

The Rise of a Hero

An examination of a fallible hero

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, it is often said that children are willing to read less and less. There are different and diversified reasons for this tendency, which will not be discussed in this paper. However, it is undeniable that nowadays the readership of children and juvenile literature including the so-called fantasy sub-genre, is growing, especially if we take teenagers into consideration. The best seller lists are generally led by fantasy authors. On entering bookstores fantasy books draw out attention first. Yet, the research of fantasy literature is embryonic in Hungary, we could also say ‘it is still in the egg’. Literary research considers fantasy as mainstream light or popular literature and thus experts do not feel it is worth researching. There are some writers, one or two smaller literary groups, for example the Hungarian Tolkien Society¹, who are engaged in the reception of the fantasy literature and its examination. However, there is no Hungarian monograph on fantasy literature. There are some translations of Tolkien international research and a single volume of studies²; furthermore a volume focusing on analyses of Harry Potter series appeared, which cannot be considered to be a literary study as instead it deals with questions of the pedagogy and psychology. Therefore, results do not appear in education either, in higher education some universities launch seminars on the topic, in college curricula it appears marginally only, in optional courses, as part of child and juvenile literature. In primary and secondary schools, which most of the fantasy readers attend, fantasy literature is not part of the curriculum and it is unique as supplementary reading as well, and its appearance is rare and isolated. Furthermore, the most well-known characteristic feature of fantasy research in Hungary that its reception and criticism is latent. The professional interest in Harry Potter series appeared only after the series’ had run out and its popularity started to decline. Fortunately, Tolkien’s work seems to be more universal and we are just in time with its exploration.

It is our utmost necessity to strengthen the exploration of fantasy as a genre. For this Anglo-Saxon research results provide us a perfect basis. This highly popular genre of present times originates from the Anglo-Saxon literature, where it has shown, from the beginning, but

¹ Magyar Tolkien Társaság

² 2012. Dr. Pődör Dóra, Nagy Andrea, Füzesy Tamás (ed.): *J. R. R. Tolkien: Fantázia és erkölcs*. Magyar Tolkien Társaság. Budapest.

especially from 1970s a growing tendency in research papers. Currently, there are a numerous sources available in different categories for those who are interested in and familiar with the English language and culture.

The aim of this initial piece of work is to contribute to Hungarian fantasy research by offering a theoretical basis and an instrument for the examination. Relevant sources (not only Anglo-Saxon) will be examined. In teaching literature the theoretical, historical, creative-psychology examination of literary works is a strong recommendation. For this examination an instrument (Hero Cycles) will be provided and used in the examination process. Furthermore, the creation of a Hungarian thesaurus is also indispensable as it can be used by researchers in the hopefully near future. My long-term goal is to create an embracing genre-theoretical, historical piece of work on the genre itself.

I am aware of the fact that the chosen Martin text contains several parts which are not suitable for the child's reading experience. In the world designed by Martin, violence, eroticism, fear and dirty words appear, but these elements can also be found in former myths and fables, since these were never written for children, but for adults who wanted to pass some time in a cold late winter evening. In looking for sample texts to create a base for genre-theory I am bound to search for quality sources. I can claim that Martin has written high quality works which carry a great number of myth schemes.

In my essay I am going to examine the lack of myths in our everyday life and how we try to fill this gap. I will write about why we read fantasy literature and whether this subgenre is able to fulfil the space that we lost. I am going to reveal some elements of myths which appear in fantasy literature. One of the best known aspects of myths, the role of the hero will be focused on. Furthermore, special attention will be paid to one of my favourite characters in a famous and mainstream high fantasy series *The Song of Ice and Fire* written by G. R. R. Martin. In this essay I will only deal with the written work of Martin, not the *Game of Thrones* TV show. My hypothesis is that Jamie Lannister is a fallible hero, a special subtype of the hero archetype, which makes his role remarkable and interesting to discuss. Our knowledge about his fate is limited by the published books of the series, from the first volume (*A Game of Thrones*) to the

fifth (*A Dance with Dragons*). Throughout this exploration I will analyse his sins, deeds and redemption and try to prove his role as a fallible hero.

2. Myths

Desire for knowledge, demand of knowing everything and curiosity have always been a fundamental characteristic feature of human beings. Religions and their myths bound together have been used to provide us with answers for the inexplicable. These answers, nowadays, are based on scientific and everyday knowledge of the human mankind, but often, myths are used to embed into the knowledge of humans and formed an organic part of their life. Kerényi (1988: 13-14), referring to Sir George Grey, concludes *“mythology for people who live and think in it and express themselves by it is a form of life and activity at the same time.”*³ In the ancient times we would not even have been able to understand the language without the knowledge of myths. *“Living mythology is lived, it is a form of expression, thinking and living, although it is still materialised.”*⁴

The secrets of the myths have been tried to explore by many. In this essay, I would like to highlight on some ideas of two of them: Jung’s archetype-theory and Claude Lévi-Strauss’ (1971) definition. Lévi-Strauss (1971) claims that myth elements work as a kind of language element, attached to and expressed by them; they are built and arranged according to their own logic. About the same, Jung (1964: 75) says *“Like the instincts, the collective thought patterns of the human mind are innate and inherited.”* At another place he continues by focusing on the archetypes saying

“... we have to take into consideration the fact (first observed and commented on by Freud) that elements often occur in a dream that are not individual and cannot be derived from the dreamer’s personal experience. These elements, as I have previously mentioned, are what Freud called “archaic remnants” mental form whose presence cannot be

³ The original Hungarian text: „... a mitológia azoknak, akik benne gondolkoznak, és általa fejezik ki magukat, egyúttal élet- és cselekvési forma.”

⁴ The original Hungarian text: „Az élő mitológiát élük, kifejezés-, gondolat- és életforma, és mégis anyag.”

explained by anything in the individual's own life and which seem aboriginal, innate, and inherited shapes of the human mind." ... "The experienced investigator of the mind can similarly see the analogies between the dream pictures of modern man and the products of the primitive mind, its 'collective images', and its mythological motifs." (Jung 1964: 67)

Later, traditional myths were replaced by scientific theories ('scientific myths'), as a result of scientific achievements, which were not at all more realistic than mythology itself. This moves humanity from time to time forward towards the future. However, these 'scientific myths' created by scientists can no longer satisfy people, on the contrary, they displease and sometimes bother them, so these 'secondary creators' create whole living, breathing worlds to substitute traditional myths. Gaster (1953: 7-8) describes myths as 'not real' texts, which expect 'belief and approval' from the reader. Science also often builds its statements on theories, and just like in the case of myths, it also expects belief and approval from the reader. Science argues the correctness of mythical thinking. However, it behaves like mythical view of the world and mythical thinking. In a concise sentence Malraux (1999: 11) summarises, "*The next century's task will be to rediscover its gods.*" Some decades earlier Jung (1964: 82) says, "... *gods and demons are not disappeared at all; they have merely got new names. They keep him⁵ on the run with restlessness, vague apprehensions, psychological complications, an insatiable need for pills, alcohol, tobacco, food – and, above all, a large array of neuroses.*"

We do chase our gods and we finally find them in escapism. A very wide meaning of it can be noticed in the mental activity of modern man. Although, several different terms can be used to express escapism such as 'kill the time', 'enjoy ourselves', 'turn off a bit', it still remains the same thing. Many branches of escapism are based on traditional myths e.g. Hollywood's films, traditional role playing games or video games.

Eliade says that

⁵ i.e. mankind (author's remark)

“A whole volume could well be written on the myths of modern man, on the mythologies camouflaged in the plays that he enjoys, in the books that he reads. The cinema, that “dream factory”, takes over and employs countless mythical motifs – the fight between hero and monster, initiatory combats and ordeals, paradigmatic figures and images (the maiden, the hero, the paradisaal landscape, hell and so on). Even reading includes a mythological function, not only because it replaces the recitation of myths in archaic societies and the oral literature that still lives in the rural communities of Europe, but particularly because, through reading, the modern man succeeds in obtaining an “escape from time” comparable to the “emergence from time” effected by myths. Whether modern man “kills” time with a detective story or enters such a foreign temporal universe as is represented by any novel, reading projects him out of his personal duration and incorporates him into other rhythms, makes him live in another “history”.”

(Elaide 2009: 205)

Fantasy itself is a more complex, comprehensive reading which truly provides the reader with possibilities to escape. Carter (1973: 2) claims *“The charge of ‘escapist reading’ is the most often leveled against fantasy ... by those who have forgotten or overlooked the simple fact that virtually all reading – all music and poetry and art and drama and philosophy, for that matter – is a temporary escape from what is around us”*. Fantasy brings us escape; not escapism, in a pejorative sense, but a mental escape from the evil and the filth of reality (James and Mendlesohn, 2012: 66).

The ‘myth hunger’ from the second half of the 19th century created a new path leading to the birth of a new subgenre of literature, the high fantasy. The popularity of Tolkien’s stories, both in print and as film adaptations, has paved the way for this resurgence of fantasy. *The Song of Ice and Fire* has become a best seller as well as a popular HBO series by the name of *A Game of Thrones*. The *Time Magazine* referred to Martin as ‘the American Tolkien’ (Vizzini 2012) in 2005. Martin managed to continue Tolkien’s work (Cornwell 2014) by creating something new, based on Tolkien. Martin has his own perspective on fantasy which he explained in *On Fantasy*

(Martin 2014): “...*We read fantasy to find the colors again, I think. To taste strong spices and hear the songs the sirens sang. There is something old and true in fantasy that speaks to something deep within us, to the child who dreamt that one day he would hunt the forests of the night, and feast beneath the hollow hills, and find a love to last forever...*” The *Song of Ice and Fire* series seems to be a historical novel, but is classified as high fantasy. Martin says in an interview that historical novel and high fantasy are ‘*sister under the skin*’ (Cornwell 2014). In another interview Martin (New Mexico In Focus 2014) refers to Faulkner,⁶ who said that the only thing worth writing about is the human heart in conflict with itself and he hopes that this own writings are exactly about these topics.

Although based on the success of fantasy stories (e.g. Tolkien, Pratchett and Martin etc.) we can be a bit sceptical about Flieger’s criticism (1981: 41): “*Larger-than-life heroes are rare in twentieth-century literature; they do not fit comfortably in an age which seems preoccupied with the ordinary.*” Fantasy has been developing into two branches lately. One of them is in close connection to Tolkien (e.g. R. Jordan, Moorcock, etc.), the other tries to emphasise the differences of their works from Tolkien (e.g. China Miéville). Malraux (1999: 12) establishes that “*Many (perhaps most) modern fantasy writers cite Tolkien and medieval stories as a source of influence, and many of them show a continued interest in medieval literature, folklore, and classical mythology*”. Rothfuss (2014), one of the most praised fantasy writers of the modern era, noted that a writer should ask why they feel compelled to write something the writer is not familiar with. His examples were the maps and artificial languages that Tolkien loved so much and this evolved into fantasy convention: “*But if you do something because you feel like you’re supposed to... it is not... the best way to enjoy yourself and make a vibrant world.*” (Kross 2014)

Tolkien, who often emphasises that myths are a psychological entity, e.g. in his poem *Mythopoeia* (his own relationship to myths he described as ‘leaf-mould’ of the mind, out of which thoughts have been grown. He says that the layers of these thoughts appear in his texts as a reflection of his inner and outer experiences (Carpenter 2000: 118.)). He says his mould is definitely made of linguistic matter; he learns languages, creates artificial languages, and the basis of his mythology is always the inner logic, sounding and spirit of the language.

