

Arda İZGÖRDEN

D1129-0065

**TED ANKARA COLLEGE FOUNDATION  
PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL**

**INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE  
PROGRAM**

**ENGLISH B CATEGORY 3  
EXTENDED ESSAY**

**Arda İzgödden**

**Supervisor: Dilek Göktaş**

**Candidate Number: 001129-0065**

**Word Count: 4262**

**Research Question:** What are the effects of possessing and corrupting powers of the One Ring and Sauron itself on the characters and events throughout the novel.

## **ABSTRACT**

This extended essay is an analysis of the powers of the One Ring and Sauron himself throughout the novel. It investigates their effects both on characters and the story. These powers are most likely possession and corruption. They are very important and decisive for the story. As the story continues the relation between those powers and storyline gets clearer. At the end of the story all these elements are connected with the themes and every other detail. Even these powers cannot change the course of the novel and the good wins again.

# Table of Contents

1.Introduction.....	1
2.Analysis of the effects of the ring on the ring bearers in chronologic order.....	2
3.Effects of the Ring on the other characters.....	5
4.Saurons powers and other details in the story.....	6
5.Brief summary of the ending and conclusion.....	8
6.References.....	9

The Lord of The Rings is written by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. J.R.R Tolkien was born on 3.Jan.1892 in South Africa. He held several teaching positions, then he had a child. During his early teaching career, Tolkien wrote several mythology-inspired short stories and worked on invented languages, often referred to as Tolkien languages. He returned to Oxford in 1925 as a professor and contributed some academic writings. Tolkien was a founding member of a group devoted to writing, known as "The Inklings," which included many prominent members, such as CS Lewis. In 1936, a portion of a story about a hobbit caught the attention of a publishing house employee, and The Hobbit was published in 1937. Its immediate success led to a 10-year writing process to create The Lord of the Rings, which included three volumes, The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers and The Return of the King. Both The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit remain popular, and Peter Jackson's cinematic interpretation of The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit has fueled even more interest in Tolkien.

Shortly J.R.R Tolkien's novel depicts the epic conflict between good and evil. In the mystical land of middle earth this common conflict turns into a breathtaking journey and the tale of nine brave hero. This uncommon party including one elf, four hobbit, one wizard, one dwarf and two men were chosen to destroy The One Ring. "The one ring to rule them all, one ring to find them, one ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them in the land of Mordor where the Shadows lie"(Tolkien 66). Even in a story like that the corruption and possession of power is inevitable.

Before the time that the trilogy and even The Hobbit takes part the Rings of Power was forged by the followers of dark lord Sauron. "Three for the Elven-kings under the sky, Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of Stone, Nine for the Mortal Men doomed to die and one for the Dark Lord on his dark throne" (Tolkien 66). The rings were designed by the Sauron himself in order to control the others by his own ring. But his plan was not completely successful the Elves hid their rings and did not use them and the Dwarves' rings did not respond to the One's control as Sauron expected. But the nine mortal men who wore the rings became Nazgul, Saurons most loyal and deadliest servants. It begins in the Shire where the hobbits live in peace and away from the outer world. A young hobbit called Frodo chosen by the wizard Gandalf to bear the ring until a decision made by Elrond about the future of the ring. Frodo's gardener Sam and his second cousins Merry and Pippin takes a long journey to the Rivendel which is an elven settlement ruled by Elrond. In Rivendel where the fellowship is

established the real quest for the destruction of the ring begins. A fellowship that consist of two men ( Aragorn and Boromir), one elf (Legolas), one dwarf (Gimli), four Hobbits (Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin) and a wizard (Gandalf). First in a dangerous dungeon Gandalf sacrifices himself in order to save the others. Then Boromir dies while fighting against the orcs and Hobbits get kidnapped by the orcs. At that moment the fellowship falls apart and 3 different storyline follows. At one side Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli tries to protect the lands of men from the Orcs, in another Frodo and Sam tries to go to Mordor to destroy the ring where it forged and lastly Merry and Pippin tries to find help in order to aid their alliance.

