheism she became a Christian. Gresham divorced and moved to England with her two sons. Lewis and Gresham got along very well, and in order to stay in England, they got married. After her death, which deeply affected Lewis, he took care of both her sons. Elder brother Warren was a great support to him throughout.

Lewis had his first kidney problems at the age of sixty-two. Alternately, his health improved. But two years later in November 22, 1963, Lewis collapsed and died in his bedroom.

3. 1. 2 The Authorship and Contribution

Clive Staples Lewis is of Irish origin, but is one of the most successful authors of British fantasy literature. The paradox was, as Stone Murray states in *C. S. Lewis: Creator of Narnia*, that Lewis wrote his first literary texts for children and he gave them to read to his friends at the Inklings Literary Club. Tolkien, who belonged to this club, advised his friend to stop writing because he found the texts too boring. Despite it he did get discouraged by Tolkien, and so a cycle of seven books could be created, taking readers into the fabled world of Narnia.²⁰

The Chronicles of Narnia

The Chronicles of Narnia is a seven-part cycle of children's fantasy novels, created by the author from 1949 to 1954. It is interesting how the idea of writing a work, which would convey the basic Christian ideas to children's readers, came about. Stone Murray mentions that Lewis granted asylum along with his brother to several children who were evacuated from London during World War II. Lewis then was telling them about God and made up stories of his own. After their departure, he decided to continue creating stories for children

²⁰ MURRAY STONE, Elaine. *C. S. Lewis: Creator of Narnia*. 2001.

with religious motifs. And they are the Christian motifs that permeate the saga that make the author different from other fantasy stories writers. Lewis himself revealed that he had been inspired by George MacDonald's Christian fairy tales when writing *The Chronicles of Narnia*.²¹

The books were originally published in this order: *The Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* (1950), *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Last Battle* (1956). The individual parts are sorted by year. However, the works were arranged differently: *The Magician's Nephew* (1955), *The Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* (1950), *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *The Last Battle* (1956). Of course, this is only the recommended order for reading and the correct order of the books is still hotly debated among fans.

In addition to Christian motifs, Lewis also uses Greek and Roman mythology. Ancient mythology shows itself, for example, in the selection of some characters - such as centaurs, minotaurs or faun. The faun Mr. Tumnus is the first creature Lucy encounters in the fabled work in the work *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe*. Mr Tumnus is described in the work as follows:

*From the waist upwards he was like a man, but his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail, but Lucy did not notice this at first because it was neatly caught up over the arm that held the umbrella so as to keep it from trailing in the snow. He had a red woollen muffler round his neck and his skin was rather reddish too. He had a strange, but pleasant little face, with a short pointed beard and curly hair, and out of the hair there stuck two horns, one on each side of his forehead.*²²

The reference to Greek mythology is also found in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, where, Caspian symbolizes the figure of the fabled Odyssey. Caspian must also be restrained here, so as not to succumb to the siren's call.

²¹ MURRAY STONE, Elaine. *C. S. Lewis: Creator of Narnia*. 2001.

²² LEWIS, C. S. *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe*. 1994.

Not only fanciful creatures appear in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, but also humans. Human heroes differ from one novel to another. For example, in *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe*, four Pevensie siblings enter Narnia. Different attributes are ascribed to them. Here, we also encounter Christian motifs, the character of Edmund allegorically symbolizes Judas because he represents the figure of a traitor. On the contrary, the youngest of the siblings, Lucy, already mentioned above, represents a positive human figure, mainly because of her kindness and selflessness. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* we meet Eustace, who is a cousin of the Pevensie siblings. This character goes through a great development in the work, because he enters the action as a negative character who symbolizes greed. But he gradually changes and becomes a positive hero. His transformation is completed by washing in water, which is meant to cleanse from the previous sins. In this act we can find an allegory for baptism.

The purely negative main character, who permeates the first two volumes is the White Witch Jadis. Although white might evoke feelings of purity and innocence, the opposite is true. Here the white color refers to snow and ice that is cold. And so is Jadis - cold and heartless. Therefore, it could symbolize the main evil - Satan, the devil.

The opposite is the main character, who goes through all the volumes and who represents bravery, valour and courage. This purely positive figure is the lion Aslan. Here Lewis also works with symbolism (lion = king of animals). Besides Aslan being a leader, we can consider him an allegory for the creator. We can start from the work of *The Magician's Nephew*, where Aslan creates Narnia and breathes life into it. There is also a reference to the biblical flood of the world and the construction of Noah's Ark.