⁶ In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech (10. December 1950)

The fundamental theme of fantasy is said to be the fight of Good and Evil. This fight takes place not only on the surface where everybody can see it, but also inside the soul - imperceptibly. Moreover, the meaning of 'good' and 'evil' might also be relative depending on the author. The question of good or bad is asked according to the inner moral world of the novel, and the attitudes of the characters can only be evaluated through the rules of this inner moral world. While Tolkien's characters are gods (ainur), demigods (maiar), monsters (balrogs and dragons), elves and men, more or less who are - beyond dispute - devotees to one side or the other, Martin manages to find a balance between epic heroes and everyday characters. Martin says that "*I look for ways to make my characters real and to make them human, characters who have good and bad, noble and selfish well-mixed in their natures*" (Robinson 2000), to which VanderMeer (2011) remarked that "*Martin's devotion to fully inhabiting his characters, for better or worse, creates the unstoppable momentum in his novels and contains an implied criticism of Tolkien's moral simplicity.*"

There is a stable situation which is well balanced at the beginning of the story. Later on this state will be tampered with something unusual and then it becomes unbalanced. At the end of the story, after the characters overcome the obstacles, the balance will be restored, but it will never be the same as at the beginning; the world and they themselves have changed. This order was recognised by Todorov (1970). The characters' lives are a constant struggle just like ours and that is why they are so close to us and why we can understand them deeply. Grossman (2011) noted that readers "*experience the struggle for Westeros from all sides at once*" so that "*every fight is both triumph and tragedy [...] and everybody is both hero and villain at the same time*".

The hero of this essay, Jaime Lannister, says: "*Most have been forgotten. Most deserve to be forgotten. The heroes will always be remembered. The best. The best and the worst. ... And a few who were a bit of both.*" (Martin 1998b: 266)

Many myth elements are represented in modern high fantasy. One of the most famous high fantasy novels nowadays is Martin's *The Song of Ice and Fire* series, which contains a lot of myth elements; one of the most recognizable aspects of the myths is the role of the hero, especially the fallible hero. In this essay our hypothesis is that Jaime Lannister is a fallible hero.

The characteristic features and the role of a fallible hero will be explored and then the role of Jaime Lannister will be examined in detail.

While exploring the life of Jaime Lannister, some examples of mythology will be provided to explain and underline how Jaime's story fits in the universal mythology.

3. Some factors of high fantasy and its characteristic features

There are a great number of definitions of fantasy, however, only some characteristic features of the genre will be focused on here. A scholar of the genre, Hume, defined it by concentrating mostly on its fantastic elements. In her book, *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature* (Hume 1984: 20), she sets up an imaginary continuum, one end of which is 'mimesis' and the other is 'fantasy'. Hume claims that all literature "*is the product of two impulses.*" The *mimesis* end of the continuum desires to imitate, to describe events, people, and objects while the other end stands for the counterpart of 'mimesis', 'fantasy'. Our dreams, hopes or deepest cravings "*to change givens and alter reality*" are manifested in the genre of fantasy. I think that Hume's continuum is too extreme; it is oversimplification. If Hume were right, it would mean that we would not be able to recognise any meaning and plot of fantasy. It would be too far departure from consensus reality so that the readers can understand a single event or role. Jackson (1981: 33) steps forward by a theory which places fantasy in the middle of a continuum, which has on the ends the 'mimetic' and the 'marvellous'. This kind of placement authorises us to spread the wings of our minds and fly away from the troubles of life. The 'mimetic' parts allow us to understand the characters and the events and perceive the cause-effect relations of the story. One of the most prominent attributes of a good story is that it snatches us from the jaws of reality, lets us coexist in the 'Primary' and the 'Secondary World'. This mental statement is called 'simultaneously existing sense' (Mérei 1981: 238). Under the influence of it we must accept the laws of the story, and we can believe in both 'truths' at the same time. This state is special to modern man, but not for everybody, for instance children are the best subjects to get under the influence of 'magic' and many times it is the reason why fantasy is counted as exclusively youth literature.

J. R. R. Tolkien, the father of the genre, articulates the importance of the secondary created world; in *On Fairy-stories* (1947), he explains the concept and stresses the importance of its cohesiveness.

“What really happens is that the story-maker proves a successful ‘sub-creator’. He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is ‘true’: it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside.”⁷(Tolkien 1947: 37)

Hume (1984:21) says that fantasy “*is any departure from consensus reality*”. This statement is essential to understand fantasy literature. It cannot be measured with our common laws or morals which work perfectly well in our primary world, but they do not in a ‘Secondary World’. In the ‘Secondary World’ we are able to interpret these laws and morals, because they are familiar in the ‘Primary World’ but the ‘Secondary World’ still has its ‘marvellous’ elements. Thus, we cannot judge or appreciate the characters according to our own common values. Fantasy asks us to believe in a tolerant fairy-tale way. Its plot is often set in a place in a fictional time when the technology and society stuck like our early medieval times. In those days people had many beliefs which were parts of their lives. Medieval people believed in witches, demons, angels, dragons and so on. They thought differently, so we cannot just take the 21st century people, dress them in coats and mantels, give them a sword and pretend that they are medieval people. Medieval ways of thinking were quite different but with our modern thinking process we are able to understand them, while the basic ethics, morals, feelings, ideals have remained the same. Martin’s success can be found in the closeness of his works to the ‘mimic’. As I mentioned before, it is almost like a historical novel with some added ‘marvellous’ elements, which the reader can associate with their own world.

⁷ Even Tolkien made mistakes eg.: Gandalf’s fireworks are described as being like an ‘express train’ or Sam’s favourite food was ‘fish and chips’ (Tolkien, 1994: 27, 640)

The common characters of these stories are protagonists, who can be heroes and heroines or antagonists, monsters, knights, kings, nobles and common folks... I will discuss the role of the hero, but for the moment I wish to focus on that of the monsters. They have to be taken seriously as monsters which actually exist within the world created by the writer; they are part of that world, their very existence is above dispute. Even Tolkien (1947) emphasises their gravity in his essay about 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics'. They are not just allegorical creatures or manifestations of abstract conceptions. When the hero crosses the line of the imaginable, s/he vanquishes former adversaries, s/he has to face a more and more powerful foe, who can be the 'Black Foe of the World' or the nemesis of the hero. Due to the use to the 'hedonic adaptation', to fulfil the increasing desire of the readers or listeners in some myths or fantasy, the hero must face demigods or literally gods by the end of their path (e.g. the stories of Gotrek and Felix).

4. The fallible hero, a unique hero

"The universal hero myth, for example, always refers to a powerful man or god-man who vanquishes evil in the form of dragons, serpents, monsters, demons, and soon, and who liberates his people from destruction and death." (Jung 1964: 79)

Myths of heroes are the most commonly known and admired myths in the world. We can find these myths everywhere regardless time, space or culture where the society reached the level of animism or shamanism. If we scratch only the surface, we will see differences, but if we dive deeper into these myths, we can understand the essence of hero myths, patterns and motifs of which are always more or less the same. Their lives have similar stations, for instance the fight with the evil, the committed sin, the weakness of pride, 'hubris'. Finally, they are betrayed or they have to finish their lives in ultimate self-sacrifice.

Barna (2011), while examining archetypes, draws attention to a subtype of the hero archetype, the fallible hero. It should not be mistaken for the repenting hero, which is different. The repenting hero (e.g. Judas, Gollum and Wormtail) is a tragic or tragicomic hero who is hideous, pathetic, inglorious and nefarious. This kind of hero commits the sin on purpose, which later he regrets and tries to restore. Similarly to other kinds of heroes, his restoration process also comes with sacrifices. A fallible hero can be distinguished from the 'general hero' by another kind of

sin, which is human fallibility (e.g. Hercules, Odysseus, Boromir). He is a well-intentioned, high-profile figure whose aesthetic values are sublimity and dignity. The fallible hero is usually obliged to perpetrate a sin in the name of 'Greater Good', although he is aware of the fact that it is a sin and he becomes a sinner and endangers his reputation. The redemption of the fallible hero also comes with sacrifices during the process, but this is only possible through personal sacrifice, by someone's death (who is close to the hero) or by self-sacrifice. In the process of redemption it is a common event that the hero loses one of his important bodyparts or sensory organs, like his eyesight (e.g. Oedipus), or a hand (e.g. Beren).

Campbell (1949) is one of the relevant researchers who deal with mythological heroes. He is one of the most recognized mythologists, whose theory is discussed in the *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. He explores the journeys of the archetypal hero found in the mythologies of the world. According to Campbell the journey of the hero has three stages: 'separation' or 'departure', 'supreme ordeal' and 'unification'. These three stages follow the main signposts of the hero's life. The journey describes the lives of mythological heroes from the beginning to the end. At first sight it is obvious that without using this work as an instrument it is not really possible to examine the life of our hero. Using Campbell's categories might be relevant in this examination too; however, Jaime Lannister's journey has not been finished yet. His story is being written now and we do not know what will happen to him in the forthcoming parts of his journey. Without this information classification into the three stages of Campbell cannot be used perfectly as we cannot judge the importance of the last events of his life in the journey, not to mention that we do not know the end of the story. Therefore, I decided on using the categories of another scholar, Radin (1948).

Henderson (1964) quoting Radin summarizes the patterns of heroes. Radin (1948) under the title of *Winnebago hero cycles: a study in aboriginal literature* published his work about the North American tribe of Winnebago Indians. It is a perfect example of how to examine the distinct stages of the evolution of a hero's path. According to Radin⁸ there are four stages of the progress of a hero, the names of which Henderson used to label the distinct stages. "*He named them the*

⁸ „He correctly perceived the psychology of this evolution when he said: “It represents our effort to deal with the problem of growing up, aided by the illusion of an eternal fiction.” (Henderson: 1964: 112)

Trickster Cycle, the Hare Cycle, the Red Horn Cycle, and the Twin Cycle.” (Henderson 1964: 112).

While presenting the meaning of these cycles, the characteristic features of Jaime Lannister as a hero will be examined. These pieces of information about his life are revealed scattered throughout the series. The exact circumstances in which these pieces of information come to the surface will be only explored if it is necessary to understand the whole picture. To help this understanding one more hero (Brienne) whose paths crosses Jaime’s will be presented. She would deserve a whole essay, but in this essay, Jaime Lannister is in the centre of our exploration.

To present the essence of the story, I use a lot of quotes. My intention with the quotations is firstly to express the style of the series, then, to explore the manner of the characters and finally to reveal their relationships with the help of their exact words. It seems obvious that the best way of understanding is to read the original text. Only word by word quotations are able to reflect the original content and the intention of the author which is in the background. Transcription necessarily leads to re-interpretation, which can only partly or cannot at all present the original intention of the author in an adequate way. In the transcription, the transcriber is the one who speaks and changes, even without intention, the author’s message, which is what needs to be kept in focus.

4.1 The Trickster Cycle

The *Trickster Cycle* is about the earliest and least developed period of the hero’s life. “*Trickster is a figure whose physical appetites dominate his behaviour; he has the mentality of an infant. This figure, which at the out-set assumes the form of an animal.... Lacking any purpose beyond the gratification of his primary needs, he is cruel, cynical, and unfeeling. ... At the end of this stage he is beginning to take on the physical likeness of a grown man.*” (Henderson: 1964: 113)

Jaime Lannister is the first-born son of Lord Tywin Lannister of Casterly Rock and his wife Lady Joanna, also of House Lannister. He is the twin brother of the later Queen Cersei Lannister. They literary shared the same womb of Joanna and were always inseparable as they grew up

together at Casterly Rock. They have a little brother, Tyrion Lannister, as well. Their sigil is a golden lion on a field of crimson, and their House words are "*Hear me roar!*" which is rarely mentioned. Their unofficial motto, which is more commonly known as the official one, is "*A Lannister always pays his debts*" - which is used much more frequently in negative rather than a positive context, though it is also sometimes used in the original, literal sense. The noble characters are often matches to their sigil animals in figurative and literal sense. They frequently wear the colours and attributes of the sigil animals, like Jaime's lion's-head helm. He is many times called a Lion. In Martin's world the shape shifting into animals does not exist, but there are people, the wargs, who can enter the minds of animals and perceive the world through their senses and even control their actions, which Jaime does not. In his case the animal form does not literally mean a transformation, but the identification with the family's sigil animal.