When the One Ring forged it only obeyed its first and only master Sauron. Of course the ring has some powers other than controlling and finding the others. A mortal wearing the Ring was made effectively invisible except to those able to perceive the non-physical world, with only a thin, shaky shadow discernible in the brightest sunlight. Also it grants mind reading ability and a longer life. A stronger mind means greater power. In the battle of Dagorlad the last alliance of men and elves fought against the army of Sauron. Afterwards King Elendil's son Isildur cuts the several fingers of Sauron in a fight. This destroys him because Sauron's soul is bind to the ring and after losing the ring his body vanishes as an effect of its power. Isildur takes the ring, Elrond told him to destroy the ring they went to mount doom but suddenly ring possessed him and he refused to destroy it. He believed to be that he will become the most powerful king ever, he desired more and more power as the rings possession becomes greater. Just like hunger for power rings power fed itself as the bearer wants more than he has. While he returns back he get ambushed by orcs, his troops started retreating. He thinks that the ring would protect them but after understanding that he is wrong he tries to escape. This situation usually appears in the times of crisis, the ring bearer stops and thinks about the relationship between him and the ring. This opens the eyes of ring bearer, their expectations from the ring begins to disappear and the bond between them starts to break. With the help of this moment of self realization their minds starts to take logical decisions this is the only time that they can get away from the ring but with the help of greed in all human beings none of them (except Frodo) throws the ring away. After that crisis point he wore the ring in order to be invisible, one more time by losing against it's power. He enters the river Anduin and took off his armor in order to move faster. In the strong current of river while he just barely moves the ring betrayed him and left his finger, suddenly he became visible again. The orcs that saw him killed him with their arrows. The ring got lost and never

seen again for nearly 2500 years until Smeagol's brother Deagol found it while they were fishing.

After that 2500 years two young hobbits went fishing. One is called Deagol and the other is called Smeagol. This brother got in their little boat without knowing that they are about to change the fate of the whole realm. From the last appearance of the ring, the whole realm was living in peace for 2500 years but by the law of nature good and evil must have been brought to a balance as the evil has gone for too long it must have been returned. While they were waiting patiently for to catch some fish, Deagol noticed something that shimmers under the water. He reached out in order to take it. After pulling his arm he saw a golden ring in his palm. It was the One Ring for sure but the Hobbits of Shire can not understand the importance of that ring. While they were fighting about who will own the ring it whispered to Smeagol in order to possess his mind because Smeagol was not clever as his brother so his mind was easier to control. Poor Smeagol easily lost his control. He attacked his brother in order to have the ring. After drowning Deagol he went back to his village but even his family wanted him to leave. Then he traveled to misty mountains in order to live until the end of his life. Smeagol the fourth ring bearer couldn't resist the powers of the ring. The ring granted him a very long life but also cursed him so his long life was actually a punishment for him. The ring corrupted him, his body started to change just like his mind. He turned into a ugly beast. Along the book the changes that the ring does was related to money and power in real life. Tolkien wanted to show that to the people and telling this in a story was the best way for a writer like Tolkien. The ring unveiled the power hungry, greedy characteristics of Smeagol again another reference to money. Possession and corruption began with the first touch. The ring possessed his mind day by day until turning him into his slave. Corruption that it created was not about only his body also his mind and thoughts changed. He started acting like a greedy and stingy man this is also related to money because a man gets greedier as he gets rich. After a while he started calling the ring as precious. This is a reference to power as a man gets powerful he values his power without knowing that the power is actually becoming his master. As the ring was one of the most powerful things in the middle-earth it was literally precious but also it was the only thing that Smeagol has that's why he named it precious. Smeagol lived in the shadows of the Misty Mountains all alone until he met a young hobbit called Bilbo.

Bilbo Baggins is the fifth ring bearer and also his fifth slave. While he was on an adventure he got lost in a goblin cave while searching for a way out he met Smeagol.

