



Gandalf's transformation in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* – An analysis according to Jung's individuation theory

Gunnar Gräsbeck

Research Essay 15 hp
English 61-90 Online (EON200)
Department of Social and Behavioural Studies
October 2023
Supervisor: Joakim Jahlmar
Examiner: Ulrika Andersson

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Chapter One: <i>LOTR</i> mythology, Jung's individuation theory and previous research	6
Chapter Two: Analysing Gandalf's individuation process through multiple shadows and a shadow counterpart	18
Conclusion	27
Works Cited	28

Introduction

Gandalf's transformation from Grey to White is an impactful moment in *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR) trilogy by J. R. R. Tolkien. Gandalf's reunion with Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli in *The Two Towers* (642-652), after being assumed dead by the hands of a Balrog in "The Fellowship of the Ring" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 429-431), comes as a surprise both for the fictional characters in question and the reader. It is not only revealed that Gandalf is alive, but that he has returned stronger and wiser than prior to his battle with Balrog. This emerges mainly from his change in attire, from Grey to White: "They all gazed at him. His hair was white as snow in the sunshine; and gleaming white was his robe; the eyes under his deep brows were bright, piercing as the rays of the sun; power was in his hand. Between wonder, joy, and fear they stood and found no words to say" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 645).

Gandalf assuming the role of White, despite it belonging originally to Saruman, is a transformation process that is open to many interpretative approaches. One such approach is to interpret Gandalf's transformation as an individuation process. Originally founded by C. G. Jung, the theory of individuation suggests that in order to achieve personal improvement, one has to become fully conscious in one's self and sometimes change in the process. This can be characterized as a form of improvement, if this change in one's self helps in attaining new levels of consciousness in one's abilities and improve their relatedness to a desired context.

In the case of Gandalf, past literature studies have been using Jung's individuation theory to analyse Gandalf's transformation and show its deeper meaning when it comes to his character

development. One such analysis is offered by Klautau (5), who argues that Gandalf's transformation and personal development is a longer process that already starts when he is betrayed by Saruman and is concluded upon his sacrifice against Balrog.

This essay aims to elaborate further on this, trying to show in detail the crucial moments of Gandalf's character development and explain them from the perspective of Jung's individuation theory and past literary studies. Since Jung's individuation theory can be used to analyse the individuation process of individuals by measuring their level of consciousness in self, this approach will also be used to analyse Gandalf's individuation process. There are many crucial moments in *LOTR* that have an impact on Gandalf's character development, particularly Saruman's betrayal and the Balrog fight, which occur in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. These two events will be analysed particularly from the lens of the individuation theory, because these two events are what in the end lead to Gandalf's sacrifice, transformation, rebirth and then the later reunion with Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli in the *Two Towers* (645). This particular timeline in *LOTR* is used for analysis, because it already has been used to analyse Gandalf's individuation process in the past.

In order to understand Gandalf's character and what constitutes his self that is being analysed, the mythological background of *LOTR* is presented and how it connects to Gandalf's actions in the story. Jung's individuation theory and how it can measure consciousness and unconsciousness in one's self is also presented in its whole and how it has been used to analyse Gandalf's individuation process prior to this study. This will all be presented in chapter one of this essay.

The analysis in chapter two aims to use Jung's individuation theory as explained in chapter one, to analyse Gandalf's actions and how they can be connected to the theory. This analysis is then compared to past studies that have done the same, portraying similarities and differences in findings. This way, Gandalf's individuation process can be further elaborated by discussing which of his actions have increased his consciousness in his self and which have not, from the lens of Jung's individuation theory and how the past studies have interpreted this. As a final remark, a conclusion is provided to summarize the final findings of this analysis and how it can and should be encouraged to be analysed further in the future.

Chapter One: *LOTR* mythology, Jung's individuation theory and previous research

In this chapter the mythology of the *LOTR* universe, Gandalf's timeline, the individuation theory by C. G. Jung and previous research in Gandalf's individuation process are presented to provide a background for the analysis that is later carried out in chapter two.

The Mythology of *The Lord of the Rings*

The origin and creation of the fictional *LOTR* universe is described in *The Silmarillion* (Tolkien, 1-42). Eru Ilúvatar, the holiest of deities in *The Silmarillion*, sparks the roots of creation through song. The music of the Ainur, *Ainulindalë*, is the origin of Ilúvatar's creation and during this, his thoughts are what create the Ainur. Ainur are holy deities, the predecessors of Eru Ilúvatar, that continue creation by learning and singing further Ilúvatar's song.