*And now, for the first time, the Lion was quite silent. He was going to and fro among the animals. And every now and then he would go up to two of them (always two at a time) and touch their noses with his. He would touch two beavers among all the beavers, two leopards among all the leopards, one stag and one deer among all the deer, and leave the rest. Some sorts of animal he passed over altogether. But the pairs which he had touched instantly left their own kinds and followed him.*²³

In other works, Aslan rather represents Jesus Christ. In the part of *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe*, Aslan sacrifices himself for Edmund and dies. Here is a direct reference to Jesus,

²³ LEWIS, C. S. *The Magician's Nephew*. 2001.

he is the one who sacrificed himself to redeem the sins of others. We see similarity in individual details. Like Jesus, Aslan is humiliated before his death. And just as Jesus he will rise from the dead, because love and faith have more power than evil and betrayal. Aslan can be considered a master figure throughout the series of *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

C. S. Lewis works with the real fictional world in his novels - human world, simultaneously. Creates a parallel to the fantasy fictional world - Narnia. Lewis took over the name of the fantasy fiction world from an Italian locality. But Narnia looks more like Lewis's native Northern Ireland.

Narnia is a very diverse country full of strange creatures, but it is not just animals that can talk. In Narnia, we also find, for example, talking trees that can move. There are several routes to Narnia, but travelers must always use the portal for the transition between the real world and Narnia. This is, for example, a wardrobe or a picture. But, importantly, only children can enter Narnia.

As I have already mentioned, Narnia was created by the lion Aslan as an allegorical biblical Creator in a part *The Magician's Nephew*.

*"Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters."*²⁴

The series of seven novels is closed with the final episode of *The Last Battle*, when we learn about the last days of Narnia and its downfall. The downfall of Narnia is indispensable from an educational point of view, because there has been a great abuse of faith and sins have prevailed over good deeds. The very title of the last novel in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series brings us to the reference to the biblical Last Judgment, when it is decided who goes to paradise and who goes to hell. Paradise is symbolized by Aslan's empire, where everyone lives happily ever after.

Narnia differs from the human fiction world not only in that magic works here, but also in the concept of time, which in the fabled realm passes much faster than in the real human world.

²⁴ LEWIS, C. S. *The Magician's Nephew*. 2001.

An important theme that appears in the series of novels *The Chronicles of Narnia* is the theme of the journey. The journey can be seen as an expedition for adventure and knowledge of a new land. But with Lewis, this motive takes on even more important meaning. And this is the spiritual path, where the individual main characters experience spiritual growth, their character changes, they mature. Their path is therefore spiritual and the aim is to arrive at faith. Here again we can refer to the character of Edmund or Eustace.

3. 3 J.K. Rowling

3. 3. 1. The Biography of the Author

Joanne Rowling is one of the most important living authors of fantasy literature today. This British writer, who writes under the name Joanne Kathleen Rowling or the pseudonym Robert Galbraith, is best known for her seven-part saga of a little wizard Harry Potter.

Rowling was born on 31 July 1965 in Gloucestershire. She was interested in literature from an early age when she wrote her first work at the age of 11. She liked to read her fictional stories to her younger sister, Dianne. At her parents' instigation, she began studying French and even spent one year studying in Paris. She studied at Exeter University, where she studied French and classical literature.

There are many legends about the creation of the first episode about the wizard boy. The idea for writing the story supposedly was given to the author during the train journey from Manchester to London, when she managed to invent the basic plot and most of the characters. Most of the work on the *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* took place in Edinburgh, where she and her daughter Jessica Rowling Arantes went after a failed first marriage.

As the first volume aroused a great response from readers, Rowling wrote six more volumes: *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. In the spirit of these books, she also published *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*

and *Quidditch through the ages*. Last but not least, she created the drama *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, which is a follow-up to the *Harry Potter* heptalogy. However, the main character is already an adult in this drama and his son assumes the role of the main child hero. Due to the high popularity of the Harry Potter stories, all seven books were filmed.

Rowling also adapted the fictional wizarding world in her screenplays for *The Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *The Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald*. Rowling sets the plot of these films before events concerning *Harry Potter*. The works are connected by the character of Dumbledore.

Besides the fantasy books, the author has published several real-world books, such as *The Cuckoo's Calling*, but under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith.