Smeagols wanted to eat him but he tricked Smeagol in order to play a riddle game. While talking with Smeagol Bilbo's hand felt a cold steelish thing on the ground. He took it and put it in his pocket. After several riddles at Bilbo's turn he couldn't find a riddle to tell at that very moment ring makes him do something against the rules. This is also related to the ring, Bilbo is a very clever Hobbit but his fear of death weakened his mind and let the ring take control. Bilbo asked Smeagol what he has in his pocket. Bilbo won but Smeagol didn't kept his promise and tried to eat him. Bilbo started running. By instinct he wore the ring and with it's invisibility effect he escaped. He found his company he waved them but no one replied him. Then he understood that he is invsible he hid behind a tree, removed the ring and put it in his pocket. The Ring helped him while he faced off with the great dragon Smaug but also it turned him into a liar. He became greedy too. He was aware of his actions, also he felt the power of the ring but his mind regrets the idea of getting rid of the ring. His actions started changing especially when the situation is about the ring. Other than these ring didn't effected Bilbo much because he was able to keep the ring away from himself. As not using the ring his mind stood purer than Smeagol's or Isildur's. After many years with Gandalf's pressure he accepted to leave ring behind while he is going to live with elves. At that moment he tried to escape with the ring but Gandalf understood his paln and stopped him. It was also the rings effect on someone, a ring bearer can not leave the ring easily and when they are about to lose it they try their last chance to keep it. Gandalf as a mage could not hold the ring so he called Bilbo's young cousin Frodo who will be the sixth ring bearer. He told everything to him and gave him a mission and left Shire in order to care his own jobs. The reason why Gandalf chose Frodo is probably his intelligence and strong mind beacause as a wizard Gandalf knows who is suitable for quest like he gave to Frodo.

Frodo left shire in order to meet Gandalf in an inn. On the way he, Sam, Pippin and Merry saw a black rider. Rider hunt them while Frodo got close to him, an invisible force made him wore the ring he resist it but before arriving the inn wore it unwillingly and felt the power that after him. Sauron himself talked to him. The four hobbits met the Aragorn in the inn, When Frodo got ready for his journey to the Mount Doom his uncle Bilbo visited him and before he left, also asked permission to see the ring for one last time. Frodo showed him the ring, at that moment Bilbo's eyes turned mad and he tried to take the ring by juping onto Frodo. At this point we can understand that tha Ring lefts an impact on the previous beraer just like power in todays society, for example if a former businessman who lost his company gets a chance to take it back he can do anything for this purpose. Bilbo apologises about his

behaviour. It was the last time Bilbo saw the ring. For a long time ring only acted as a trouble magnet until Boromir asked to carry it. An instinctive resistance came from Frodo he refused the offer. At that moment orcs found them in forest while fighting them and trying to protect Hobbits, Boromir gets killed. Everyone believes that it is connected to the ring something like a curse. Lesser minds or greedy personalities desire the ring like Boromir. Everytime since the Ring forged anyone who looked at the ring as a source of power or as a treasure to be coveted they mostly die or live in endless pain trying to find the Ring again. Other party members can resist the ring. No one wanted it for himself or even thought about it. While going to Mordor, Smeagol found them he acted like he wants to help them but all he wanted was the ring. Because of Frodo's pure and naive mind ring could not possess him easily but Smeagol made him fall to the ring's tricks. First he awakened the greed in Frodo's mind. Then tried to make Frodo see Sam as a greedy and evil friend who wants the ring. Just like a mole in a big company Smeagol tried to subvert it. As they approached the Mount Doom ring's powers became greater, this also increased the effect of the Ring on Frodo. Sam offered Frodo some help about carrying the ring. Frodo misunderstood his offer because of the ring's deflecting powers and Smeagol's misdirecting words. He yelled at Sam and wanted him to go back. Sam understood that he is unwanted by Frodo so he left. Just like happened in Smeagol's first encounter with the Ring, the Ring ended another friendship but this time nobody died. Frodo's growing anger, pain and the suffering he faced became irresistible. When he got into danger and when there was no hope Sam appeared and saved him. They destroy the ring but it costed Frodo a finger and some temporary mental problems also Smeagol jumped to the lava with the Ring and he died. Even when the ring is about to be destroyed it managed to take one more life.