Through Jaime and Cersei's devotion to each other, their passion for each other came to the surface early. This fall from grace, their incest, is Jaime's most serious sin, although it is not as rare in mythology as we might think. Twin incest is a common feature of Balinese mythology and also ordinary in Southeast Asian creation myths which prominently featured twin or sibling couples. According to Hindu mythology, Manu and Shradha (the first humans on earth) were twins. Twin incest occurs in Greek mythology as well, such as in the story of Byblis and Kaunos. There are strong parallels between the Germanic portrayals of twin incest and those of the Balinese Ramayana. The 'anima' found his 'animus' (Jung, 1964: 30) at the beginning of their lives, we might think and Jaime thought it as well. When a man feels passion for a woman, he sees his own anima manifestation in the woman as an inner ideal, and he sees this woman more beautiful than others do and far more beautiful than she actually is (Antalfai, 2007: 166). Jaime tried to elucidate their love by the examples of former royal family's. "*For centuries the Targaryens had married brother to sister, since Aegon the Conqueror⁹ had taken his sisters to bride. The line must be kept pure, Viserys had told her a thousand times; theirs was the kingsblood, the golden blood of old Valyria, the blood of the dragon*" (Martin 1996: 29). According to Targaryen tradition, Aegon married within the family; however, instead of just one sister, he married both of them: his elder sister, Visenya, and his younger sister, Rhaenys. They

⁹ Valyrian Freehold, the ancient fallen empire, the ancestral home of House Targaryen was destroyed by a cataclysmic event known as the Doom of Valyria a century before Aegon's Landing. Aegon conquered Westeros riding on the back of his dragon, with his sisters on either side.

descended from the sky like gods do on the back of powerful creatures and brought fire and blood which are their words as well. The people had excused their incest until they became incompetent to rule, due to the madness derived from their sin.¹⁰ Jaime finds excuse for being together with his sister in the traditions of the Targaryens. *“Why shouldn’t I marry Cersei openly and share her bed every night? The dragons always married their sisters. Septons, lords, and smallfolk had turned a blind eye to the Targaryens for hundreds of years, let them do the same for House Lannister. ... That would show the realm that the Lannisters are above their laws, like gods and Targaryens.”* (Martin 2000: 287)

House Lannister is the richest and one of the most powerful families in the known world, however, the common judgement would condemn Jaime and his sister, Cersei.

‘Nomen est omen’, he is a Lannister to the core. Jaime, as we see him immediately at the beginning of the story, has the quintessential Lannister look, with flashing green eyes and golden hair. He is considered to be extremely handsome, his tall figure complemented with comely features and *“a smile that cut like a knife”*; Jon Snow thinks of Jaime that *“This is what a king should look like”* (Martin 1996: 48).

Tyrion, Jaime’s little brother, met Tysha on a lonely road, where she was being chased by some men. Jaime drove off the men while Tyrion took care of her. She was a crofter's daughter, orphaned when her father died of an illness. Tyrion fell in love with her and married her, even though he was only thirteen years old. When Lord Tywin Lannister learnt it, he made Jaime tell Tyrion that Tysha was a whore who had been paid to make Tyrion a man. Jaime, with this tricky lie, ruined Tyrion’s happiness and his relationship with Tysha.

At this point a parallel can be drawn with the iconic figure of Reynard. Reynard the fox appears in medieval European folklore and literature. Originally, he is a smart and cunning cleric who had to be anthropomorphized into a fox because of his scandals. These stories of Reynard

¹⁰ Robert’s Rebellion was a rebellion against House Targaryen under the rule of Aerys II Targaryen, also called Aerys the Mad, the Mad King, and King Scab. An instance for his madness: *“There were trials. Of a sort. Lord Rickard demanded trial by combat, and the king granted the request. Stark armored himself as for battle, thinking to duel one of the Kingsguard. Me, perhaps. Instead they took him to the throne room and suspended him from the rafters while two of Aerys’s pyromancers kindled a blaze beneath him. The king told him that fire was the champion of House Targaryen. So all Lord Rickard needed to do to prove himself innocent of treason was... well, not burn.”* (Martin 1998a: 721)

initially appear in French and German culture. He is an uninhibited, hedonic figure, who is a noble, lives in his own castle, and takes every opportunity to draw attention to the double-faced morals of medieval times emphasising that powerful people and the sovereign himself have greater sins than he has. It is not only his slyness that is outstanding, but he is also an excellent fighter which can be seen in one of the top scenes of his story, when he tries a fall with the wolf and manages to vanquish him by his foxiness and skills. He always manages to survive and escape by means of his connections and luck. He is able to get out from the least hopeful situations as well. He was sentenced to death several times, once he was even standing in the shadow of the gallows, from which but he finally escapes. Reynard defeats his enemies cruelly, as in the best case scenario they get crippled. Reynard is a source of many trickster figures. Although, they do not appear in animal form, they are defining characters in European culture (e.g. Till Eulenspiegel).

Jaime is a born warrior, his talent as a swordfighter revealed early. According to the traditions he became a squire at the age of eleven and was sent to Sumner Crakehall. Two years later he won his first tourney mêlée. At the age of fifteen during a battle against the Kingswood Brotherhood, Jamie saved Sumner Crakehall from Big Belly Ben and earned his spurs. During this campaign Jaime encountered the most infamous knight of his time, the psychic Smiling Knight, while he was still a squire. However, it was not Jaime who defeated him, but he was able to resist the infamous knight. On the battlefield he got knighted by the legendary knight Ser Arthur Dayne, the Sword of the Morning, and event which became the most decisive moment of his life not only because of his young age but also because he was knighted by the knight he most respected.

On return to his family home, he visited Cersei in the capital city, King's Landing, where his father (in position as Hand of the King) took her to separate them from each other. There Jaime got the news about his marriage pact, which was arranged by his noble father. To inhibit this pact and avoid their separation forever, Cersei suggested as a solution that Jaime should become a member of the Kingsguard. She managed to convince him with a night of passionate sex. *“By morning Casterly Rock seemed a small price to pay to be near her always.”* (Martin 2000a: 156) This truth was expressed by Cersei: *“Jaime told me once that he only feels truly alive in battle and in bed.”* (Martin 1998a: 764)

A month later they got the news about his acceptance to the Kingsguard, so he became the youngest member of the order in history. These events were against their father's will. He lost his heir by Jaime's joining the Kingsguard. Kingsguard is a renowned order of knights which had recruited the best sword fighters for centuries. The aim of the order is to protect the king and the royal family with their own lives, to obey their commands and keep their secrets. The existence of the Kingsguard roots from the establishment of The Seven Kingdoms, from Aegon the Conqueror. The number of the members never exceeds seven at any point in time and they can never own lands, ranks, titles nor be able to marry and have any children. All members of the Kingsguard must be sworn knights and throughout its history the Kingsguard has always been led by the Lord Commander who was usually appointed by the king himself and traditionally sits in the Small Council. The history of the members of the guard is recorded in the White Book, a volume maintained by the head of the Kingsguard, and stored in the Round Room of the White Sword Tower. In the White Book, officially known as The Book of Brothers, each member of the Kingsguard is given one page on which his personal history and a record of his deeds are written. Some of the members of the order were legendary knights who represented the essence of chivalry and honour in Westeros. Their uniform consists of white cloaks, they carry plain white shields and with some occasional exceptions they wear little or no ornamentation or sigils on their white armour. Pushing the limits "*Ser Jaime wore the white cloak as well, but beneath it he was shining gold from head to foot, with a lion's-head helm and a golden sword*" (Martin 1996: 284) as a representation of being a Lion as well, not 'only' a Sworn Brother of the Kingsguard.

We do not know much about Jaime's emotional world in his young age. In this cycle Jaime appears as a Lannister lion and acts like one. Only a few feelings are revealed. One is his devotion to Cersei, another is his amusement in fight and finally his upset which led to his most incongruous act in protecting their little brother against his lover, Cersei, when she abused him. These feelings do not fit into the *Trickster Cycle*, but we do not see his life in chronological order, but through the eyes of Eddard Stark. He is the one who we are initially led to believe is the main protagonist of the series, so we hold his opinion with high regards. Eddard judged Jaime guilty the moment he saw him. He thinks very little of him, because he had a limited view of Jaime's life and therefore a limited understanding of it. Attacking Ned and his people in the

street did not help Jaime's judgement. It was an act of revenge and a threat by Jaime, as Ned's wife unfairly captured his little brother, Tyrion, following the command of his husband. From Ned's point of view Jaime is an arrogant oath breaker, the murderer of his king, who broke the vow that he had sworn. And there was something Eddard did not know about. He did not know about Jaime's attempt to kill his son, Bran, by pushing him through the window with these cynical words "*The things I do for love...*" (Martin 1998a: 81) in order to stop Bran from reporting what he had observed. That is how he was presented to the readers at the beginning of the story, but his motifs and reasons for committing such acts are revealed only later.

4.2 The Hare Cycle

"The next figure is Hare. He also, like Trickster ... first appears in animal form. He has not yet attained mature human stature, but all the same he appears as the founder of human culture, the Transformer. ... he became their saviour as well as their culture-hero. ... This archetypal figure represents a distinct advance on Trickster: One can see that he is becoming a socialized being correcting the instinctual and infantile urges found in the Trickster Cycle." (Henderson 1964: 113)

The best-known North-American hero myth is the Anishinabe, Menominee and Algonquian Indian myth, in which there is a hare called Manabush. He is of high origin, his grandmother is none other than Mother Earth, Nokomis. He is born in the shape of a hare, but he changes several times during his life, e.g. for some time he lives as a wolf and gets a wolf brother with whom they struggle together. This wolf-brother with whom he fights will die and Manabush kills his murderers. He kills a bear. He goes down into the nether world; he is gobbled up by a giant monster, a Jonah-like story which refers to a coming back from death or escaping from a deadly danger. The hare is not only a cracker of jokes and a hero, but it is also a culture-hero, as it has a role of culture-preserver and culture re-creator. Manabush, for example, gets the fire for people, and remakes the land in post-diluvial times. It can remind us of Prometheus and Coyote, an Indian creative mythical hero.

Lord Tywin, furious at the turn of events, left King's Landing with his daughter at his side to take revenge on the king and Jaime as well, so Jaime remained alone at court guarding the Mad King, who had made Tywin upset. He had no chance to meet Cersei for a long time, since his duty bound him to the capital where he had to face the fact of what it means to be a 'true' knight. One night he and Ser Jon Darry stood guard outside Queen Rhaella's bedchamber, while King Aerys raped and abused her. To Jaime's remark "*We are sworn to protect her as well,*" Darry answered "*We are,*" ... "*but not from him.*" (Martin 1998b: 261)

Another important event was the execution of Brandon and Lord Rickard Stark. After it Jaime expressed his concerns to Ser Gerold Hightower, who was the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. "*After, Gerold Hightower himself took me [Jaime] aside and said to me, 'You swore a vow to guard the king, not to judge him.' That was the White Bull, loyal to the end and a better man than me, all agree.*" (Martin 1998b: 722)

This execution and the abduction of Lyanna Stark (by Rhaegar Targaryen) led to Robert's Rebellion. To King Aerys, after the loss of the Battle of Bells, it becomes apparent that the rebellion could be successful and it would mean King's Landing's loss as well. All members of the Kingsguard were sent out from the capital except Jaime, who was refused to join the royal army, so eventually he was the remaining 'white cloak' in the capital. Before the departure of Rhaegar, Jaime begged him to take him along and let Ser Barristan Selmy or Ser Jon Darry protect the king for once, but Jaime got refused again. During the short period of sole guarding of the King, Jaime became cognizant and keeper of Aerys' secret backup plan. According to this plan of the king and the chief pyromancers, caches of wildfire were placed throughout the city, and when the necessity arose, they would burn the entire city to the ground rather than lose it and leave it to Robert.

They got the news about the Battle of the Trident where the royal army got defeated and Rhaegar Targaryen got hammered by Robert Baratheon himself. The news was spreading and not just King's Landing got the news, but also Tywin Lannister. He immediately called his banners and marched against the capital to save his son in fear that King Aerys might kill Jaime in his endless madness and anger. Although Varys, the Master of whisperers, called Lord Tywin a traitor, King

Aerys listened to Grand Maester¹¹ Pycelle, who told him that Lord Tywin had come to his defence, and followed his advice to open the gates to Lord Tywin and his army. Once they were inside the gates, Tywin, against the expectation of the Aerys, started the Sack of King's Landing. Realising the inevitability of the defeat of the Red Keep, Jaime sent a messenger to the king, asking him to leave and to make terms with the attackers. When the messenger returned, Jaime got Aerys's order to bring him Lord Tywin's head, who was his own father, to prove that he is not a traitor. *"I want him dead, the traitor. I want his head, you'll bring me his head, or you'll burn with all the rest. All the traitors."* (Martin 2000a: 158) From the messenger Jaime also got the information that the king was with Rossart, the head of the Alchemists' Guild, which led Jaime to believe that Aerys was about to order the destruction of the city.

