TED ANKARA COLLEGE

ENGLISH B1

EXTENDED ESSAY

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Research question: Even though Tolkien was hating war and J.K Rowling was a researcher and living a life not even close to war why in their alternative universes ultimate war between good and evil exists?

"No parent should have to bury their child."

(Lord of the Rings, Tolkien)

Content:

Abstract:

I have always been interested in fantasy literature. Whenever I feel depressed I read universes of heroes, stories of ancient Greeks because this fictions give me chance to step away from my life and look into a different world. This extended essay purposes to reveal why war is an inevitable thing in a fantasy literature fiction. In this extended essay two very different examples of fantasy literature is explained which is J.J.R Tolkien's mythology of middle earth and J.K Rowling's series of Harry Potter. Reason of evil, evilness good and conflict between good and evil is analyzed for both alternative universes. In Tolkien's alternative universe evil and evilness is analyzed by analysis of characters Melkor, who is the main villain in Tolkien mythology, and Feanor the most gifted and hubris of elves. After reason of evil and role of good is explained their relation with theme of war is examined. Reasons of war in Tolkien's world is explained and why war is an inevitable end is structured very simply.   In alternative wizardry world of J.K Rowling evil and evilness is analyzed by using main villain Lord Voldemort. Reasons of evil and what makes a person good in Harry Potter universe is explained. Later the purpose of war them in Harry Potter series explained. In both alternative universes there were similar reasons for evil and they were differences. Those similarity and differences is compared and in conclusion why war is inevitable end within the conflict between good and evil is explained in a detailed way.

(254 words)

Introduction:

"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." This opening line of The Hobbit by J.R.R Tolkien has changed the future of literature. Before Tolkien; escape literature was accepted as empty stories written for entertaining people and do not containing any scent of realism. British linguist J.R.R Tolkien was very interested in mythologies especially Scandinavian mythology and he was very upset because his country do not have a mythology. His desire to create a mythology leaded him to create "middle earth" which changed the all reality of fantasy literature and point of view to dwarfs, elves and many mythological creatures. During First World War Tolkien lost two of his best friends which caused him to feel hatred towards war. Even though he hated war, in his own world he created very impressive battles between evil and good. Moreover, his trilogy Lord of the Rings considered as one of the best war novels. A researcher woman J.K Rowling created universe of wizardry and adventures of "unusual" boy Harry Potter. Book was consist of a very complex plot revealing mysteries from past of Harry and his archenemy Lord Voldemort. This secrets completed the gaps in story and leaded into an ultimate fight between dark side and good side. For a researcher woman war was not a familiar thing however Rowling was able create breath taking battle scenes such as "Battle of Seven Harrys" and "Battle of Hogwarts". Fantasy literature creates its own run away world, to offer readers an opportunity to escape from depressions of real world. However from fairy tales to epic war novels of mystical creatures ever fantasy literature piece contains a war between good and bad. In this essay war theme in alternative universes of "Tolkien" and "Harry Potter" is going to be analyzed, then evil and good sides will be discussed for understand the plot leading to battles. I wish I could be able to explain why war is an inevitable end deciding the future of alternative universe.

Tolkien World

When Tolkien created his mythology he mainly infected by three things. As a linguist his academic works on languages of old and foreign cultures leaded an urge to create tales of new people speaking new languages that he has already created. Elvish language was created by Tolkien and mainly influenced by Finnish and Welsh languages in grammar structure and phonetics. Tolkien was always reading mythologies because of his work, and he was very upset because his country does not have a sophisticated mythology explaining how the World was created. His will to create a mythology forced him to create "Middle Earth" which he speculated as the origin of all mythologies. Eru İluvatar is the creator of all universe in Tolkien mythology. İluvatar creates gods that called "Valar" and together with Valar they sang a song that creates every person that is going to be born and event that is going to be occur in "Middle Earth". However one of Valar, Melkor does not follow the rhythm and harmony of song and rebel against İluvatar. After that point conflict between "good" and "evil" started and throughout the mythology war between good and evil never ended. History of middle earth people begins with awakening of Elves. After awakening, they requested by Valar to come Aman and live together with Valar. Most of Elves were impressed by the mighty look of Valar and accepted to live with them. In Aman most gifted of Elves Feanor creates Silmarils that is beyond even abilities of Valar and most beautiful jewelry ever made in whole Middle Earth forever. Melkor steals silmarils from Feanor and Elves so Feanor swears for revenge and during his revenge he let his own people die. This agnate slaughter causes a conflict between family of Feanor and other Elf kings.