It is through the song of Ainur that creation of the *LOTR* universe begins. During the Great Music of *Ainulindalë*, Melkor is introduced as the oldest of the four Ainur that are created by Ilúvatar. Due to this, Melkor is also introduced as the most developed of the four. It is worth mentioning that the other three are named Aulë, Manwë and Ulmo. A twist in *LOTR* mythology is that Melkor starts to create music of his own, thus interfering with the original themes of Ilúvatar, that the other three Ainur are following. The chaos created by the disharmonies of Melkor's melodies, are what turn creatures of harmony into malevolent beings in the *LOTR* universe, leading to creation of evil creatures like the Balrogs and even Sauron himself, the main villain of J. R. R.

Tolkien's *LOTR* trilogy, that consists of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*. Contrary to the disharmonic melodies by Melkor, the harmonic melodies of Ilúvatar and the other Ainur are what create creatures of harmony, the Maiar (1-42).

The Maiar are spirits that start to incarnate themselves physically into Middle-Earth, after its creation at the end of *Ainulindalë*. This marks the beginning of *Valaquenta*, the Account of the Valar, which marks the starting point of Middle-Earth history. Valar are the rest of the Ainur created by Ilúvatar in hopes of bringing order to Arda, the name of the world in which the Middle-Earth is created as one of two main continents, with the other one named Aman. While Melkor is bringing the forces of evil into the Middle-Earth, the Valar bring the forces of harmony through the Maiar. The harmonic Maiar brought by the Valar start to incarnate themselves as elves, humans and wizards, marking the first generation of most main characters in the *LOTR* trilogy. Only the Maiar brought and influenced by Melkor are the ones who become evil creatures such as Balrogs and Sauron. (1-42)

Sauron is already depicted as having a strong influence on Middle-Earth prior to the events of *LOTR*, particularly during The Second Age (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 20-42), which is the phase in *LOTR* that lead to the events of the main story. In this phase, the last alliance of the elves and men is created to bring an end to Sauron. The Second Age ends with Sauron's defeat by the hands of Isildur, one of the human warriors fighting for the Last Alliance, later to be one of the founders and first rulers of Gondor, one of the major kingdoms being ruled by humans in the *LOTR* trilogy, where Sauron's defeat marks the beginning of the trilogy's main events.

Sauron is the creator of the ultimate Ring of Power and despite his physical form being defeated by Isildur, his spirit lingers and continues its evil influence in Middle-Earth. As long as his Ring of Power remains, Sauron's spirit lives on. Isildur had the chance of destroying the ring, but since he refused and wanted to keep the ring for himself, due to its colossal power, Sauron continued its evil influence. This marks the beginning of the third age, when the Istari, Maiar who incarnate themselves as wizards, are sent to Middle-Earth. The Istari were tasked to keep forces of Sauron at bay and to maintain peace on Middle-Earth, while the search for Sauron's Ring of Power was underway. The five Istari sent to Middle-Earth for this task were Saruman the White, Gandalf the Grey, Radagast the Brown and the Blue Wizards Alatar and Pallando (*Silmarillion*, 372-378).

Gandalf the Grey, being the character analysed in this study, is described as having the appearance of an old man in grey robes but possessing both physical and mental powers surpassing those of men. Before the events in *LOTR*, Gandalf mostly wanders the Middle-Earth using his powers to protect the innocents from Sauron's forces, following his assigned task as an Istari to maintain peace in Middle-Earth. Gandalf's travels occurred mostly in the western part of Middle-Earth, which is the area mainly populated by hobbits, elves, men and dwarves. This is why Gandalf became very acquainted with these groups of people, especially the hobbits and the dwarves. Most of the other Wizards are not mentioned in Gandalf's travels, because each wizard went to different locations of Middle-Earth to observe and maintain peace, with Gandalf remaining in the western part with this task (*Silmarillion*, 372-378).

Gandalf's timeline in *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*

During Gandalf's time in Middle-Earth, he befriends the king of Dwarves, Thorin II Oakenshield and the hobbit Bilbo Baggins. This is what sparks the events of *The Hobbit*, which play a crucial role in what is to come in the *LOTR* trilogy. In *The Hobbit*, due to Gandalf's concern about the dragon named Smaug, the main nemesis of *The Hobbit* story, Gandalf decides to embark on a quest with the dwarves and Bilbo to put an end to Smaug's terror and help recover the dwarves' lost treasure which Smaug has taken for himself.