Currently, Rowling lives with her second husband, Dr. Neil Murray, with whom she has two children: a son, David Gordon Rowling Murray, and a daughter, Mackenzie Jean Rowling Murray. In her professional life she is working on a continuation of scripts and a new fairy tale called *The Christmas Pig* which is expected to be released in the autumn of 2021. Besides, Rowling applies to charity. She has her own charity, Lumos, which was named after one of the basic spells with which a wizard can magic light with his wand.

3. 3. 2 The Authorship and Contribution

In the previous chapter dedicated to J. K. Rowling, I have mentioned her existing literary work. I will focus on the Harry Potter heptalogy in the next chapter, because this series has made the author famous.

The intention of the series for the reader (child reader) is to grow up just like the main character. This corresponds to the changing atmosphere of the individual parts, when the part by part makes the atmosphere darker and more mysterious. In the first part, the main protagonist celebrates his eleventh birthday, so one might conclude that the first part should be intended for children of this age (in our country this age corresponds to the pupils of the fifth grade of primary school). Each volume represents one year in Harry Potter's life. The wizard celebrates his 17th birthday in the latest volume of *Harry Potter and the Deathly*

Hallows. It means that he will come of age in the fiction wizarding world. From the point of view the darkest of the whole series is this volume, the motif of death and brutality grows.

We can see a connection with the work *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the number of volumes, where we also have seven parts. In terms of numerical symbolism, seven is the number of completeness and perfection. This is not the only form between the work of C. S. Lewis and J. K. Rowling, because here also we have a real fiction world of people and a fiction wizarding world. It is also necessary to use the portal to enter the wizarding world. It is mainly King's cross station and its platforms 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ from where the Hogwarts express train departs. They can also use a special telephone box or flush toilet.

Hogwarts and its surroundings represent the fictitious fantasy world in the work. Even if we do not find this world on any map, we know from the context that it is located in England. The human world without magic is Little Whinging, the place where Harry Potter's relatives live. Wizards are common in the world of men, but they mustn't do magic. Even so, they are mainly suspects in their clothing - various robes for "muggles". In *Harry Potter and Philosophy: If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*, the authors rate muggles as very oblivious beings who are primarily interested in themselves.²⁵ The two fiction worlds are closely interconnected. It is evidenced by the fact that Ron Weasley's brothers study in real places - Charlie studies dragons in Romania and Bill works in Africa.

As I have already mentioned, most of the action takes place mainly in Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. This is reminiscent of a normal British boarding school, where students start at the age of 11 and they have been studying there for seven years. Mathias Jung refers to Hogwarts as a multicultural school. Pupils struggle with bullying as in the real world. There are even manifestations of racism, and Jung also draws attention to references to Nazi ideology. This is manifested mainly in connection with the Slytherin College, because it includes pupils with a purebred magic line. Such pupils consider themselves better and superior. They show their hatred towards pupils who come from a mixed family and, above all, against pupils who have muggles as both parents. They refer to these pupils with the derogatory slur "mudblood".²⁶

²⁵ BAGGETT, D., KLEIN, S. E., et. al. *Harry Potter and Philosophy: If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*. 2019.

²⁶ JUNG, Mathias. *Kouzlo sebeuskutečnění: Harry Potter v nás*. 2012.

The school has been divided into four colleges since its inception (according to four founders): Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, Slytherin. Pupils are assigned to their house dormitory by the Sorting Hat after arrival, which, according to key characteristics, will place them in the appropriate house dormitory.

*You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring, nerve and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart,
You might belong in Hufflepuff,
Where they are just and loyal,
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true
And unafraid of toil,
Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,
If you've a ready mind,
Where those of wit and learning,
Will always find their kind,
Or perhaps Slytherin
You'll make your real friends,
Those cunning folk use any means
To achieve their ends.²⁷*

The symbol of each dormitory also corresponds to the typical characteristics. The faithful and brave Gryffindor has a lion, the wise Ravenclaw symbolizes the eagle, The Slytherin has a badger in its emblem, and the Slytherin has a snake.

Besides the students and their teachers, there are also ghosts in the castle. Every ghost belongs to a certain dormitory. We meet Nearly Headless Nick or Rowena Ravenclaw. There also will be the ghost of the killed student - Moaning Myrtle. And Peeves, who troubles students and pupils with vicious jokes. The appearance of the castle and the presence of ghosts can remind us of medieval legends.

²⁷ ROWLING, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. 2002.

On the boundaries of the castle grounds is the Forbidden Forest. Same as Tolkien, the forest here represents a place of peril. That is why students have a strict ban on entering the forest. Here, the main character encounters the various supernatural beings that are typical of fantasy literature. Also he meets centaurs or unicorns.