Evil and Good in Tolkien mythology

In Tolkien mythology main villain is Ainu Melkor who is the most powerful of Valar that created Middle Earth. Melkor is aware of his power and he feels depressed because he is not able to control everything in middle earth. Melkor is the root of all evils in middle earth. Evil in Tolkien mythology is a metaphor to evil and sin in our real World. In Tolkien mythology Melkor is a pure evil and shows many similarities with Lucifer in Christianity. They both is closest to creator and most powerful of their own kinds. Reason of evil in middle earth is rebellion and hubris. Since Melkor is the mightiest thing that Iluvatar created his hubris that sourced from his power forces him to pass the limits of his own nature and he rebels against the creator Iluvatar. Hubris is considered as original and most serious of seven deadly scenes in Christian belief. Moreover hubris is the reason of agnate slaughter and war between elves.

Feanor is not a pure evil character like Melkor however in mythology only Iluvatar knows temperament and character of Feanor totally. Feanor is the most gifted elf of all middle earth history and even Valar is not capable of understanding his temperament sometimes.

Feanor is different from all of Iluvatar's children "For Fëanor was made the mightiest in all parts of body and mind, in valour, in endurance, in beauty, in understanding, in skill, in strength and subtlety alike, of all the Children of Ilúvatar, and a bright flame was in him." (Silmarillon, Tolkien) Feanor is the most proud character throughout the mythology and some of his skills that beyond even Valar makes him fall into deeps of hubris and vanity. His hubris and obsession toward silmarils, the most beautiful gems ever made containing a part of Feanor's own spirit, blinds him and he accuses his step brother Fingolfin of trying to steal silmarils. Alienation from society and hubris is the main reason for evilness in Feanor and his jealousy towards silmarils causes him to lose his temper and starts the war within elf families.

In Tolkien mythology, origin of evil is similar to real world. For Tolkien seeds of evil starts with uncontrolled power and hubris. Evilness in Tolkien mythology is very similar to concept of sin in Christianity of real world. Iluvatar knows that Melkor is going to rebel against him one day and he let it be. In Christianity God knows Lucifer will not obey his rules and still God let Lucifer disobey. Relation between evil and good is dynamic and dialectic one they both depend on each other and within any world do not matter fantasy or real good can not exist if evil do not exist. In Tolkien mythology evil exists as a simple and pure form of evil and sin in our real world. Good side in mythology is consist of characters that follows order of Valar and Iluvatar and ones that do not lose themselves because of hubris. Formation of evil and good in universe leads to war between them purposing the supreme power over everything in universe.

War theme in Tolkien mythology

While Tolkien was a young student in Oxford University First World War started and Tolkien and all of his friends joined the army. After war, most of his friends were dead and Tolkien had seen the brutality of war. J.R.R Tolkien is not a war writer, he is a man created a myth and influenced by war. In works of Tolkien such as "The Hobbit" and "Lord of the Rings" war scenes are not well explained and victories are dependent on abilities of heroes more than military strategies. In works of Tolkien war is not the main theme it is a metaphor to ultimate conflict between good and evil side. War in Tolkien mythology starts with separation of Melkor from other members of Valar. Melkor, who is blinded by his hubris and rage, swear an oath to destroy beauty in everything that Valar and Iluvatar ever created. When elves awake Melkor seduce some of them and turn them into creatures called orcs that can not walk in sunlight. Evil of Melkor becomes root for all of tragic wars and darkness in Middle Earth and with orcs Melkor builds an army for himself for the first time. Feanor, most gifted of elves who made silmarils, lose his temper because of his pride and his obsession toward silmarils lead him to rebel against Valar and kill his own kind. War in Tolkien mythology is the physical conflict between powers to get ultimate fiat upon everything. Especially in trilogy Lord of the Rings war theme is dramatic. Trilogy tells the story of power rings and last hope