During this quest Gandalf leaves the dwarf troupe midway for what Gandalf describes as an "important errand" (*The Hobbit*, 96). This errand is never described in detail during *The Hobbit* or in the *LOTR* trilogy, but it is instead elaborated in *The Silmarillion* (21). During Gandalf's quest with the dwarves and Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, he is informed of a more alarming threat than Smaug the dragon. In *The Silmarillion* (21), this threat is described as another incarnation of Sauron, in the form of a Necromancer. Gandalf is summoned to put an end to the Necromancer Sauron together with the White Council, consisting besides Gandalf of Saruman the White and the elves Galadriel and Elrond. The White Council locate and attack Necromancer Sauron at Dol Guldur, but fail in destroying it since it manages to flee to Mordor. Despite the fact that this fight is not mentioned in *The Hobbit* and *LOTR* trilogy, it is crucial for the storyline since it explains how Sauron was reincarnated into the Great Eye after fleeing the battle and how important this change is later on in the *LOTR* trilogy.

After the attack at Dol Guldur (*The Silmarillion*, 21), Gandalf returns to the aid of the Dwarves and Bilbo during the Battle of the Five Armies (*The Hobbit*, 222-227). After the battle, Gandalf's quests in *The Hobbit* are complete. Thereafter it is mentioned that Gandalf made plenty of visits to the Shire (the Hobbit settlement). Among one of them he visits the shire to attend one of Bilbo's birthday parties, which marks the beginning of Gandalf's quest in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. During this time Gandalf discovers after some careful scrutiny of Bilbo's magic ring (which Bilbo finds in the Misty Mountains during his interaction with Gollum in *The Hobbit*), that it is the Sauron's Ring of Power, later being named One Ring for the rest of the *LOTR* saga.

The discovery of the One Ring is what triggers the main events that follow. Gandalf's timeline starts immediately with one of his most crucial moments – his encounter with Saruman. Gandalf decides to meet Saruman the White for further counselling on what to do with the One Ring after finally being discovered. This is where Gandalf is betrayed by Saruman and imprisoned after a brief fight. Since it is revealed that Saruman has been corrupted by Sauron, Gandalf challenges Saruman but this encounter leads to Gandalf's defeat and Saruman's victory. Later on, Gandalf is rescued and brought to Rivendell, where he joins the fellowship and its quest to destroy the One Ring. The only way to do so is to take it to Mordor, the fire volcano where Sauron originally forged it, and through it into the flames.

During this quest we enter another crucial moment in Gandalf's journey, his battle with a Balrog (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, 429-431). During the fellowship's journey through the ruins of Moria, they are faced with a Balrog, that Gandalf can only match in power. Gandalf willingly sacrifices himself in the Balrog fight to secure safe passage for the rest of the fellowship.

Believed to be dead, it is later revealed in *The Two Towers* (642-652) that Gandalf is alive, but reborn stronger than ever as Gandalf the White. This transformation from Gandalf the Grey to Gandalf the White is open to many interpretations and since it is deemed crucial to the story of *LOTR*, it is subject to plenty of studies trying to analyse its meaning. This essay aims to do the same. With the presented *LOTR* mythology considered, combined with past studies of Gandalf's transformation, this can be elaborated further. Most of the studies have interpreted Gandalf's transformation as a case of individuation, from the perspective of Carl Jung's individuation theory. Before delving into the analysis of this essay in chapter two, a proper introduction of Carl Jung's individuation theory and its usage in previous research to analyse Gandalf's transformation is presented.

Carl Jung's Individuation Theory

The individuation theory was originally created by Carl Jung and refers to a process of becoming conscious in one's self (158-230). This means that the fully conscious self is what makes up the potential individual, and the consciousness and unconsciousness of one's current self are what make up the presential individual. Jung defines consciousness as the amount of awareness one has in one's self and of the unconscious as the opposite, the amount of unawareness one has in one's self. This makes the individuation process unique since it means that each individual has their own individuation process that is characterized as their journey to become fully conscious in themselves, by exploring all the unconsciousness hindering one from becoming more aware of one's true self.

Jung defines the “self” based on the archetypal image and archetype of the character (304-310). Archetypal images define qualities of specific characters and archetypes define qualities of character groups. Both terms help provide a structure on how to portray similarities and differences between characters and how to compare them within a setting. In the case of Gandalf, Clarke defines his archetypal image as “the wise old man” and his archetype as “wizard”. This means for the sake of Gandalf that the older and wiser he is, the more his age and wisdom is meant to resemble his looks and powers as a wizard. According to Jung’s approach to this, Gandalf’s self can be partly defined with the archetypal image and archetype presented by Clarke. This suggests that Gandalf is more conscious in his self the more he resembles the archetypal image of a wise old man and fits the archetype of a wizard. However, defining the self becomes more complex but also precise, when also the task and setting of a character is taken into account. Therefore, past individuation studies have followed this principle, trying to connect the archetypal image and archetype of a character to their respective setting and ongoing task. This is made to portray a more accurate level of consciousness and unconsciousness that the characters (in Jungian terms “individuals”) have in their selves.