In the term of time, Rowling, unlike Tolkien, focuses on her present. It is untypical that time flows at the same rate as in the real world. We still allude to time manipulation. In the *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, we learn of a magic stone from which it is possible to create a magical elixir of immortality. Thanks to it, its owner, Nicolas Flamel, is celebrating his 666th birthday and continues to live happily in Devon. Time manipulation is also found in the third volume of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Hermione can study several subjects here at the same time, thanks to a time-turner. The time-turner will then play an important role in saving the godfather of Harry Potter.

As the title of the series itself suggests, the main character is a boy named Harry Potter. Harry, as a child, lost his parents because of evil, and grew up in the Muggle family of his aunt and uncle in Little Whinging. His substitute family knows about the magic world, but they take it as something unnatural and wrong. That's why they treat the boy badly. Harry acts as an outsider who is even bullied by his cousin in the human fiction world. The boy has no idea of his origins. Also he does not know of the existence of a magical world. The boy's life turns upside down when he reaches the age of eleven and, with Hagrid's help, reaches Hogwarts. On the other hand, everyone knows Harry and his past in the magical world. He's a legend for wizards. Everyone recognizes him primarily because of the scar, which looks like a lightning bolt. Lord Voldemort caused him this scar on the fatal night, when he killed his parents and tried to kill the boy unsuccessfully.

We see physical and spiritual development of the main character in individual volumes. Harry Potter overcomes various pitfalls and fights evil in every volume. Almost always, evil has something to do with the representative of the main evil in this fantasy series, Lord Voldemort.

Even here, the main hero does not fight alone. He has a company that supports him. His company consists of Herminone and Ron, Harry's best friends. But other classmates and magical creatures, such as the Dobby household elf, contribute to winning the good.

The character of the master, who accompanies the main character, gives him his experience and wisdom in this fantasy series. That, of course, is the headmaster of Hogwarts School Albus Dumbledore. He shows Harry his way through life and helps him find his way in the fight against evil. Besides he also helps the boy to know himself and reveal his past and his destiny.

The main evil in the whole series is Voldemort, who is also named as “the Dark Lord”, “He Who Must Not Be Named” or “You-Know-Who”. As I have already mentioned, Voldemort appears as a negative character in almost all volumes. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the weakened Voldemort is part of Professor Quirrell and he wants to gain immortality using the philosopher's stone. Harry fights the first Horcrux - the diary of Voldemort from the days of his studies in the second volume. Here we learn Voldemort's real name - Tom Marvolo Riddle. And we also find that Voldemort is of mixed origin - mother witch and father Muggle. We do not meet Voldemort until the fourth part, when the Dark Lord regains the human body at the end of the book. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, the entire Magic Society will be convinced of Voldemort's existence. Harry will also find that he and Voldemort are bound by a prophecy. Rowling reveals to readers the full past and origins of Voldemort in the sixth volume along with the discovery of some of the horcruxes. The power of the Dark Lord culminates in the final volume of heptalogy, when all seems lost. Until the author puts cards on the table and the main hero understands why he is so much connected with Voldemort (he can talk to snakes, he can hear other horcruxes, he can get Voldemorts in his head). Harry Potter had become Voldemort's unwanted horcrux. Unwittingly, Voldemort created a total of seven horcruxes (Tom Riddle's diary, Marvolo Gaunt's Ring, Salazar Slytherin's Locket, Helga Hufflepuff's Cup, Rowena Ravenclaw's Diadem, Nagini the Snake and part of his soul had been put into Harry). Here we again allude to a magic number seven.

Professor Snape is also a very important character. All other characters (except Harry Potter) can be considered as schematic. It is possible to recognize, which character tends to be good and which to be evil. Snape has been a negative character for readers since the first volume, because he treats the main protagonist badly. The negative impression of this character underscores the fact we learn that he belonged to the Death Eaters (a narrow circle of Voldemort supporters). The very conclusion reveals that Snape does not belong to the side of evil. We learn that he has loved the mother of Harry Potter with all his heart since his early childhood and he has sacrificed his life to help fight evil.