On the way to the throne room, Jaime came across Rossart and attacked him. He had no chance against such an excellent knight, who slayed Rossart with no mercy. Jaime then arrived into the throne room through the king's door, finding Aerys alone. When the king saw the blood on Jaime's sword, he demanded to know whether it was Lord Tywin's, reminding Jaime of his order. He told Jaime that Rossart was on his way to give his enemies a 'warm' welcome. Jaime cynically obeyed to the command and answered the king's question that it was Rossart's blood. The king became scared, turned and ran to the Iron Throne where Jaime slaughtered him, preventing him from giving the command to burn the city. *"A king should die harder than this"* thought Jaime (Martin 2000a: 158). Then, suddenly, some of Tywin's knights burst into the hall leaving Jaime no time to vanish. On the faces of the newcomer knights were no surprise, perhaps fear. *"Lannister or no, he was one of Aerys's seven."* (Martin 2000a: 159) Roland Crakehall stepped forward and reported that *"The castle is ours, ser, and the city,"* (Martin 2000a: 159) Jaime as a Kingsguard and their lord's son commanded *"Tell them the Mad King is dead,"* ... *"Spare all those who yield and hold them captive."* (Martin 2000a: 159) They asked Jaime *"Shall I proclaim a new king as well?"* ... Jaime read the question plain: *Shall it be your father, or Robert Baratheon, or do you mean to try to make a new dragonking?"* (Martin 2000a: 159) He was aware of the fact he had no right to answer such an important question so he replied arrogantly *"Proclaim who you bloody well like"* (Martin 2000a:159). *"Then he climbed the Iron Throne and seated himself with his sword across his knees, to see who would come to claim the*

¹¹ The maesters are an order of scholars, healers, postmen, and scientists.

kingdom. As it happened, it had been Eddard Stark. You had no right to judge me either, Stark.”
(Martin 2000a: 159)

The later king, Robert Baratheon pardoned him officially, but in reality nobody forgot his deed and the Kingslayer was born.

In this cycle Jaime still appears as a Lannister lion and acts like it, but besides that he becomes someone who acts like an independent grown-up man. He earned the derogatory nickname "Kingslayer" when he seemingly and treasonously slew King Aerys. Jaime by this murder executed many things as well. He ruined the reputation of the Kingsguard in the eyes of the common judgement, he broke his most sacred vow, became famous for his notoriety and also saved hundreds of thousands of lives which nobody knows, because the people who did are dead. It is hard to judge the honour and moral of a 'time and place' which is not really like our own and which is not governed by our own standards. Jaime did not really have the time or ability to put Aerys under protective custody and let the authorities take over. He chose the lesser of two evils, but it was still evil. He defended himself many times in his style like this: *“How can you still count yourself a knight, when you have forsaken every vow you ever swore?” ... “So many vows...they make you swear and swear. Defend the king. Obey the king. Keep his secrets. Do his bidding. Your life for his. But obey your father. Love your sister. Protect the innocent. Defend the weak. Respect the gods. Obey the laws. It's too much. No matter what you do, you're forsaking one vow or the other.”* (Martin 1998a: 720) Jaime Lannister became a point of view character in *A Storm of Swords* (the third volume of the series). Once we know his thoughts it becomes crystal clear that his problems with vows come from giving priority to them. Which is the primary and which is secondary in importance? Which one comes first? What if one is against the other which he has sworn already? Jaime's heart is in conflict with itself.

The contrast in morality between Jaime and Eddard Stark can be seen in how Jaime judges actions according to intent and outcome ('utilitarian'), whereas Eddard judges actions according to their adherence to his concept of honour ('deontological'). That is what makes it easier to comprehend Jaime's infamous actions, once we have understood the reasons for them. The way we do it is by learning his thoughts and dreams. We realise that he is neither inherently cruel nor violent.

And it is the right place to present one of this recall about the lost good old times. *"The world was simpler in those days, Jaime thought, and men as well as swords were made of finer steel. Or was it only that he had been fifteen? They were all in their graves now, the Sword of the Morning and the Smiling Knight, the White Bull and Prince Lewyn, Ser Oswell Whent with his black humor, earnest Jon Darry, Simon Toyne and his Kingswood Brotherhood, bluff old Sumner Crakehall. And me, that boy I was... when did he die, I wonder? When I donned the white cloak? When I opened Aerys's throat? That boy had wanted to be Ser Arthur Dayne, but someplace along the way he had become the Smiling Knight instead."* (Martin 2000b: 342) Jaime never told the truth about the happenings to anybody except his saviour, Brienne, whose character will be examined in details in the next cycle.

4.2.1 The True Knight

Conferring to knighthood in Westeros follows a long tradition which evokes the way that a knight should follow.

In the ceremony there is a touch on the right shoulder with the blade with the words *"in the name of the Warrior I charge you to be brave."* Then, the sword moves from the right shoulder to the left saying *"In the name of the Father I charge you to be just."* Then, the sword goes back to the right with the words *"In the name of the Mother I charge you to defend the young and innocent."* Finally, touching again the left shoulder, he says: *"In the name of the Maid I charge you to protect all women."* (Martin 1998c) The ceremony is conducted by the master of the squire.

There were and are a lot of men who got knighted in Westeros, but only a few of them are considered to be true knights. A true knight embodies all that a knight should be, that is, a perfect knight exemplifying all the qualities of what knighthood stands for. The true knights are supposed to be brave and just, they have to defend the young and the innocent, especially women who cannot defend themselves, and they should live a pure and godly life. A true knight acts with military courtesy, in combat and when nobles and knights were taken prisoner, their lives were spared and were often held for ransom. But just a few knights are considered true knights,

achieving and maintaining such high and noble ideals. The chivalric code in Westeros is similar to ours. A true knight is as rarely as they were in our age of romance.

One of the true knights Ser Barristan Selmy, former Lord Commander of the Kingsguard and actual Lord Commander of the Queensguard, said these words to emphasise and express the meanings of chivalry. *“It is chivalry that makes a true knight, not a sword,” ... “Without honor, a knight is no more than a common killer. It is better to die with honor than to live without it.”* (Martin 2011: 399) He has a very clean opinion about Jaime: *“Selmy had never approved of Jaime's presence in his precious Kingsguard. Before the rebellion, the old knight thought him too young and untried; afterward, he had been known to say that the Kingslayer should exchange that white cloak for a black one.”* (Martin 2011: 261)

The white cloak represents the uniform of the Kingsguard while the men of the Night's Watch dress entirely in black. They are the protector of the realms, however, most recruits are now criminals avoiding punishment, nobles avoiding scandal, orphans and other social outcasts. Eddard Stark, the other honourable character of the series would have done the same to Jaime. Ser Barristan Selmy, who has based all his life on oaths, despises people like Jaime. He with his actions cannot be farther from Barristan's ideal of a knight.

The concept of the true knight also appears in several legend cycles, the best-known spotless knight is Sir Galahad from the Arthurian legends.

4.3 The Red Horn Cycle

“Red Horn, the third of the series of hero figures, is an ambiguous person “...” He meets the requirements of an archetypal hero by passing such tests as winning a race and by proving himself in battle. His superhuman power is shown by his ability to defeat giants by guile “...” or by strength”. He meets a powerful companion “whose strength compensates for whatever weakness Red Horn may display. With Red Horn we have reached the world of man, though an archaic world, in which the aid of superhuman powers or tutelary gods is needed to ensure man's victory over the evil forces that beset him. Toward the end of the story the hero-god

departs, leaving Red Horn “...” on earth. The danger to man’s happiness and security now comes from man himself.” (Henderson 1964: 113)

Jaime is a proven warrior who got pardoned by the king from his former crime and remained the member of the Kingsguard which he betrayed at some point. His beloved sister became the wife of Robert as a kind of marriage pact between the ruler Baratheon family and the mighty Lannister family to secure the power of the throne. Jaime had to tolerate Robert’s actions as he was his king and the husband of his sister. He was constantly abused and judged guilty of Aerys’ murder, but in his pride he never redeemed himself by telling the truth and endured these abuses. The marriage between Robert and Cersei was not free from sorrow. At the beginning there was a chance, but later on they had started to loathe each other. Their first attempt to have a child ended tragically. Robert sought solace at the whorehouses and begat sixteen bastards while his wife Cersei found solace at her brother, Jaime. These events were foretold by Maggy when Cersei was young, but then she had found the prediction senseless.

“Cersei: When will I wed the prince?

Maggy: Never. You will wed the king.

Cersei: I will be queen, though?

Maggy: Aye. Queen you shall be... until there comes another, younger and more beautiful, to cast you down and take all that you hold dear.

Cersei: Will the king and I have children?

Maggy: Oh, aye. Six-and-ten for him, and three for you. Gold shall be their crowns and gold their shrouds, she said. And when your tears have drowned you, the valonqar¹² shall wrap his hands about your pale white throat and choke the life from you.” (Martin 1998b: 610-11)

From this conversation we can draw a conclusion that Cersei never had the same attitude to their relationship as her brother did. She never planned a common future which they would spend together for eternity and against everything and everybody.

¹² Valonqar is in High Valyrian for ‘little brother’.

Valanqar might refer to Tyrion, whom Cersei hates and later tries to kill, he may be Jaime himself, whom she turns against herself with her permanent rejection and intrigue, and he can also be her own son, Tommen, who is her brother as well, as he was born from an incestuous relationship.

A parallel story in mythology is from Thebes. Eteocles and Polynices were sons of Oedipus and Jocasta. Jocasta is Oedipus' mother and wife at the same time, so the boys were also born from an incestuous relationship. They divide the rule of Thebes, however, Eteocles deceives Polineices, does not share the power with him. As a result, Polineices, together with six of his men, (seven as a number appears at Martin in the number of Kingsguard the leader of which is Jaime) attacks Thebes. At the gate of the city they kill each other in hand-play. The story of Cain and Abel comes to our mind, the turning point here is the opposite sex of the twin-brothers; however, the change of relationship and incest in the background refers more obviously to Eteocles and Polynices.

Jaime never had a chance to perform as a father, which would have doomed his family's life. The only thing that he could do for their beloved ones was guarding them as the member of the Kingsguard, or to commit a crime such as pushing a child through the window because he saw Cersei and Jaime making love. If the child, Bran, had spoken about what he saw, it would have meant the death of both Jaime and his family. Jaime sacrificed him, an innocent life in order to defend theirs, without any sign of remorse.

"If truth be told, Jaime had come to rue heaving Brandon Stark out that window. Cersei had given him no end of grief afterward, when the boy refused to die. "He was seven, Jaime," she'd berated him. "Even if he understood what he saw, we should have been able to frighten him into silence."

"I didn't think you'd want—"

"You never think. If the boy should wake and tell his father what he saw—"

"If if if." He had pulled her into his lap. "if he wakes we'll say he was dreaming, we'll call him a liar, and should worse come to worst I'll kill Ned Stark."

"And then what do you imagine Robert will do?"

“Let Robert do as he pleases. I’ll go to war with him if I must. The War for Cersei’s Cunt, the singers will call it.” (Martin 2000a: 22)

After Robert’s death, ‘his son’ Joffrey ‘Baratheon’ comes to the Iron Throne, who gradually lost his ability to rule just like the Mad King. He is the son of Jaime and Cersei born from their secret relationship¹³. Eddard Stark foresaw the paternity of Joffrey which led to Eddard’s death.

Eddard’s son Robb Stark’s rise opened a new chapter in Jaime’s life. During the War of the Five Kings Jaime became prisoner of war by a masterly executed stratagem. Besides, we should know that this plan was based on his pride and self-confidence. He did not give up easily as before he got captured, Jaime managed to kill Daryn Hornwood, Eddard Karstark, and Torrhen Karstark on the way to Robb Stark, but Jaime never reached him. Jaime spent a lot of time imprisoned while the War of the Five Kings raged around him. There were attempts from the side of his family to release him, for instance negotiations that led to nothing. Meanwhile, the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard got discharged by Cersei and she appointed Jaime as the new Lord Commander in his absence. At the end of his imprisonment Catelyn Stark, wife of Eddard Stark, visited him. In a short conversation she figured out that she can trust Jaime despite his bad reputation. There were harsh questions and cynical answers between them.