of middle earth against evilness. Melkor's henchman Sauron is member of Maiar and one of a magical spirit created by Iluvatar. Maiar is the magical spirits created by Iluvatar to help and serve to Valar while Valar ruled the world. Sauron takes his side near Melkor who promises him to teach secret lores. When Melkor is prisoned by Valar Sauron escapes and shadow and darkness of Melkor joins Sauron's spirit. Sauron possesses Human race when they first awake. Sauron with ability to change his appearance fools elves with his mighty look and together with elves he creates power rings. Power rings is a metaphor to corruption of power. Sauron creates rings for people of middle earth and secretly creates one ring that rules all of the other world. "One ring to rule them all" (Lord of the Rings, Tolkien) power rings reveals the corruption of power and how does vanity and uncontrolled power leads evil. In Lord of the Rings, war is a part of journey that leads to distinguish evil from middle earth forever. When heroes that fight for good side analyzed they are epitomes of goodness and purity: Aragorn, Sam, and Faramir. Certainly the quest could not have been achieved without these shining examples. War appears as the physical conflict of good and evil in Tolkien mythology, war in Tolkien world make his universe more realistic. Uncontrolled power, weak will and hubris is the main weaknesses of people of real world and in the book this are the roots of evil, war theme in Tolkien world shows that in any world there must be war for things that worth to fight for, because ultimate fight between good and bad gives humans, dwarves, elves and good side of middle earth a purpose and unite them against the evil. War theme in Tolkien mythology shows that no matter how bloody or tragic it is, sometimes war is required to find the piece finally. War in Lord of the Rings is made for to save time for Frodo and Sam and real mission is to diminish one ring from middle Earth, war is the sacrifice to distinguish evil forever. Moreover, war in Tolkien world gives a purpose to human and elves they are fighting for peaceful days and their only hope is to be victorious, war is necessary to make people's life significant. Otherwise Elves, Human, Ent, Hobbits and other races would be moving statues.

An unusual boy Harry Potter:

Written by J.K Rowling, Harry Potter is a fantasy series telling adventures of a young wizard Harry Potter. The main story arc concerns Harry's quest to overcome his archenemy Lord Voldemort, who aims to become immortal, conquer the wizardry world, subjugate non-magical people, and destroy all those who stand in his way, especially Harry Potter. Each book reveals secrets about Potter's and his archenemy Lord Voldemort. Harry Potter includes themes, friendship, love, power and evilness. Voldemort is considered as one of the evilest villain of all times in literature. Harry Potter does not considered as a child tale. Novels are mainly about struggle between good and evil, good through courage as plot reaches climax one of epic battles in wizard history occurs in alternative world of Rowling.

Good and Evil in Harry Potter

In J.K Rowling's alternative world similar to J.R.R Tolkien's mythology evil and goodness and conflict between evil and good side is the main conflict in the story. Both fantasy worlds begin story with the battle between evil and good. Different from Tolkien's world in Rowling's wizardry world, characters are not black and white they are not pure evil or pure good. Rowling shares the temperament and character of evil and dark mainly by using villain Voldemort. Conflict between dark and good side is symbolized with war between Potter and Voldemort. In J.K. Rowling's reason of evilness is related with love and power of human spirit. In alternative world of J.K Rowling reason of evil is stated as the lack of love towards a person. For Rowling's world love is the most powerful magic and the evil craves to be the ultimate leader of magic, however since evil does not know what love is it is prisoned to be defeated by evil. Tom Marvolo Riddle was son of a pureblood witch mother and a muggle father who was not able to do any form of magic. Mother of Lord Voldemort, Tom Marvolo Riddle, and Merope Gaunt was in love with an ordinary human without any magic skills. However muggle man was not in love with Merope so Merope used a love potion to make father of Lord Voldemort to fall in love to herself. Lord Voldemort's mother gets pregnant to him while his father is under possession of potion and a person who has born with effect of a potion is unable to understand and know what love is. His mother dies right after she gave birth to Voldemort and Voldemort grows without being loved by anyone. In orphanage Tom Riddle starts to reveal his dark sides. He is not accepted by other kids but with his extraordinary magic skills he get his revenge from other kids. At this point Voldemort perceive real power as the fear that a person creates and his ultimate intention forms; be the most powerful and feared wizard of all times. As an extraordinarily gifted wizard who is unable to love and understand any other person Voldemort obsesses a desire to be the most powerful authority in his world and also develops a hatred towards muggles and wizard that are not pureblood because of his hatred towards his muggle father who left him and his