“I have spied for you, and lied for you, put myself in mortal danger for you. Everything was supposed to be to keep Lily Potter’s son safe. Now you tell me you have been raising him like a pig for slaughter - ‘ But this is touching, Severus, ‘said Dumbledore seriously. ‘Have you grown to care for the boy, after all?’ ‘For him?’ shouted Snape. ‘Expecto patronum!’ From the tip of his wand burst the silver doe: she landed on the office floor, bounded once across the office and soared out of the window. Dumbledore watched her fly away, and as her silvery glow faded he turned back to Snape, and his eyes were full of tears. ‘After all this time?’ ‘Always,’ said Snape.”²⁸

The penultimate volume of the series is named after Snape, which proves he is a key character. He's the half-blood prince.

Magical objects are an integral part of the story. Every wizard buys a magic wand before coming to the magic school. Wizards can travel using brooms, floo powder or a portkey. We must also not forget the three magical objects that are crucial in the fight against evil - the deathly hallows (a cloak of invisibility, the Resurrection Stone and the Elder Wand).

Besides magical objects we encounter a large number of magical beings in the work. We have already mentioned the centaurs that inhabit the Forbidden Forest. Merpeople live in the lake. Rowling works in the fourth and seventh works with the fabled character of the dragon. As with Tolkien and Lewis, dragons protect treasures and valuable objects (eggs or safes at the Gringotts Wizarding Bank). Goblins also appear here, as in Tolkien's creation. Rowling is based on a similar description, but they are different in character. We also encounter giants, half-giants, house-elves or werewolves in this heptalogy. The specific supernatural being are the Dementors who feed on human happiness and can suck the soul out of person with their kisses.

An important motif of the whole series is the motif of friendship. The main hero is experiencing his adventures in the company of his friends, Both Ron and Hermione complement Harry. It can be said that without their help, the main hero would have no chance of success. For this reason, Harry Potter does not destroy all the Horcruxes himself: Ron destroys the medallion by a Gryffindor's sword, Hermione stabs the cup with a Basilisk Fang, and Neville cuts off Nagini's head.

²⁸ ROWLING, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. 2015.

A very common motif is the motif of death. As I have already mentioned the motif of death is more common, especially in the last three volumes. Significant characters are dying. It is important to note here that these are not just negative characters. Cedric Diggory, an innocent student, dies in the fourth volume. Harry Potter loses his godfather Sirius Black in the fifth volume. In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Dumbledore is murdered. His death is very emotional because he is killed by Severus Snape. Harry has no idea that this death is part of a big plan. He considered Snape's act as treason. The whole struggle of good and evil escalates in the last volume. And that's why the number of dead from is the highest. Dobby (house-elf) saves Harry and his friends' lives as he transfers them from Malfoy Manor. He died because of it. Fred Weasley, Nymphadora Tonks or Remus Lupin also died in the final volume. But we must not forget the death of Severus Snape, who sacrificed his life to protect Harry Potter.

The theme of the riddle also permeates the series, because in many situations Harry Potter and his company must prove their cleverness and wit. The theme of the sword (Gryffindor's sword) or the theme of the mirror (The Mirror of Erised) also appears in the work. The theme of the journey is also important. It is manifested as the instigative path of a major hero who fulfils demanding trials and he is often tempted to join the dark side. The main character matures and acquires the confidence during the journey which is needed for the final fight in which he defeats the main evil. The theme of the journey then passes through the final work, which is built on the pilgrimage of Harry Potter and his friends (Ron and Hermione) to find and destroy all the Horcruxes so that they can confront Voldemort and save not only the world of wizards, but also the world of men.

4 CONCLUSION

Bachelor's thesis titled *Contemporary British Fantasy Literature: An Analysis of Selected Authors and their Contribution to the Genre* is divided into two parts. The first part deals with fantasy literature theory, general fantasy development and the classification of this popular literary genre.

This part explains the differences between fantasy literature and science fiction. An important element for fantasy literature, which is usually parallel to the human fictional world is the supernatural, magic, the imaginary world. A fundamental difference is the time in which the story takes place - fantasy literature puts the plot most often into the past.

In the definition of fantasy we based on the definition from C. N. Manlove:

„A fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of the supernatural with which the mortal characters in the story on the readers become on at least partly familiar terms.”²⁹

Folk literature plays an important role in the development of fantasy. The main common feature with myths is the uniqueness of the main character, who is accompanied and supported by the company on the road in the fight against evil. The symbolism of numbers (especially the number 3 and its multiples, or the number seven) goes into fantasy literature from fairy tales. There is also a happy ending in fairy tales, when good wins over evil. With myths, fantasy literature has a common view of death, because it is not uncommon for positive characters to die.