“Jaime: Answer my questions and I’ll answer yours.

Catelyn: Truthfully?

Jaime: Oh, it’s truth you want? Be careful, my lady. Tyrion says that people often claim to hunger for truth, but seldom like the taste when it’s served up.” (Martin 1998a: 716)

In this conversation Jaime said arrogantly but truly how he considered himself unique *“There are no men like me. There’s only me.”* (Martin 1998a: 715) At the end of her visit Catelyn called Brienne in, and asked for her sword. Then, Catelyn with Brienne’s sword forced Jaime to swear a questionable sacred vow¹⁴. Besides the strange circumstances Jaime has kept this oath

¹³ We can observe the comparison between their and Beowulf’s myth. Certain interpretation of Beowulf says that he did not kill Grendel, on the contrary, they had a relationship which resulted in the birth of a dragon.

¹⁴ *“Swear that you will never again take up arms against Stark nor Tully. Swear that you will compel your brother to honor his pledge to return my daughters safe and unharmed. Swear on your honor as a knight, on your honor as*

throughout his life. This is how Brienne appeared in his life, but then he did not know that she is his ‘thunderbird’, his ‘twin’ (Henderson 1964: 113).

Think of Manabush or Jonah in the belly of the whale. Also prisoners in Riverrun, in the castle of Tully, whose symbol is the fish.

From now on Brienne’s importance in the Jamie’s life increases, but the readers first encounter Brienne earlier, when she became a member of Renly Baratheon’s Rainbow Guard. Brienne just won a tourney, became the victor of one hundred and sixteen knights and swore her vow to Renly: *“My life for yours, Your Grace. From this day on, I am your shield, I swear it by the old gods and the new.”* (Martin 1998a: 312) We come to know that Brienne has romantic illusions about chivalry; she is an idealist. She idolized Renly because he looked and acted like the perfect king. Brienne’s appearance is important I therefore quote her description: *“Brienne’s eyes were large and very blue, a young girl’s eyes, trusting and guileless, but the rest... her features were broad and coarse, her teeth prominent and crooked, her mouth too wide, her lips so plump they seemed swollen. A thousand freckles speckled her cheeks and brow, and her nose had been broken more than once.”* At first sight Catelyn thought *“Is there any creature on earth as unfortunate as an ugly woman?”* (Martin 1998a: 312)

There are songs and stories which depict honourable knights and chivalry in details. Later Catelyn warned Brienne that life is not a song *“...it will not last. ... Because they are the knights of summer, and winter is coming.”* However, her wise words did not reach Brienne. *“Lady Catelyn, you are wrong.”* Brienne regarded her with eyes as blue as her armour. *“Winter will never come for the likes of us. Should we die in battle, they will surely sing of us, and it’s always summer in the songs. In the songs all knights are gallant, all maids are beautiful, and the sun is always shining.”* (Martin 1998a: 315) That kind of sanguine Brienne is. A following quotation of her thought underlies this feeling: *“He could have died. Old or young, a true knight is sworn to protect those who are weaker than himself, or die in the attempt.”* (Martin 1998b: 526)

a Lannister, on your honor as a Sworn Brother of the Kingsguard. Swear it by your sister’s life, and your father’s, and your son’s, by the old gods and the new, and I’ll send you back to your sister. Refuse, and I will have your blood.” (Martin 2000a: 20)

Brienne, the Maid of Tarth, realized that the sword is more fitting to her than the lady's tambour-frame with her outlook and mettle. Swords will keep Brienne safe, not roses, because roses represent the danger of humiliation. Her hatred for roses, the symbol of romantic love, helped her win the last knight to gain her position in Renly's Kingsguard. Renly gave Ser Barristan Selmy's position in his Kingsguard to Brienne believing that Ser Barristan might have gone to Riverrun to support Robb Stark as king (one of the Five Kings). *"Loras Tyrell had been the last to face her wrath that day. He'd never courted her, had hardly looked at her at all, but he bore three golden roses on his shield that day, and Brienne hated roses. The sight of them had given her a furious strength."* (Martin 1998b: 318) Her hatred rooted in her childhood. She had three suitors, one of whom was Ser Ronnet, who years later, Brienne still vividly remembers. *"She remembered a day at Evenfall, and a young knight with a rose in his hand. He brought the rose to give to me. Or so her septa told her. All she had to do was welcome him to her father's castle. He was eighteen, with long red hair that tumbled to his shoulders. She was twelve, tightly laced into a stiff new gown, its bodice bright with garnets. The two of them were of a height, but she could not look him in the eye, nor say the simple words her septa had taught her. Ser Ronnet. I welcome you to my lord father's hall. It is good to look upon your face at last."* (Martin 1998b: 162) Her psyche was afflicted with this failure. She re-lived the humiliating experience with Ser Ronnet in Renly's camp when his knights competed in a cruel competition to win her maidenhead. Sadly, her experiences with men had been so bad that she actually wants them to try to injure or kill her rather than woo her. She is much more confident facing men armed with swords than roses. For Brienne the humiliation is far more threatening than an injury or loss of her life. To keep herself on the surface she stubbornly clings to chivalry and its ideals. She wears an amour against what threatens her both literally and figuratively. Her sword is not just a means of protection and justice for her, but also a symbol freedom and independence.

Brienne is one of the few true knights throughout history. But even she broke her vow unwillingly and learned how hard it is to keep up a resolution. Not long after her admission to Renly's Kingsguard, a supernatural shade killed Renly and he died in her arms. Brienne was unable to do anything against an enemy of this kind. *"'Your Gr—no!' cried Brienne the Blue when she saw that evil flow, sounding as scared as any little girl. The king stumbled into her arms ... His legs collapsed, and only Brienne's strength held him up. She threw back her head*

and screamed, wordless in her anguish.”As Catelyn perceives *“The shadow. Something dark and evil had happened here, she knew, something that she could not begin to understand. Renly never cast that shadow. Death came in that door and blew the life out of him as swift as the wind snuffed out his candles.”* (Martin 1998a: 455-6) Right after the eldritch event a few knights stepped into the tent and mistakenly judging the situation, they attacked the assumed ‘kingslayer’. Brienne had no chance or time to explain, therefore she had to protect themselves. Brienne unsheathed Renly’s sword and managed to flee away with Catelyn. It is important to emphasize the fact that she got her sword from Renly, from her idealized king. As a result of this misconception she also earned the nickname ‘kingslayer’.

During their runaway Brienne swore three times to kill Stannis (one of the five kings, the man who was suspicious in the assassination) and avenge Renly’s death, but also said these words: *“... when the time comes, you will not try and hold me back. Promise me that. That you will not hold me back from Stannis.” ... I am yours, my lady. Your liege man, or... whatever you would have me be. I will shield your back and keep your counsel and give my life for yours, if need be. I swear it by the old gods and the new.”* (Martin 1998a: 548) This is how Brienne got into Catelyn’s service and gave her the sword to make Jaime swear his vow. She had to help Jaime to escape from his prison and escort him to King’s Landing unhurt in exchange for getting back Catelyn’s daughters.

Their relationship started very poorly. While they were travelling together, Brienne often threw Jaime's oathbreaking in his face *“Your oaths are worthless. You swore an oath to Aerys.”* (Martin 2000a: 289) Brienne despised Jaime for his reputation while Jaime made jokes at her expense all the time. Jaime often forgot about courtesy, seized every chance to provoke her and state his displeasure about her looks. *“The Rainbow Guard? You and six other girls, was it? A singer once said that all maids are fair in silk... But he never met you, did he?”* (Martin 2000a: 27)

“You figure to row all the way to King’s Landing, wench?”

“You will call me Brienne. Not wench.”

“My name is Ser Jaime. Not Kingslayer.”

“Do you deny that you slew a king?”

“No. Do you deny your sex? If so, unlace those breeches and show me.” He gave her an innocent smile. “I’d ask you to open your bodice, but from the look of you that wouldn’t prove much.” (Martin 2000a: 19)

On the long journey back to King’s Landing Jaime had a chance to get rid of the ‘wench’. His relationship to her is changing step by step. *“One good swing when she comes paddling up and I’ll be free of her. Instead he found himself stretching the oar out over the water. Brienne grabbed hold, and Jaime pulled her in. ... “I [Brienne] want none of your thanks, Kingslayer. I swore an oath to bring you safe to King’s Landing.” “And you actually mean to keep it?” Jaime gave her his brightest smile. “Now there’s a wonder.” (Martin 2000a: 32)*

Jaime obviously tried to pretend being arrogant and cynical but the statement was honest. Later he changed his mind about her. *“Well, she may be ugly but she’s not entirely stupid.” (Martin 2000a: 154)* His attitude to her slowly changed during the process of her cognition and a spark of appreciation and understanding was shown. *“She reminded him of Tyrion in some queer way, though at first blush two people could scarcely be any more dissimilar.” (Martin 2000a: 155)* Once he asked her forgiveness about a misunderstood sentence, but Brienne did not react exactly well. We should note that Jaime called her by her real name instead of ‘wench’ in order to emphasise that he is speaking seriously.

“I did not intend to give offense, Brienne. Forgive me.”

“Your crimes are past forgiving, Kingslayer.” (Martin 2000a: 155)

Even a little sexual tension can be observed in their odd relationship, for instance in the swordfight between Brienne and Jaime that led to their capture by the Bloody Mummies. We can recognise how this double meaning is described in terms of romance, like kisses and dancing.

“Give me the sword, Kingslayer.”

“Oh, I will.” He sprang to his feet and drove at her, the longsword alive in his hands. Brienne jumped back, parrying, but he followed, pressing the attack. No sooner did she turn one cut than the next was upon her. The swords kissed and sprang apart and kissed again. Jaime’s blood was singing. This was what he was

meant for; he never felt so alive as when he was fighting, with death balanced on every stroke. ...

The dance went on. He pinned her against an oak, cursed as she slipped away, followed her through a shallow brook half-choked with fallen leaves. Steel rang, steel sang, steel screamed and sparked and scraped, and the woman started grunting like a sow at every crash, yet somehow he could not reach her. ...

He laughed a ragged, breathless laugh. "Come on, come on, my sweetling, the music's still playing. Might I have this dance, my lady?" (Martin 2000a: 289-90)

Jaime symbolically takes Brienne's virginity during this 'dance':

"...As he felt himself falling, he twisted the mischance into a diving lunge. His point scraped past her parry and bit into her upper thigh. A red flower blossomed, and Jaime had an instant to savor the sight of her blood." (Martin 2000a: 290)

Martin used the term 'red flower' to refer to menstruation so it is a kind of reference to a maiden's blood. Brienne's symbolic deflowering was demonstrated in these lines:

"Brienne lurched to her feet. She was all mud and blood below the waist, her clothing askew, her face red. She looks as if they caught us fucking instead of fighting..." (Martin 2000a: 291)

At the end of their fight, in her fury, Brienne almost choked the life out of Jaime. She managed to do that thanks to Jaime's poor circumstances. His skills had gone to rust and rot in the dungeon, and the chains were not a great help either. *"His eye closed, his shoulders were going numb from the jarring they'd taken, and his wrists ached from the weight of chains, manacles, and sword. His longsword grew heavier with every blow..." (Martin 2000a: 290)* Getting aware of his situation also chilled him: *'She is stronger than I am.'* (Martin 2000a: 291) Only a few words in season help him out of his sticky situation when Brienne shouted at him *"Yield, or I'll drown you!" "And break your oath?" he snarled. "Like me?" (Martin 2000a: 291)*

These wise words were great effect on her honour and she opened her eyes. But the wise words were not able to save him to lose his 'best part'.