By defining archetypal images, archetypes, character setting and task, a structure can be provided to analyse a character’s level of consciousness and unconsciousness. Truly individuated selves are characters cleared of all doubt and have become fully conscious in their own selves. To what degree this can be measured, is dependent on the individual’s personal experience when solving a task in a particular setting. Naturally, each individual will meet obstacles during this process. Jung argues that one way of exploring the unconscious and increasing awareness in one’s self is to face these obstacles, which Jung names one’s “individual shadows” (168-176). According to

Jung, a shadow is the embodiment of the unconscious and we can face it in many different forms. Some examples of this are overcoming personal challenges, strong adversaries, or completing a very tormenting task. Simply put, the unconscious shadow can be defined as anything that requires us to explore something unknown, that becomes known for us after exploration and makes us more conscious and aware of what we are able to accomplish.

By having the bravery to explore the unknown domains of one's current awareness, the consciousness of an individual increases. When put into the context of a character who has constantly faced individual shadows and bested them, this character will be more individuated than those who have never had the bravery to face their own shadows. Characters who do not face their shadows have a lower probability of becoming more aware and conscious of their selves. If shadows are left unfaced, character have never truly embarked on an individuation process, leaving it incomplete when shadows are never faced or overcome. In worst cases, characters can even succumb to their shadows, becoming more unconscious and unaware of their true selves, further distancing themselves from the potential individual that the character could have become. This is usually the case when one's shadow is too traumatic or too difficult to conquer, thus leaving the individual unfulfilled and never able to become fully conscious into the self. According to Jung (168-176), for someone to be fully individuated they would need to have no unconsciousness lingering, meaning that a character's individuation process is incomplete if even the slightest unconscious unawareness remains in one's self. Jung argues that the only way to solve this is to recognize the individual shadow left and overcome it.

This view is applicable to many contexts of character development. Since this theory is qualitative, it makes each character's individuation process unique. It is based on the amount of consciousness and unconsciousness in a character's self within a particular setting connected to a specific task, where the character is defined in relation to the archetypal images and archetypes typical of the setting. Shadows are defined based on a character's obstacles and individual challenges. These are the cornerstones of the individuation theory and to analyse how individuated a character is, these parts need constant elaboration. For the sake of Gandalf, previous research that has aimed at defining these parts for his individuation process need to be presented.

Previous research

According to Jung's individuation theory (168-176), facing one's "shadow" is one of the most crucial and necessary steps for character development and for becoming more conscious in one's self, thus becoming more individuated. To understand Gandalf's character, it is therefore necessary to understand exactly how this has been interpreted in previous research in order to be able to build up on what has already been analysed.

To start off, despite being a very precedented topic in *LOTR* and other literature, Kechan (297-304) argues that not enough works exist that delve deep enough into individuation when analysing *LOTR* characters. Despite the works of Skogemann and O'Neill providing a complete analysis of *LOTR* from a Jungian perspective, Kechan argues that the analyses made by both are too general and would benefit from a more detailed approach. These views are supported by

Honegger, who also suggests that there is still plenty of room to explore individuation processes of *LOTR* characters, including Gandalf.

Both Honegger (10) and Klautau (4-5) argue that the “shadow” concept can be used to discuss Gandalf’s transformation and individuation process as a literary character. Both argue that in *LOTR*, there exist shadows for the characters to be conquered in order for them to reach full consciousness and to complete their individuation process. Besides Gandalf, Honegger argues particularly that Frodo had to face his individual shadow through more than one adversary. Examples of these are Ringwraiths, Shelob and Gollum, all of whom were obstacles for Frodo in his task to destroy the One Ring in *LOTR*. The idea of multiple shadow encounters would imply that both Saruman (338) and the Balrog (429-431), were obstacles that Gandalf had to conquer in order to finish his individuation process (*The Fellowship of the Ring*).

Honegger delves deeper into Jung’s “individual shadows” theory by discussing the possibility of characters also having indirect shadows, that are not necessarily faced head on but which exist as versions of a character that they should avoid becoming at all costs. Honegger (8) defines these particular shadows as “shadow counterparts”. Despite not being directly mentioned by Jung, Honegger defines a shadow counterpart for a character, according to Jung’s individuation theory, as a situation where both the potential shadow counterpart and the character have same archetypal images, archetypes and task in the same setting, but present opposite moral values. In the case of *LOTR*, Honegger (8) presents Frodo-Gollum, Aragorn-Boromir and Gandalf-Saruman as examples of such counterparts where Gollum, Boromir and Saruman act as shadow counterparts to Frodo, Aragorn (another main character in *LOTR*) and Gandalf. Honegger (8)

argues that if characters succeed in maintaining their moral values and not succumbing to the values of shadow counterparts, the character has managed to overcome its shadow counterpart in the same manner as a character has overcome a shadow and thus managed to become more aware and conscious in one's self.