In terms of subgenres we discuss high or epic fantasy, low fantasy, magical realism, sword and sorcery, dark fantasy, fables and superhero fiction in this work. We also mention Urban fantasy and Young Adult fantasy. It should be noted here that subgenres are constantly evolving and intersecting.

From the general features of fantasy, we deal with worlds in fantasy literature. Most often, authors create two worlds - the fictional human world and the fictional fantasy world. Different portals (such as a wardrobe or platform) are used to cross between these worlds. Next we concentrate on magical beings and magical objects. The main motifs of fantasy

²⁹ MANLOVE, C. N. *Modern Fantasy*. 1978.

literature is the battle of good and evil, where both sides are always represented by specific characters or beings. The main hero goes through an evolution very often. From an ordinary character (in some cases an outsider), he becomes an exceptional personality who is destined to destroy the main evil. But he can't do that without the help of his loyal company (fellowship) and the character of the master who educates the main character and helps him reach the goal.

The task of the protagonist is always linked to the motifs of the journey. At the end is the final battle against evil. The path here is understood in two ways - a particular journey and a spiritual journey. The motif of death is also one of the other motifs.

The second part focuses on the most important representatives of British fantasy literature (J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, J. K. Rowling). First of all is always introduced a personal life of the author and then the creation and contribution to fantasy literature.

The unsurpassed author of fantasy literature is considered J. R. R. Tolkien, who is also considered the founder of this genre. In the Bachelor thesis we are more concerned with the work of *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, because this work made him famous and led him to write more books about the fabled Middle-earth. The author enriched the fantasy world with a new literary character - a hobbit. He also creates very detailed maps for the fictional Middle-earth, an elaborate history and specific languages for each race.

The second author is C. S. Lewis, a close friend of Tolkien. We introduce more closely the haptology of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which, in a non-violent allegorical form, convey biblical stories and have an educational effect on young readers. The main character (Lion Aslan) appears as the Creator, or Jesus Christ in the series. Lewis also deals with individual sins and bad human characteristics such as greed, laziness or envy.

Next we introduce one of the most successful contemporary writers - J. K. Rowling. At work, we discuss the haptology of the wizard apprentice Harry Potter. Rowling creates a fictional world full of magic in the series. This world exists parallel to the human fiction world. In her work we find common features with the aforementioned authors. For example, we can mention the motif of the portal between parallel worlds, the motif of the forest as a dangerous environment, or the concept of the dragon as a being protecting something valuable. The interesting fact is that the author lets her reader mature along with the main character and thus changes the atmosphere of the individual volumes. She brings new modern elements to

fantasy literature, combined with mythical motifs. She creates an elaborate wizarding world with a specific vocabulary and new magical beings. The Hogwarts setting and the story of the boy with the scar on his forehead give not only today's young generation, but also those older readers the feeling that something magical can happen to them.

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6 ABSTRACT

Bachelor's thesis titled *Contemporary British Fantasy Literature: An Analysis of Selected Authors and their Contribution to the Genre* is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the definition of fantasy and its sub-genres. It also discusses the influence of fairy tale and myth on the development of fantasy. I also mention the difference between fantasy and sci-fi literature. Individual important motives are discussed, which appear in fantasy literature - the motif of good and evil, the motif of the journey, the motif of the company, the motif of the master, the motif of death or the motif of the mission.

The second part focuses on the most important representatives of British fantasy literature (J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, J.K. Rowling). First of all is introduced a personal life of the authors and then the creation and contribution to fantasy literature. The selected works discuss specific features of fantasy literature with a focus on general contribution to the world's fantasy literature.

7 RESUMÉ

Bakalářská práce s názvem *Contemporary British Fantasy Literature: An Analysis of Selected Authors and Their Contribution to the Genre* je rozdělena na dvě základní části. První část se zabývá vymezení pojmu fantasy a jeho podžánrům. Dále se zde rozebírá vliv pohádky a mýtů na vývoj fantasy. Uvádíme také rozdíl mezi fantasy a sci-fi literaturou. Rozebrány jsou jednotlivé důležité motivy, které se ve fantasy literatuře objevují - motiv dobra a zla, motiv cesty, motiv družiny, motiv mistra, motiv smrti nebo motiv poslání.

Druhá část je věnována jednotlivým významným britským autorům fantasy literatury. Představen je život a tvorba J. R. R. Tolkiena, C. S. Lewise a J. K. Rowlingové. Na vybraných dílech jsou rozebrány konkrétní znaky fantasy literatury se zaměřením na obecný přínos do světové fantasy literatury.