In the beginning, Gilgamesh behaves arrogantly and stonily, so the gods create Enkidu to be his opponent. Enkidu is just as strong as Gilgamesh, but his power is in his virginity. He has two dreams. In his first dream he appears as a shield, then as an attacking weapon. In the beginning they are enemies, but Gilgamesh had a dream which says they will become friends. In his dream he can also see an axe, with which he makes love as if it was a woman, then, they become friends. In the end, Enkidu dies (these mythological friendships often come up like in the cases of Akhilleus and Patroclos and their deaths).

Brünhilde is a Valkyrie, in a story called Siegfried, in Niebelung Song, who is unbeatably strong as a virgin, but as she lost her virginity by Siegfried, and with her virginity she loses her superhuman strength as well. Brienne, the perfect, stainless and virgin knight is just like Jeanne d'Arc.

Right immediately after their fight they got captured by the dreadful band, The Brave Companions, also known as the Bloody Mummars. Jaime hoping that it could help them out of the trouble constantly tried to refer to his father, about his power and wealth which made their leader, Vargo Hoat, command one of his men to chop off Jaime's hand. *"The goat [Vargo] wants me [Jaime] to piss my breeches and beg his mercy, but he'll never have that pleasure. He was a Lannister of Casterly Rock, Lord Commander of the Kingsguard; no sellsword would make him scream. Sunlight ran silver along the edge of the arakh¹⁵ as it came shivering down, almost too fast to see. And Jaime screamed."* (Martin 2000a: 297)

Odin loses one of his eyes for the sake of obtaining knowledge. Oedipus, in order to punish himself for incest, takes his own eyesight. Then, he has to take a long journey, which he cannot make without help. He gets to Colonus with the help of a woman; just like Jaime gets to Harrenhal with the help of Brienne after losing his hand. Another great example is Tyr, whose story will be examined later. Martin is not the first author who uses the motif of twins in the sense of a man and a woman helping each other in a complementary way to achieve their aims. Martin is admittedly a Tolkien fan, and at Tolkien Beren and Lúthien's story is one of the most powerful ones. A man and a woman who struggle together and additionally Beren loses one of

¹⁵ A special weapon

his hands and leaves it in the mouth of a wolf called Carcaroth, and thus, wins the hands of the woman, Luthien.

The Bloody Mummers' cruelty was beyond words. They hung the chopped hand to Jaime's neck and they bound him tight to Brienne and made them share a horse again. One day, instead of back to front, they bound them face-to-face. "The lovers" they said. They constantly humiliated them. This turn of events made Brienne nurse him. She had failed her vow, she broke it unwillingly, she was not able to take Jaime to King's Landing safe and sound. She experienced how excellent swordfighter Jaime was despite his circumstances, her blind hate started to spread and change into some kind of sympathy. One night when Jaime's condition got worse Brienne turned to him:

"Jaime," Brienne whispered, so faintly he thought he was dreaming it. "Jaime, what are you doing?"

"Dying," he whispered back.

"No," she said, "no, you must live."

He wanted to laugh. "Stop telling me what do, wench. I'll die if it pleases me."

"Are you so craven?"

The word shocked him. He was Jaime Lannister, a knight of the Kingsguard, he was the Kingslayer. No man had ever called him craven. Other things they called him, yes; oathbreaker, liar, murderer. They said he was cruel, treacherous, reckless. But never craven. "What else can I do, but die?"

"Live," she said, "live, and fight, and take revenge." (Martin 2000a: 416)

These were the words which kept him alive. Her trust meant a lot for Jaime, she managed to touch his inner pride. Jaime even started to taste the word craven. *"Craven, Jaime thought, as Brienne fought to stifle her moans. Can it be? They took my sword hand. Was that all I was, a sword hand? Gods be good, is it true?" (Martin 2000a: 416)* This was throughout his life the very first time he questioned his own self-worthiness and he did it many times later.

Their destinies are intertwined. Like Jaime, Brienne started out as a member of a Kingsguard (even so a different one). Like Jaime, she became notorious as a kingslayer and an apparent oathbreaker. Like Jaime, Brienne swore an oath to find the Stark girls and bring them home

safely. And like Jaime, Brienne considers her oath to Catelyn a chance to redeem herself for failing in her duty as a member of the Kingsguard. Their journey can be considered as the start of their redemption. He lost the hand which made him the Kingslayer, and caused his sins, so was this a starting point for their 'redemption arc'. He lost what had made him famous, what made him the member of the Kingsguard, what made him officially half Lannister, but he remained just a man behind the 'mask'. What this loss represents will be discussed is the next cycle when the outcomes comes to the surface.

By knowing this part of Jaime's life we can draw a parallel between Jaime Lannister and the Norse god Tyr with ease. Tyr is associated with law and heroic glory in Norse mythology, portrayed as one-handed. His most well-known deed was the 'binding' of Fenrir, as a consequence of which Tyr lost his hand. Jaime always considered himself as an honourable man with great values, but he is completely aware of the fact that others have a different opinion about him. Once Jaime compares himself to Eddard Stark, the manifestation of honour by saying: *"In my own way, I have been truer than your [Catelyn] Ned ever was."* (Martin 1998a:722) Bran can be placed parallel to Fenrir and as Bran's paralysis represents Fenrir's "binding". Bran is a warg which means that he can be considered a wolf, and also the sigil animal of the House Stark is a direwolf. When Jaime pushes Bran out of the window Jaime still has both hands just like when Tyr bounds Fenrir. Although Bran is not directly responsible for the loss of Jaime's hand, it was the war, arising between the Starks and the Lannisters (one of the causes of it was Bran's crippling), which leads to Jaime's tragedy. Jaime's role as Tyr is hinted at in the names of his brother TYRion, and father TYwin (Ty is Norwegian for Tyr). The etymology of these names could be a sign-post toward the role of Jaime. The word 'ion' is of Greek origin, and once meant 'the road to' or 'the path to' in its ancient usage, making Tyr-ion 'the road' or 'the path to Tyr'. Conversely, 'win' is of proto-Germanic origin and has always meant practically the same thing – 'to gain by struggling' -- making Ty-win 'to gain Ty[r] by struggling [with Aerys]'. (Dorian the Historian 2013b)

4.4 The Twin Cycle

“This basic theme (which is repeated in the last cycle, that of the Twins) raises, in effect the vital question: How long can human beings be successful without falling victims to their own pride or, in mythological terms, to the jealousy of the god?” (Henderson 1964: 113)

“Twins ‘...’ are essentially human and together constitute a single person. Originally united in the mother’s womb, they were forced to apart at birth. Yet they belong together, and it is necessary – though exceedingly difficult to reunite them. In these two children we see the two sides of a man’s nature. ‘...’ In some of the stories of the Twin Heroes these attributes are refined to the point where one figure represents the introvert, whose main strength lies in his powers of reflection, and the other is an extravert, a man of action who can accomplish great deeds.” (Henderson 1964: 113)

“Thus, in both the Red Horn Cycle and that of the Twins, we can see the theme of sacrifice or death of the hero as a necessary cure for Hybris, the pride that over-reached itself.” (Henderson 1964: 114)

Jaime survived the terrible loss of his hand by the help of Brienne and constantly reminded himself of it with these words: *“...live for Cersei, live for Tyrion. Live for vengeance. A Lannister always pays his debts.”* (Martin 2000a: 416-17) His admiration for Cersei was on unsurpassed, but another woman, Brienne, managed to earn his respect and admiration, and stepped into his life.

All that remained to him was the memory of his former life, Brienne, the pain, and the agony on his loss. *“They had taken his hand, they had taken his sword hand, and without it he was nothing. The other was no good to him. Since the time he could walk, his left arm had been his shield arm, no more. It was his right hand that made him a knight; his right arm that made him a man.”* (Martin 2000a: 417)

Once during their captivity Jaime saved Brienne from rape by a tricky lie which she thanked him for and for the very first time called him by his title. *“I thank you, ser.”* Jaime answered, *“A Lannister pays his debts. That was for the river, and those rocks you dropped on Robin Ryger.”* (Martin 2000a: 419)

Eventually, they reached their destination, Harrenhal, the seat of the lord of the Bloody Mummers. *“Jaime’s rage kept him walking. ... [This is how he stimulated himself] I am stronger than they know, he told himself. I am still a Lannister. I am still a knight of the Kingsguard. He would reach Harrenhal, and then King’s Landing. He would live. And I will pay this debt with interest.”* (Martin 2000a: 419)

When they were admitted to the presence of the lord of the Bloody Mummers, Roose Bolton, he treated Jaime and Brienne differently. Bolton realised that if Jaime’s father connected his name to his son’s mutilation he would lose everything, including his life. *“The Lord of the Dreadfort [Roose Bolton] finally pursed his lips and said, “You have lost a hand.” “No,” said Jaime, “I have it here, hanging round my neck.”* (Martin 2000a: 422)

After this came to report of Brienne: *“My lord, these men tried to rape me.”* to avoid Tywin’s revenge, Roose Bolton showed his displeasure to his man *‘turned his pale eyes on Vargo Hoat. “I am displeased. By that, and this of Ser Jaime’s hand.”* (Martin 2000a: 423) Brienne expressed her resentfulness to him that they took away her sword and armour, but got the answer that being under his protection, she would not need them. These arms and armour were important to her; without them she felt defenceless. She ultimately lost his precious sword which she got from the most admired person, Renly.

Eventually Jaime got to a maester, who worked as a doctor in Westeros, as well. He managed to aid him and save his life. After his own medical treatment Jaime asked the master to attend Brienne too. The maester asked him *“What is this woman to you?” “My protector.”¹⁶ Jaime had to laugh, no matter how it hurt.”* (Martin 2000a: 425) It was the hardest confession in his life, but he did it honestly. He started to care for her. These words had weight for a man like Jaime.

A few days later they were invited to Lord Roose Bolton’s supper so they had to take a bath. Brienne had been in the tub when Jaime entered and climbed in next to her. Brienne acted like a maiden as she was, but Jaime did not have interest in her. He groped for the brush she had dropped and realised again that his left hand is good for nothing. In her shyness she turned back

¹⁶ On the sigil of the Tarth family crescents and suns can be seen. Besides many other meanings they are the symbols of protection and guarding.

to him, but Jaime reassured her. *“Does the sight of my stump distress you so?” Jaime asked. “You ought to be pleased. I’ve lost the hand I killed the king with. The hand that flung the Stark boy from that tower. The hand I’d slide between my sister’s thighs to make her wet.”* (Martin 2000a: 504) (The sinner hand, the hubristic hand). We can observe that he is aware of what that loss means for him, for her and for the world. The heat of the warm water made Jaime a bit dizzy. In their conversation he told the truth about his most sacred secret about the wildfire plot. Brienne was speechless during the “tale” when Jaime asked her *“Has my tale turned you speechless? Come, curse me or kiss me or call me a liar. Something.” “If this is true, how is it no one knows?” “The knights of the Kingsguard are sworn to keep the king’s secrets. Would you have me break my oath?” Jaime laughed. “Do you think the noble Lord of Winterfell [Eddard Stark] wanted to hear my feeble explanations? Such an honorable man. He only had to look at me to judge me guilty.”* (Martin 2000a: 507) Eventually, he fainted and Brienne saved him from drowning. After recovering from the influence of the “bath”, they got into Lord Bolton’s chamber where they feasted and there was an implied negotiation for their release. The Lord asked for Jaime’s father’s forgiveness about the acts of his men and in return he promised Jaime to get a safe return to King’s Landing when he is strong enough to leave escorted by a group of men who were loyal to him. But Brienne’s case was a different question.