Honegger (8-10) presents an example of how this works in the Frodo-Gollum combination. According to Honegger's analysis, Gollum is more like a "Frodo gone wrong" than his actual shadow, because Gollum succumbs to his unconsciousness and becomes the creature that he is. This occurs because after Gollum found the One Ring, he did not stick to the original task of a ringbearer - to destroy the One Ring in the *LOTR* setting. What this means, according to Honegger, is that because Gollum is a representation of what Frodo can be if Frodo does not stick to his task as ringbearer, Frodo's level of unconsciousness can be analysed in comparison to Gollum based on the task that they share. Honegger's findings suggest that Frodo is not fully individuated, because not only does he fail in overcoming all his shadows, but he follows Gollum's footsteps, by succumbing to the One Ring's power and at the end does not throw it into the flames of Mordor. Honegger presents Gandalf-Saruman as a similar combination as Frodo-Gollum but does not analyse Gandalf's individuation process based on this method, which this essay intends to do in chapter two.

Besides the idea of shadow counterparts, according to Klautau Gandalf's consciousness and unconsciousness are based on the awareness of his abilities (1-9). Those abilities are based on his task as an Istari, which are to maintain peace on Middle-Earth and protecting the innocent in the setting of *LOTR*. Klautau (4-5) argues that the moment when Gandalf's abilities are put to the test

is his encounter with a Balrog, where Gandalf is willing to put his life at risk to protect the fellowship in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (429-431). This is also a view supported by Honegger, who, like Klautau, argues that Gandalf's fight with the Balrog is an obstacle he needs to overcome according to his task to protect the fellowship. Klautau argues that Gandalf being victorious in the Balrog fight and saving the fellowship results in his transformation to Gandalf the White, marking the peak of his individuation process and making it complete.

Klautau (1-9) argues that Gandalf faces his unconsciousness through his encounters with Saruman and Balrog and is met with his first conscious realization of his abilities through Saruman's betrayal. Thereafter he encounters another conscious realization of his abilities through his encounter with a Balrog. Despite Klautau supporting the claim that both Saruman and the Balrog are crucial for Gandalf's individuation process, Klautau only argues that the Balrog is a potential shadow that Gandalf must conquer to become complete his individuation process. The closest additional insights are offered by Honegger (1-12), who argues that each *LOTR* character have multiple shadows to overcome, even in the form of shadow counterparts. Since Honegger's findings generally suggest that Gandalf has a shadow counterpart in Saruman and is facing multiple shadows in his individuation process, this is explored and further analysed in chapter two.

Chapter Two: Analysing Gandalf's individuation process through multiple shadows and a shadow counterpart

This chapter intends to use the background presented in chapter one to analyse Gandalf's individuation process from the perspective of having multiple shadows and a shadow counterpart, by seeing how they apply to Gandalf's timeline from the first encounter with Saruman (*Fellowship of the Ring*, 338) all the way to Gandalf being revealed as Gandalf the White (*The Two Towers*, 642-652). First Gandalf's individuation process will be analysed from the perspective of having multiple shadows. Thereafter Gandalf's individuation will be analysed from the perspective of having a shadow counterpart. When both analyses are complete, a final discussion taking both perspectives into account is done to provide a final conclusion and provide suggestions to how this analysis can be taken into new directions.

Gandalf's individuation process with multiple shadows

Despite Klautau (5) offering a detailed analysis of Gandalf's individuation process, he argues that Balrog in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (429-431) is the only actual shadow that Gandalf has to overcome. Although he interprets Gandalf's fight with Saruman in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (338) as the start of Gandalf's individuation process, Klautau does not regard Saruman as a shadow to be conquered. Gandalf transforms into Gandalf the White after the fight with a Balrog, as later revealed in *The Two Towers* (642-652). Klautau argues that this transformation alone symbolises Gandalf overcoming his shadow and all past losses, thus being fully conscious in his abilities.

Gandalf's fight with a Balrog is crucial to his character development and is what finally leads to his reunion with Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas (*The Two Towers*, 642-652), but in my interpretation Klautau's view of Saruman's role as being only to make Gandalf conscious of his weakness misses some important points. Saruman and Gandalf's face-off in the *LOTR* trilogy draws a direct parallel to Gandalf's fight with a Balrog, with the difference that Gandalf is victorious against the Balrog but loses against Saruman in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. This is where Klautau's findings come in conflict with Honegger's, since Honegger argues that all shadow encounters must be conquered in order to be fully conscious in one's self and thus complete one's individuation process. Klautau's findings themselves are not in conflict with this, since based on the assumption that Balrog was Gandalf's only shadow, Klautau's findings are in agreement with those of Honegger. However, disregarding Saruman as a shadow is in conflict with Honegger's findings, and also with the narrative of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, since Gandalf clearly loses against Saruman but later defeats a Balrog (338, 429-431).