mother and spattered noble ancestry of her mom. Voldemort is very determined and pragmatic villain for him it is all about to have it all or lose everything. Like every psychopath Lord Voldemort never thinks that what he is doing is wrong "There is no good and evil, there is only power, and those too weak to seek it."(J.K Rowling Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone). In Rowling's alternate universe reason of evil is the inability to love because real magic and life comes from love however evil ones are not able to comprehend such a beautiful thing. Evil with a greed towards everything is afraid of death and Voldemort intends to defeat worst thing in life which is death, which reveals the weak character of evil because real power is ability sacrifice life for other ones. Moreover Dumbledore, who seems to be the wisest character of the series, is a very complex character who is not good or bad in his past he and his companion Gellert Grindelwald aimed to be the supremacy in wizardry world for the greater good caused to death of his sister and lack of his little brother's love towards him. This shows that desire to have the ultimate power leads to evilness and lack of love in universe of Rowling. Good in universe of Harry Potter is represented by Harry and his friends. Good is dependent on love and courage. Good does not afraid of sacrifice itself for greater good. Courage of human spirit is a common property of good in Harry Potter universe. In Rowling's alternative universe as far as known from the story good is a reaction against evil. Evil and good exists all the time however evil reveals itself before good and good is the love towards other people and determination to sacrifice his or her life for the people they love.

War Theme in Harry Potter

War in Harry Potter universe is a part of characteristic of evil and good. In series evil side Voldemort fights together with his army that is full of mad wizards and dark creatures. Voldemort and other evil characters are much skillful in dark magic relative to good side however they are not able to win the war. War in alternative world of Rowling shows that love is the most powerful magic and it is undefeatable. "Battle of Seven Potter's" in last book points out that good characters are ready to sacrifice themselves for Harry, which indicates characteristic of good in series. Good is not afraid of dead and it is the most ancient of all magic. During Battle of Hogwarts Harry sacrifice himself and accept death for benefit of his friends and supporters. After this point spells of Voldemort does not affect good side in the war because most powerful of magic prevents evil from doing the worst thing; taking someone's life. War between good and evil is an expected end in the series and it determines future of wizardry world. In universe of Rowling, war is used the show true power and it is a metaphor that evil is prisoned to lose against good because good fights with true power, love and bravery to sacrifice own life, whereas for evils war is an opportunity to slaughter and make people fear you.

Conclusion:

War is defined as a state of fight between groups. War is never aim of a group actually because of its nature war is the tool required to achieve that aim. It is the oldest story of humanity that eternal war between good and evil. From story of Cane and Abel to fairy tales, from legends of demigod's to tales war between evil and good is always main conflict in fantasy and fiction literature. Because it is our nature. Our struggle between being good and bad is the main issues of our life and since every story is written to tell life from a different point of view this conflict is eternal. Fantasy literature is a fiction that consist of a created alternative universe different from real world with its structure. Fantasy literature offers reader to have break from real world and be a spectator other people's life in different worlds where reader exists there with his or her imagination. In both Tolkien mythology and Rowling's wizardry world war is the physical form of conflict between evil and good. In Tolkien mythology reason of evil is related to hubris and obsession towards ultimate power. In alternative universe of J.K Rowling reason of evil is stated as inability to understand love, obsession to ultimate power and weak morality of characters. Since evil do not have an ability to empathy and a desire to have ultimate power causes evil to attack on good and declare a war. War is an inevitable end in fantasy literature because fantasy literature fictions a brand new world and war is what makes those worlds dynamic. Without an eternal war between evil and good story can not exist because; depth and reality of characters and events is dependent on war between good and evil. If Lord Voldemort would not exist in Harry Potter series there could not be the story of a boy defeating evil with power of love and courage of human spirit. In mythology of Tolkien, war is the sacrifice that good makes to distinguish evil from world forever and this gives the depth to story and to created alternative universe. Even though alternative worlds are independent from real world still writers draw inspiration from real world. Although writers were not intended to do allegory within real world in both alternative universes there is an allegory to world wars. Resemblance between Adolf Hitler and Lord Voldemort is obvious. They both are feared dictators without ability to empathy and they both are racist. Sauron and his army in Lord of the Rings trilogy evoke Nazi army because war is a reality of our world to and both writers influenced by real world. War is a natural concurrency in our real world to decide whether good or evil is stronger and fantasy literature purposes to show the life with a different point of view and reality remains same without wars there would not be a world because conflict between evil and good is our oldest struggle because every dynamic and alive world needs wars. This is why it is inevitable to create a world without war.

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