A bit later both parties left Harrenhal, one under the leadership of Roose Bolton, the other to escort Jaime Lannister to King’s Landing. It was still Jaime’s primary goal to reach Cersei: *“Jaime was anxious to be gone, to put Harrenhal, the Bloody Mummies, and Brienne of Tarth all behind him. A real woman waited for him in the Red Keep.”* (Martin 2000b: 33) For the Bloody Mummies Jaime swear an oath: *“Rest assured, though, I will be back. A Lannister always pays his debts.”* (Martin 2000b: 34) The maester also escorted Jaime in case of trouble with his medical condition and informed Jaime that Vargo Hoat got a letter from his father and the ransom made him angry, because it was too small. The first night Jaime had a dream in which he saw her father, his love, Cersei, the naked Brienne whom first in his life he desired, and she wanted to defend him: *“I swore to keep you safe,” the wench said stubbornly. “I swore an oath.”* (Martin 2000b: 40) and their former Brothers who interrogated him about his broken vows. Jaime by threats and promises managed to turn his party back so they went back to Harrenhal to rescue Brienne. They were twice as many as the Bloody Mummies were. They had

her in the bear pit, fighting against a bear with a single sword, but without any armour or other protection. They judged her slow death against the bear. When she managed to stab the bear Jaime saw no blood on it and realised this is a tourney sword. She had no chance. 'His men' expressed that Brienne is none of their business so Jaime had to act alone. He stepped to Vargo Hoat and offered *"I'll pay her bloody ransom. Gold, sapphires, whatever you want. Pull her out of there."* *"You want her? Go get her."* *So he did."* (Martin 2000b: 47) Bravely, as a mad warrior, he commanded Brienne to step back behind the one handed man. Eventually, to protect their honoured guest or hostage, his party brought the bear down with their crossbows. The leader of his party stepped forward and stated that

"We're taking the wench."

"Her name is Brienne," Jaime said. "Brienne, the maid of Tarth. You are still maiden, I hope?"

Her broad homely face turned red. "Yes."

"Oh, good," Jaime said. "I only rescue maidens."

"Ser Jaime?" "I am grateful, but... you were well away. Why come back?"

A dozen quips came to mind, each crueler than the one before, but Jaime only shrugged. "I dreamed of you," he said." (Martin 2000b: 48-9)

This is how he saved Brienne from the beast. Jaime magnanimously risked his life in order to save the 'wench', the person he respects and owes. He discovers her values and pays great respect towards her.

His 'redemption arc' begins when he saved Brienne from the bear. He lost his sword hand, the hand that made him the Kingslayer, the hand that made him once the most feared men in the Seven Kingdoms, but also the symbol of his sin. He begins to have a crisis of identity as a result. He questions his self-worth constantly, reminding himself of what he had been and what a cripple he has become. He admires Brienne and her devotion to the ideals of honour as well as her determination to prove that she is a true knight, not only a woman, but also because the honourable way is never the easiest way. That is what mainly gives Jaime the motivation to start to learn fighting with his left hand later on, futilely. In short, Brienne's honour and faith gives Jaime a reason to keep on living not only an ordinary, but also an honourable life.

On the way back home Jaime learned the news that the king was dead. *"Joffrey. My blood. My firstborn. My son."* (Martin 2000b: 269) They rode hard the next day, at Jaime's insistence to get home to console Cersei. When they arrived into King's Landing, Jaime offered Brienne his help to find a post with the City Watch, but she refused it: *"I will not serve with oathbreakers and murderers."* Then why did you ever bother putting on a sword? he might have said, but he bit back the words. *"As you will, Brienne."* (Martin 2000b: 272) Jaime observed that her strength has gone from her. She had dropped a rock on Robin Ryger, had fought a bear with a tourney sword, and had fought Jaime to exhaustion, but ultimately she was broken.

Marching through the city Jaime realised that nobody recognised him. *"Your face is changed, and your arms as well," the Northman said, "and they have a new Kingslayer now."* (Martin 2000b: 273) When they arrived at the Red Keep, Jaime found two new Sworn Brothers of him, whom he did not know. *"How like Cersei to name me Lord Commander and then choose my colleagues without consulting me."* (Martin 2000b: 274) He expressed his displeasure about their failure at their duty to protect the king. They discovered Jaime's loss, but he answered *"I fight with my left now. It makes for more of a contest."* (Martin 2000b: 274) Then Brienne stepped in that made one of Jaime's Brother to rush forward to her and charged her with the murder of Lord Renly Baratheon. He was Ser Loras Tyrell, her former adversary, lover of King Renly, former Kingsguard member of his, former Brother of Brienne and considered her to be a Kingslayer. He did not obey Jaime's command, the words of his Lord Commander. Jaime threatened him and showed fake power: *"I am the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, you arrogant pup. Your commander, so long as you wear that white cloak. Now sheathe your bloody sword, or I'll take it from you and shove it up some place even Renly never found."* (Martin 2000b: 275) After that he officially asked him to arrest her which Jaime could not deny, but he took her under his protection *"the wench does have honor. More than I have seen from you. And it may even be she's telling it true. I'll grant you, she's not what you'd call clever, but even my horse could come up with a better lie, if it was a lie she meant to tell."* (Martin 2000b: 275) She was led away.

Jaime rushed straight into Cersei, whom found in the sept mourning their son. Cersei charged him without hesitation *"You should have come sooner"* (Martin 2000b: 277). He replied peacefully with reference to the raging war and showed his loss. *"The hair will grow back."*

Jaime lifted his stump. She needs to see. "This won't." (Martin 2000b: 277) She just turned away with no seeming reaction and she started to blame their little brother, Tyrion to poison their son. Jaime did not want to believe that, but he was aware of the fact that he had no knowledge about what happened while he was away. Cersei even asked Jaime to kill Tyrion, but Jaime refused that act immediately. She even tried to seduce him *"I was lost without you, Jaime. ... She kissed him. A light kiss, the merest brush of her lips on his, but he could feel her tremble as he slid his arms around her. "I am not whole without you."* (Martin 2000b: 278) She was successful Jaime reacted with passion. He did not care about the danger, about the consequences he made sex in the sept.

"This was folly." Cersei pulled her gown straight. "With Father in the castle... Jaime, we must be careful."

"I am sick of being careful. The Targaryens wed brother to sister, why shouldn't we do the same? Marry me, Cersei. Stand up before the realm and say it's me you want." (Martin 2000b: 279)

Cersei's reaction stunned Jaime, she called him stupid among others. Then, she came to the ultimate realisation. *"What did they do to you?" "They cut off my hand." "No, it's more, you're changed."* (Martin 2000b: 279)

After that crucial realisation Cersei sent him away. Jaime was surprised and offended deeply, nonetheless he tried to explain himself. *"I crossed a thousand leagues to come to you, and lost the best part of me along the way. Don't tell me to leave." "Leave me," she repeated, turning away.* (Martin 2000b: 279) And he did so. She started to avoid every possible occasion to see Jaime.

Jaime was aware of the fact that he had to visit his father. In a short conversation he informed Tywin about his loss and who was responsible for that. Tywin seared with revenge about the crippling of his son. Tywin also accused his son Tyrion about the death of the king, but Jaime saw hesitation of his eyes. He was not sure about the charges, but it was the perfect opportunity to get rid of this dwarf son. Other subject was Brienne whom Jaime defended with his words. Tywin tried to convince Jaime to leave the Kingsguard about his lost hand, but Jaime refused that. He wanted to play the role of the Lord Commander more than ever before. Jaime told that

his duty bounds him to the Kingsguard. *"I have a duty" "You do."* Lord Tywin rose as well. *"A duty to House Lannister. You are the heir to Casterly Rock."* (Martin 2000b: 282) Jaime was sick of the whole vow breaking thing and ignored his father's will. Jaime stated that he will not leave the Kingsguard and be his heir. Lord Tywin had his answer already, he informed Jaime about the marriage plan of Cersei which made Jaime very upset.

"NO!" Jaime had heard all that he could stand. No, more than he could stand. He was sick of it, sick of lords and lies, sick of his father, his sister, sick of the whole bloody business.

"I don't want your Rock!"

"You are my son—"

"I am a knight of the Kingsguard. The Lord Commander of the Kingsguard! And that's all I mean to be!" ... "Father..." he began. "You are not my son." Lord Tywin turned his face away. "You say you are the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, and only that. Very well, ser. Go do your duty." (Martin 2000b: 282-3)

Jaime became disinherited that way. He lost almost everything important in his life when he tried to fulfil his duty. He had already recognised the loss of his sister and little brother. He already lost his father and his legacy, his hand and everything that it represented and eventually only his reputation remained. The only last remaining thing that he possessed was his honour, their odd relationship with Brienne, and the Lord Commander title.

He spent his next days in the chain trials of his brother and in the White Sword Tower in the role of the Lord Commander, organising the Kingsguard. He made constant self-evaluation, how well his job as a Lord Commander is done and compared himself to Ser Barristan Selmy and Ser Arthur Dayne all the time. On a meeting of the members he inquired about the circumstances of the death of Joffrey and figured out that no one had any proofs about who the perpetrator was, so there was a chance for his brother; Tyrion was innocent. The Brothers left the room one by one and only Ser Loras Tyrell remained with him in private. Jaime spoke in defence of Brienne and gave him the chance to question Brienne and be her judge in order to judge her guilty or innocent. *"All I [Jaime] ask is that you judge her fairly, on your honor as a knight."* Ser Loras stood. *"I shall. On my honor."* (Martin 2000b: 351)

One day it was Cersei who visited him. It was the first time they had met since she sent Jaime away. She tried to convince him to obey their father and give up his position as a Lord Commander and kill Tyrion. She asked her with sweet words like *"Jaime, you're my shining knight. You cannot abandon me when I need you most!"* (Martin 2000b: 429) which did not reach him, then she made an attempt to seduce him again, but he resisted. Cersei's reaction was furious. She started insulting him *"You great golden fool. He's lied to you a thousand times, and so have I."* (Martin 2000b: 430) Jaime responded with all of his remaining courtesy *"You had best go, Cersei. You're making me angry."* *"Oh, an angry cripple. How terrifying."* *She laughed."* (Martin 2000b: 431) After her leaving he meditated with these thoughts: *"I've lost a hand, a father, a son, a sister, and a lover, and soon enough I will lose a brother. And yet they keep telling me House Lannister has won this war."* (Martin 2000b: 431)

After calming down, he asked Ser Loras to escort Brienne to her. Jaime made sure Ser Loras accepted her innocence, then asked him to leave. She was dressed in blue and Jaime expressed his pleasure at seeing her. *"Blue is a good color on you, my lady," Jaime observed. "It goes well with your eyes." She does have astonishing eyes."* (Martin 2000b: 432) Jaime had a gift for her. Eddard Stark had an extremely rare metal sword, Ice, a Valyrian steel¹⁷ sword which Lord Tywin melted in and forged two new swords out of it, one for Joffrey and one for Jaime. Jaime gifted that sword to Brienne to fulfil their sacred vow and redeem themselves for their sins. It was a sacred quest and Brienne got the new sword, a better one than she had ever had before. Jaime asked her to call the sword Oathkeeper. As Oathkeeper was forged from the metal of Eddard Stark's greatsword, Ice, Brienne was using Stark steel to rescue the Stark girls, the Wolf girls. Along with this, Jaime gives her two bags full of coin, a mail hauberk, a Lothston shield, and a letter signed by King Tommen Baratheon saying that she is on a royal mission. Brienne accepted the gift with great regard and left to find the Stark girls to take them to a safe place with the help of their father's sword, the sword which she got from Jaime. His last words to her when he sent her were these: *"I have made kings and unmade them. Sansa Stark is my last chance for honor."* *Jaime smiled thinly. "Besides, kingslayers should band together."* (Martin 2000b: 435)

¹⁷ Valyrian steel swords are the best and finest weapons all around Westeros. The last remained fragments of the Valyria. Only a few existed in possess of noble houses. All of them were invaluable. Valyrian steel was invented in Valyria and was used to make weapons and various other items of unparalleled quality. Being spell-forged steel, it is the spells and magic that makes the steel special.

At this point a parallel can be drawn with the Celtic mythology. Cuhullin, a Celtic mythological hero, who kills the hound of a smith called Culain by mistake. He had to step into the hound's role to protect Culain's house in order to get redemption. Another example is the wolf brother of Manabush and Romulus and Remus in the Roman mythology, where the twins are raised up by a mother wolf and they became the founders of Rome. It is also important for the future that one of the twins will die.