Based on the interpretation of Gandalf having multiple shadows, he would need to face and conquer all of them in order to complete his individuation process. Based on this, Gandalf's loss against Saruman means that despite Gandalf being victorious in the Balrog fight, Gandalf has not become fully conscious in his self. Based on Jung's description of overcoming the shadow (168-176), this would be true since Jung clearly states that all unconsciousness needs to be cleared to become fully conscious in the individual self. Based on this it can be interpreted with the support of Klautau's arguments that Gandalf becomes conscious of his own weakness when he loses to Saruman (Klautau, 4-5). Being conscious of his weakness, Gandalf's loss to Saruman is at risk

of turning into unconsciousness if not turned into a victory later on. This is exactly where Honegger's detailed analysis of Frodo (8-10) provides an additional example, since he deems Frodo not to be fully conscious in his self because he did not face and conquer all his shadows. Based on this, it would suggest that because Gandalf did face Saruman but did not defeat him, this makes Saruman a shadow that Gandalf did not overcome, making his individuation process incomplete.

However, being transformed into Gandalf the White does make Gandalf more conscious in his self due to his tremendous empowerment, as witnessed by Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas: "They all gazed at him. His hair was white as snow in the sunshine; and gleaming white was his robe; the eyes under his deep brows were bright, piercing as the rays of the sun; power was in his hand. Between wonder, joy, and fear they stood and found no words to say" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 645). As mentioned in the introduction, Gandalf is given the title of White, that originally belonged to Saruman. With this newfound power, Gandalf should, based on Honegger's arguments, have another fight with Saruman, to see if the fight would be different with the new powers Gandalf has obtained after transformation. On the other hand, this does not happen in the setting of *LOTR*, and Gandalf's opportunity to overcome Saruman is lost.

This implies further that Saruman is a shadow that Gandalf is meant to conquer and if not, then Gandalf's individuation process would remain incomplete, based on the arguments of Honegger (8-10) and Jung's (168-176) individuation theory. If however Saruman is disregarded as a shadow, as Klautau argues (5) and that Gandalf transforming into Gandalf the White marks the end of his individuation process, then Gandalf has reached full consciousness in his self and

completed his individuation process through his transformation. The way Gandalf's power is presented in the reunion with Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas (*The Two Towers*, 645), would support this interpretation since it is very clear that Gandalf is portrayed as stronger than ever.

With all perspectives in mind, I would still argue that Gandalf's individuation process remains incomplete since Klautau shows that it is Saruman who sparks the process of Gandalf becoming conscious in his self, but that it remains a conflict unresolved. According to Honegger's understanding of Jung's individuation theory, each encounter that has the potential of increasing consciousness or unconsciousness offers a shadow to overcome. Only overcoming the shadow will increase individual consciousness in the self, since if the loss against a shadow is not overturned then it will remain an unconsciousness unattended. This strengthens the interpretation that Saruman is a shadow that Gandalf did not overcome due to their face-off ending in Gandalf's loss in *The Fellowship*, remaining an unconscious encounter since Gandalf does not directly face Saruman a second time in the *LOTR* setting. In addition to this, Honegger presents Frodo as an example of a failed individuation process, that remains incomplete exactly for the reason that he did not overcome all his shadow encounters. Since Frodo cannot go back in time to have a second chance at a past shadow encounter in the *LOTR* setting, then neither can Gandalf.

However, it is worth mentioning that based on Honegger's findings (8-10) Saruman and Gandalf share a similar relationship to that of Frodo and Gollum, meaning that they contradict each other with their values and present a bond that characterizes them as shadow counterparts. Why this is important for this analysis is that despite Saruman being a shadow that Gandalf never manages to overcome by himself, if Saruman is defined as Gandalf's shadow counterpart, it would mean that

Gandalf has the potential to overcome Saruman as an indirect shadow. This would be supported by the narrative since after defeating Balrog, Gandalf is given the title of White, despite it belonging to Saruman (*The Two Towers*, 645). If this is the case, it would support the claim that Gandalf has overcome Saruman indirectly and through this completed his individuation process by becoming what Saruman was meant to become.

Gandalf's individuation process with a shadow counterpart

If *Silmarillion* (372-378) is considered, Gandalf remains true to his task as a Istari, maintaining peace in Middle-Earth by fighting the forces of Sauron and protecting the innocent. Gandalf's sacrifice against Balrog is proof of that (Klautau, 4-5), because Gandalf sticks to his task by securing a safe escape route for the fellowship in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (429-431).