Also the One Ring was not the only thing that can affect a character and not everyone able to get possessed by it. There are some characters who were never involved with the Ring and also never fell to its traps. First of them was Aragorn also known as "Strider the Ranger" is the only character that never affected by any kind of power including the ring. First of all his ancestors were well known heroes of the Middle-Earth but he never boasts about them. This shows that he has no pride and he has a calm nature. When he met Frodo and the Hobbits, he could have stolen the ring and vanished away forever but he helped them until they reached Rivendell. He received a sword called Anduril which is reforged by the one of the greatest swords that ever were made. After taking Anduril, Aragorn used it for the benefit of his allies and the Middle-earth, he never even thought about selfish interest. He tamed the army of

ghosts with his sword Anduril. An army that can not be harmed by normal weapons an army that formed by murderers, traitors and all kind of war criminals. This army also known as the army of the dead, they were unclean souls of men which left in our world as a punishment of their crimes. Aragorn could have been offered them a chance of revenge and he could take all the places belongs to men, elves and much more. But he chose to offer them a way of salvation, he made the army of the dead aid him and his allies in the war and as its return he freed their souls. Even having an invulnerable army he didn't turn his back to his allies to have infinite power. While giving this kind of decisions his courage and his heroic being helped him to stay away from possession of great powers. After saving the Middle-Earth Aragorn became the king of Gondor. He could also choose to be dictator or a monarch but he chose to be the one of the greatest and fairest king that Middle-Earth ever seen. Elves offered him eternal life in the undying lands but he refused this offer in order to rule and protect his people from any kind of inner or outer harm and danger. This also shows his true personality, by accepting this offer he could have lived forever but his will and love for his people made him stay. This is also what Tolkien always said and tried to tell his children, his son Christopher says that Aragorn was the example that our father wanted us to be. As a result Aragorn's powerful mind and his unbreakable will lets him stay away from any kind of corruption. He never fell to the tricks of dark powers. Other two characters were Gimli and Legolas. They were aware of the power of the ring but they didn't even look at it. Their role in the story was about the friendship. They were belonged to two different races which used to hate each other but they were able to trust each other and even risk their lives for each other.

The one ring is just an instrument of war but it's no match for the dark powers of Sauron. These powers itself must be more desirable than a small ring. Before talking about those powers, a reader must know the story of the five wizards. At the beginning of time ages before the Middle-Earth there was a group of men which are greater than the others. Elves called them Istari (the Wise Ones). They sent five wizards to Middle-Earth in order to help them their wars against the Sauron. At first they sent three wizards; Saruman as known as "man of skill", Gandalf as known as "elf of the staff" and Radagast as known as "tender of beasts". Then they sent Alatar and Pallando. Each wizard had robes of a characteristic colour: white for Saruman (the chief and the most powerful of them), grey for Gandalf, brown for Radagast, and sea-blue for Alatar and Pallando (as known as the Blue Wizards). Gandalf and Saruman both play important roles in The Lord of the Rings. Gandalf and Saruman stand against Sauron for long years but their wise structure starts to change in this world of mortals.

This doesn't effects Gandalf much but Saruman becomes greedy just like a human. His search for power ends when he finds Sauron. Sauron offers him greater powers and tends to give him an army. Saruman gladly accepts and turns his back to his friends and allies including the elves. Because of his new powers and his betrayal he becomes the Saruman of many colours. Colours is a referance to the sides he changes. He starts rebuilding the armies of uruks and orcs. After arming his soldiers Saruman marks them with a white hand. This shows that Saruman is selfish because he marks them with his own stmbol not his new master's symbol. Also when in case of danger he tries to protect himself not his master. It shows his true aim, he is not loyal to his master he is just after the power he will get. He easily falls Sauron's trap because his humanish sides are stronger than his supernatural being. But while he tries to have greater powers he loses his own life instead.