Saruman, on the other hand, does not adhere to his task as an Istari, and instead becomes corrupted by Sauron and sides with Sauron's forces, which is in complete opposition to his Istari task.

Since both Gandalf and Saruman were tasked as Istari to maintain peace on Middle-Earth, this task is what defines the values of the two characters. Gandalf stays true to his task until the end, while Saruman strays from his path as an Istari, thus making him a counterpart to Gandalf's values. With Honegger (10) considered, this supports the claim that Saruman is a shadow counterpart to Gandalf and offers a connection that provides additional perspectives on the individuation process of Gandalf.

The connection between shadow counterparts and how they affect the individuation process is something Honegger (10) has argued for *LOTR* characters in the past. As previously mentioned, Honegger argues that shadow counterparts can be defined if both share the same archetypal images, archetypes and tasks in a particular setting according to Jung's individuation theory (304-310), but additionally have contradicting values. Both Saruman and Gandalf fit the archetypal image of "the wise old man" and the archetype "wizard" based on the interpretation of Clarke's findings. Both also have the same task as the Istari based on *The Silmarillion* (372-378), and within the same world setting of *LOTR* trilogy. Based on this analysis, Honegger's criteria are met and the Gandalf-Saruman combination is strengthened, with Saruman being the shadow counterpart to Gandalf with the opposing values in accordance to the Istari task.

Honegger argues similarly for Frodo's shadow counterpart of Gollum, in that their values are connected to their task of destroying the One Ring. Gollum succumbs to the ring's power, thus becoming what Honegger (8) names "Frodo gone wrong", since Frodo was also tasked with destroying the One Ring, but that he sticks to this cause compared to Gollum who fell to the ring's temptations and succumbed to his shadow. This is supported by Jung's individuation theory that characters who decide not to face their individual shadows run into risk of succumbing to the unconsciousness of the shadow, thus losing their hope of ever becoming conscious in their self. This is exactly what has happened to Gollum. Saruman is the same, because he got so corrupted by Sauron that he lost sight of his original task as Istari – to protect the innocent from Sauron's forces in the setting of *LOTR* and instead of siding with Gandalf, he attacks him in their encounter (*Fellowship of the Ring*, 338). Since Saruman can be deemed to have succumbed to his shadow, through the amount of unconsciousness he has gathered by

distancing himself from the Istari task, he can similarly in the Frodo-Gollum combination be named “Gandalf gone wrong”. This brings further light into Gandalf being more conscious in himself, supporting the claim that Gandalf has indirectly overcome Saruman, because Gandalf remained uncorrupted by Sauron and stuck to his task as Istari to protect the fellowship at all cost. This is supported also in the *LOTR* narrative when Gandalf reunites with Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas in the woods as Gandalf the White (*The Two Towers*, 642-652), with his change from Grey to White symbolising this indirect victory over Saruman, by even taking his title of White.

Honegger (8-10) demonstrates through his analysis of the Frodo-Gollum combination another argument that brings more light into why Gandalf has indirectly overcome Saruman through the Gandalf-Saruman combination. Honegger (8-10) argues that since both Frodo and Gollum not only fail to stick to their values connected to the task, but they fail their tasks altogether, they both lose their indirect opportunities to overcome each other as counterparts. In the case of Gandalf-Saruman combination, Gandalf not only stays true to his values connected to his task, but he actually manages to complete it by keeping the fellowship safe during the encounter with a Balrog (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, 429-431). Saruman not only fails his task as Istari by losing his values and succumbing to his shadow as a “Gandalf gone wrong”, but his siding with Sauron fails his task altogether since in the whole *LOTR* trilogy, countless lives are lost due to Saruman’s treason towards the Istari.

These two arguments do not only prove that Gandalf overcame Saruman indirectly as his shadow counterpart by not succumbing to his shadow, but he also manages to complete his task as Istari

which Saruman fails. This is further supported by Honegger's (8-10) Frodo-Gollum combination, where both Gollum and Frodo succumb to the shadow and fail the task of destroying the One Ring both directly and indirectly, providing the comparable parallel to the Gandalf-Saruman combination where Gandalf clearly emerges indirectly victorious. This even brings light to Klauatu's (4-5) argument that since Gandalf conquered Balrog as a shadow, Gandalf's transformation to Gandalf the White functions as indirect victory over Saruman as the shadow counterpart, because it was the moment that defined Gandalf's values out of his commitment to the Istari task and fulfilling it by protecting the innocent from Sauron's forces.

Gandalf's individuation process with multiple shadows and a shadow counterpart

The only way to elaborate on Gandalf's individuation process further is to discuss it with both the perspective of having multiple shadows and a shadow counterpart combined. Since it can be assumed based on Honegger's (1-12) findings and Jung's individuation theory (158-230) that Saruman does present a shadow to overcome for Gandalf, based on Gandalf having multiple shadows in the encounters that make him conscious of his abilities, he has not managed to get rid of the lingering unconsciousness that remains from his loss to Saruman in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. This fact remains even when Gandalf does return reborn as Gandalf the White in *The Two Towers*. This implies that since a direct confrontation of Saruman is no longer possible for Gandalf, the possibility of getting rid of the lingering unconsciousness is lost, despite Gandalf's transformation to Gandalf the White making him more conscious than ever in his self.

However, since Honegger (8-10) argues that it is possible to overcome a shadow counterpart indirectly as a shadow, which, based on the analysis above, Gandalf does manage to do, by taking the title of White (*The Two Towers*, 645), he completes his individuation process by staying true to his task as an Istari (*The Silmarillion*, 372-378). Gandalf protects the fellowship from a Balrog (*Fellowship of the Ring*, 429-431), thus fulfilling his task as Istari and as a result becomes fully conscious in his self after transforming into Gandalf the White (Klautau 4-5). Saruman fails his task as Istari, which provides the argument needed to strengthen Gandalf's indirect victory over Saruman not only as a shadow counterpart, but also as a shadow when both perspectives are considered. This is supported by Honegger's claims that indirect victory over a shadow counterpart means indirect victory over a shadow, especially when an encountered shadow is also the shadow counterpart as in Gandalf's case.

Conclusion

Jung's individuation theory suggests that a person's individuation process is only complete when all unconsciousness is explored and none remains (158-230). Based on this analysis, through the encounter with Saruman (338) and battle against a Balrog (429-431) Gandalf has proven that his transformation into Gandalf the White not only marked him overcoming Balrog as a shadow, but also marked his completion of the Istari task, that was to protect the people in the setting of *LOTR* (*The Silmarillion*, 372-378). This brings light to Klautau's (4-5) argument that Gandalf's transformation to White and reunion with Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas in *The Two Towers* (642-652) is enough to overcome Saruman as a shadow. However, this is only possible because the transformation can be connected to Gandalf's fulfilment of the Istari task, which Saruman failed based on Honegger's (8-10) arguments of shadow counterparts. This fulfilment of the Istari task is in the *LOTR* narrative apparent because Gandalf is reborn with Saruman's original title of White in *The Two Towers* (645), proving further that Gandalf overcoming Saruman indirectly is part of the main *LOTR* storyline. However, the relationship Gandalf and Saruman share as wizards of Middle-Earth are what needs to be further discussed and elaborated on in accordance to Carl Jung's individuation theory and the setting of *LOTR*. Currently Gandalf's individuation process is limited to his timeline in the first two *LOTR* books. By increasing the scope of Gandalf's timeline for analysis, new insights into how conscious or unconscious Gandalf actually is in his self, both before and after his transformation into Gandalf the White, might be possible to uncover.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

- Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel, *The Fellowship of the Ring: The Lord of the Rings Vol. 1*. 50th anniversary edition. HarperCollins, 2004
- , *The Two Towers: The Lord of the Rings Vol. 2*. 50th anniversary edition. HarperCollins, 2004, pp. 642-652.

Secondary Sources

- Clarke, Jason. The Wise Old Man: Gandalf as Archetype in The Lord of the Rings. Valar Guild, 1998
- Honegger, Thomas. More Light than Shadow? Jungian Approaches to Tolkien and the Archetypal Image of the Shadow. *Scholars' Forum at the Lord of the Rings Plaza*, 2011, pp. 1-12
- Jung, Carl Gustav. *Man and his Symbols*. Ferguson Publishing, 1964, pp. 158-230, 304-310
- Kechan, Ana. A Jungian View of J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings. *Turkish Studies - Language and Literature*, 2020, pp. 297-304 eISSN: 2667-5641
- Klautau, Diego. From Grey to White: the individuation process seen in Gandalf in The Lord of the Rings. *Ciberteologia - Journal of Theology & Culture – Ano II, n. 10*, 2004, pp. 1-11

O'Neill, Timothy. *The Individuated Hobbit: Jung, Tolkien and the Archetypes of Middle-Earth*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1979.

Skogemann, Pia. *Where the Shadows Lie: A Jungian Interpretation of Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings*. Wilmette: Chiron Publications, 2009.

Tolkien, John Ronald Reuel. *The Hobbit: Or There and Back Again*. 75th anniversary edition. HarperCollins, 2012

---, *The Silmarillion*. Edited by Christopher Tolkien & Guy Gavriel Kay, HarperCollins, 1977