Last power of the Sauron and his Ring is corruption and it also this have a ranged effect. He uses his power to take control of Rohan and their king Theoden. Theoden the high king of Rohan. After the awakening of dark powers the strategic position of Rohan and its poerful army that including the best riders of all becomes a great danger against the wills of the Sauron. In order to eliminate them a war is just a waste of time even for a army of millions of orcs. The dark lord Sauron knows it very well so he decides to eliminate this danger from the inside. He sends Grima Wormtongue to corroupt Theoden's mind. As ring has a part of Sauron it also acts as a way of communication for Sauron. He can talk with the help of the Ring. First Sauron offered a place in his future kingdom to Grima, a former Rohan peasant also Saruman promised him Éowyn, the king's niece, as a reward for his services. Grima's mission was to transfer Sauron's words to Theoden, just like a phone but Sauron's voice is very possessing and enchanted so he takes control of Theodens mind. Also they cast a spell and makes Theoden's castle immune to magic. After nearly 10 years of Grima's control starts the Fellowship arrives to Rohan. Gandalf understands the situation and interferences. After Gandalf broke Gríma's control of Théoden and released the King, many things which men had missed were found locked in his trunk, including Herugrim, the blade of Théoden. With his betrayal revealed, Théoden presents Gríma with a choice: either ride into battle for the King or be exiled. Choosing the latter, he went to dwell with Saruman at Orthanc. In the book, Gríma arrives at Orthanc after the battle of the Ents. There, Gríma gives Saruman important information about Théoden's plans to leave Edoras with his people suspecting an attack would come, and that they would flee to Helm's Deep, the main fortress of Rohan. After many mistakes of Grima, Saruman gets angry and beats him. Gríma then accompanies

Saruman to the Shire, where the two sought revenge in petty tyranny over the hobbits. During this time, Gríma becomes increasingly degraded until he was a crawling wretch, a beggar, almost like Gollum, and Saruman shortenes his nickname to "Worm". By the words of Frodo Grima understands that he doesn't have to follow Saruman, and having been pushed over the edge when Saruman despies him, Gríma uses a hidden knife to slit Saruman's throat and kills him. He then tries to makes his escape, but quickly gets killed by several arrows fired from the hobbits present, ending his short and unhappy life. Consequently Theoden becomes free and be able to give his own desicions. Grima becomes angry after understanding that he has used by the wills of evil so he betrays them. This shows the corruption of evil. Also the potential of men which kept in the dark can be devastating for his enemies when they came to light.

At the end of the book Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli defeats the armies of evil. Even the elves sends some troops to help men so another elf-human alliance formes. Pippin and Merry helps Ents and they leave a great impact on the army of Saruman because they attack directly to the barracks of orcs. Gandalf gathers an another army and changess the fate of the battle. Frodo and Sam destroys the ring and frees all Middle-Earth from the darkness. Aragorn uses the help of the army of the dead. They leave the earth to the men. In time Hobbits, Dwarfs and Men starts to live together. After many ages the human race of our time occurs. With the ring all presence of Sauron vanishes away from the earth but its said that even now he whispers men and watch them do evil things. Saruman gets killed by his servant Grima. Orcs and uruks extincts because they are not fertile like men. If we have to sum up evil loses againts the good again but this is just the ending for the story. The real thing about the books is they are telling the story of World War II with a differnt view. Tolkien's main aim was to explain the Worl War II with his own creative world. His imagination led him to these books also these are bedtime stories for his kids. All the characters and events are for to show the true face of the world to his kids and giving them some great, inspirational role models.

## REFERENCES

- "The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway." *The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Feb. 2014.

- "The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway." *The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Feb. 2014.

- "The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway." *The Lord of the Rings - Tolkien Gateway*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Feb. 2014.