In the meantime Cersei, in her blind rage, and their father, Tywin, accused their little brother, Tyrion of the murder of Joffrey and locked him into jail. Eventually at the end of his 'trial' he got sentenced to death. Jaime tried to find out the truth, but could not find evidence against his brother. His assumption that Tyrion was innocent seemed to be true, but Jaime could not prove it. Jaime used his position and secretly rescued Tyrion from prison. In the meanwhile, Jaime confessed to Tyrion that Tysha was no whore. Tyrion realised that Tysha had been genuinely in love with him, and became furious with Jaime. He left his brother to find his own way out of the Red Keep. Jaime had a great trust in Tyrion's innocence but the event again backfired. On the run, Tyrion got through secret passages into his father's chamber, where he humiliated, then murdered him. Jaime had no idea about his little brother's sorrow, his apprehended, oppressed wrath towards Tywin and the world. Jaime wanted to do the right thing, but went wrong again. Jaime had no harm because no one knew he helped Tyrion escape. Cersei in her fury lost control and as a temptation offered Jaime the position of the Hand of the King, but she got refused again, so Jaime manages to resist again.

"We are his heirs, Jaime," she whispered. "It will be up to us to finish his work. You must take Father's place as Hand. You see that now, surely. Tommen will need you..." He pushed away from her and raised his arm, forcing his stump into her face. "A Hand without a hand? A bad jape, sister. Don't ask me to rule." (Martin 1998b: 59)

Not so long after that Cersei admitted to their uncle that she is completely aware of what the truth is *"Jaime... Jaime has taken vows. Jaime never thinks, he laughs at everything and everyone and says whatever comes into his head. Jaime is a handsome fool."* (Martin 1998b: 128)

After the death of their father Jaime felt guilty, although he did not loose the crossbow bolt that slew his father, but he freed Tyrion. He even led an investigation to find his little brother without success. In his grief he stood vigil for days in front of his father's corpse. When he was tired and dizzy, Cersei came into the chapel and tried to convince him, seduce him and tempt him to be the Hand. (Like the temptation of Jesus in the desert). She even tried the ultimate sweet promises and lies *"Be my Hand," she pleaded, "and we'll rule the Seven Kingdoms together, like a king and his queen."* *"I need you. I need my other half."* *"You are me, I am you. I need you with me."* which he already knew and he was armoured against these words. He answered briefly and honestly. *"You were Robert's queen. And yet you won't be mine."* Being rejected made her threat him *"Very well. If it is battlefields you want, battlefields I shall give you."* (Martin 1998b: 141)

Finally, this was the point when their relationship inevitably broke. Jaime started and had lived his life in admiration and in love with Cersei, and then another woman stepped into his life and has started to take over her position in his heart, but not just at the level of flesh, but at a much higher level, at the level of spirituality and morality. Brienne is the complementary side of Jaime that he missed and chased throughout his life, but interestingly their roles (e.g.: as an introvert or the extrovert person, male or female) have changed from time to time.

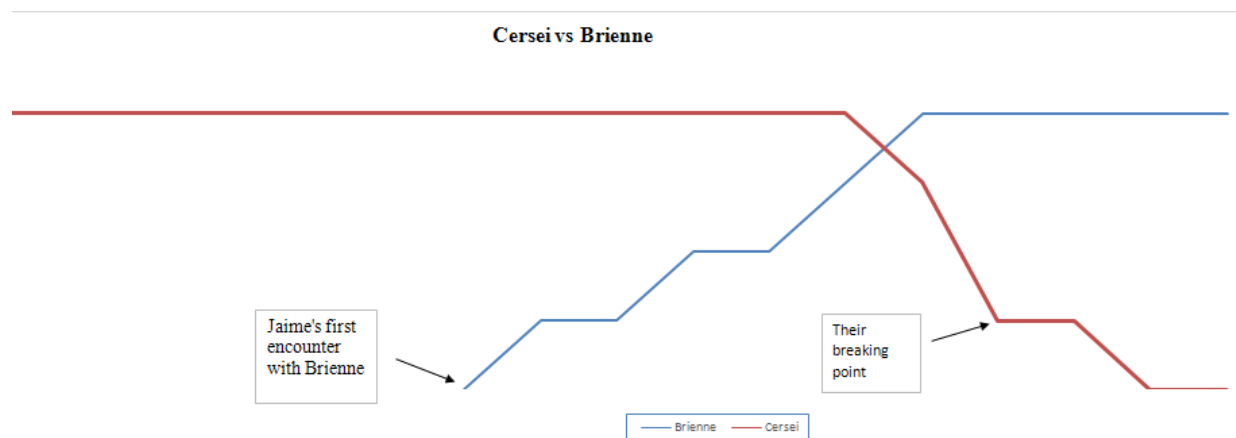


Figure 1: The appreciation of Cersei and Brienne from the point of view of Jaime Lannister

After their ominous break Cersei said to Jaime *“All the color is draining out of you, brother. You’ve become a ghost of what you were, a pale crippled thing. And so bloodless, always in white.”* *“I prefer you garbed in crimson and gold.”* (Martin 1998b: 439) After this, Jaime left her forever. The king ordered him to win back his Riverlands. He left King’s Landing as a leader of an army with two horses calling them Honor and Glory. Glory wore trappings of Lannister crimson; Honor was barded in Kingsguard white. These two are representations of his current state of mind. Jaime chose an interesting companion to follow him. He was Ser Ilyn Payne, the mute knight, the royal executioner and the King’s Justice. *“Ser Ilyn’s appointment had been a wedding gift from Robert Baratheon to the father of his bride, a sinecure to compensate Payne for the tongue he’d lost in the service of House Lannister.”* (Martin 1998b: 444) The person who mutilated Payne did it by the command of the Mad King, who was killed by Jaime. Jaime saw Payne’s office, the miserable circumstances there, when he invited him to leave his former post. *“Perhaps there is yet hope for the both of us.”* (Martin 1998b: 445) Ser Ilyn Payne was who trained Jaime with his left hand to learn how to fight. He was the perfect subject to keep Jaime’s secret namely that Jaime was not able to defend the king with his remaining left hand. Payne has no tongue so he is not able to speak or write. Jaime never reached the same level of fighting skills with his left hand as he had with his right hand, though he tried very hard and trained hard with Payne. *“We will dance again,” he promised. “On the morrow, and the morrow. Every day we’ll dance, till I am as good with my left hand as ever I was with the right.”* (Martin 1998b: 448)

On their way to the Riverlands they brought justice to everybody considering his vow that he never again takes arms against Stark and Tully. On their way he met Ser Ronnet, the former spouse of Brienne, who made bad jokes about her, but Jaime taught him the lesson with his new golden hand to defend her honour and restore her reputation. *“You are speaking of a highborn lady, ser. Call her by her name. Call her Brienne.”* (Martin 1998b: 460)

Finally, they arrived at Riverrun where the negotiations started immediately. Jaime, by himself, on the back of Honor, rode to the end of the drawbridge to agree upon terms and conditions of surrender with Ser Brynden Tully, the Blackfish. Jaime was determined to keep his vow not to shed blood of Stark or Tully, but his duty was to bring Riverrun to heels. The Blackfish was stubborn, suspicious and arrogant towards Jaime, so he needed all his rhetorical skills to come to

an agreement acceptable for both parties. There were taunts, blames, recalling all sins of the past against the Kingslayer and the Blackfish even rejected Jaime's noble conditions in the end. Jaime had to take the risk and tried to figure out a new solution. He managed to convince one of their prisoners of war, Ser Edmure Tully, the lord of Riverrun to make the Blackfish change his mind. First, Edmure also rejected Jaime, then he managed to intimidate Edmure so Riverrun surrendered and Jaime could keep his vow. *"And he had done his own part here at Riverrun without actually ever taking up arms against the Starks or Tullys."* (Martin 1998b: 756)

After taking care of the diplomacy problems, he organised his lords and his army. Then the maester of Riverrun handed over a letter which came from King's Landing.

"Come at once, she said. Help me. Save me. I need you now as I have never needed you before. I love you. I love you. I love you. Come at once. ..."

"Does my lord wish to answer?" the maester asked, after a long silence. ...

Jaime rolled the parchment up again, as tight as one hand would allow, and handed it to Peck [one of the servants]. "No," he said. "Put this in the fire." (Martin 1998b: 761)

Jaime made his decision, strengthened his heart, kept focusing on his obligation towards the king and did not neglect it for the sake of Cersei, so he went on his next and last quest. *"With Riverrun now safely in Lannister hands, Raventree was the remnant of the Young Wolf's [Robb Stark] short-lived kingdom. Once it yielded, his work along the Trident would be done, and he would be free to return to King's Landing."* (Martin 2011: 112) At Raventree there were two rival families which would not agree on the distribution of the lands. Jaime appeared in their rivalry as a judge, the consecrated representative of the royal blood, so he managed to make them agree.

One day Brienne unexpectedly appeared in front of him. *"My lord, you gave me a quest."* *"The girl. Have you found her?"* *"I have," said Brienne, Maid of Tarth. "Where is she?"* *"A day's ride. I can take you to her, ser ... but you will need to come alone. Elsewise, the Hound will kill her."* (Martin 2011: 128)

This is the last known moment of Jaime Lannister's story. It will continue in the *The Winds of Winter*, the next volume of *A Song of Ice and Fire* series which is being written by Martin. Without proper information I would not make assumptions about his future. One of the real 'twins', probably Brienne, will die if Martin follows the patterns. There are prophecies in the series (which are also mythological themes) about the so called Azor Ahai, Warrior of Light (Dorian the Historian 2013a) who might as well be Jaime, but prophecies are not always so straightforward in the series. Jaime could be the reborn Azor Ahai. A significant clue could be the dream Jaime had about wielding the flaming sword; and his metal hand might be Lightbringer perhaps together with Oathkeeper. Will the valonqar be Jaime, who kills Cersei? The theories are known, but this is not the place to discuss them, although they are worth mentioning.

The character of Jaime developed and evolved a lot. Jaime's actions showed that he matured as a military commander (Bryndenbfish 2013) or as the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard and became a 'socialized being'. He was cured from 'hubris' by losing his sinner part and lived his life considering his vows which are his main reasons to exist. Jaime found the meaning of his life, which he had lost on his journey. As the wisest blind man (also a mythological theme) of Westeros, Maester Aemon said that "*...love is the bane of honor, the death of duty.*" (Martin 1996: 638) Not answering the letter of Cersei was the proof to his final recovery. He wants to be a pure knight, and not for anybody's sake but for himself. He wants to gain his personal honour back. He says that he needs to fill up his page in the White Book with deeds, but not for fame. Jaime wants to redeem himself for himself, and as far as we know it is successful.

5. Conclusion

In this essay I have tried to provide an instrument for literary examination. Radin's hero cycles offer a possibility for literary exploration of heroes as it can be seen in the case of Jaime the fallible hero. Similar examinations can be done in the case of other fantasy heroes. A further advantage of this instrument is that it recalls the mythology bases of fantasy, thus, the examination is an opportunity to use mythological motifs for modern literary works.

Throughout this examination of the life of Jaime Lannister, I have found a great number of motifs which are similar to the motifs of myths. Fantasy seems to be the heir of myths even if fantasy is an artificial genre. This genre is able to fulfil the desire of modern man for myths and therefore it might have a highlighted place in our lives. Fantasy appears in several aspects of our life, for example in our free time activities. We should admit that not every fantasy story is perfect, but this genre is the victim of the machine of fantasy industry¹⁸. We can meet fantasy in the cinema, in video games, in the theatre, on the shelves of bookstores. They have fancy advertisements and covers, but only the shell does not make a novel great as Le Guin (1982: 84) argues that *'style is, of course the book ... If you remove the style, all you have left is a synopsis of the plot'*.

The concept of the fallible hero has been determined. Jaime's life presented all the characteristic features of the fallible hero. Antonsson and García (2012) determine Ser Jaime a Byronic hero, offering a checklist of traits that they often share: cynicism, cunning, disrespect for authority, brilliance, selfdestructive behavior, a troubled past, and so on. The romanticism of the misunderstood, brilliant man is certainly well-attested in stories of fallible heroes.

In children's and juvenile literature heroes are usually black and white, however, fallible heroes are also worth determining, drawing attention to his/her characteristics and decisions. The fallible hero is far closer to readers of modern literature than the hero of classical readings. Total perfection can never be achieved, but we must strive for it. This idea is true for us as readers and for our heroes as well. Life challenges us in many ways many times. We always get into conflicts with ourselves and have to find the golden means to get out of them. That is the main conflict of Jaime Lannister's life, the conflict with his vows.

The method of using the hero cycles as an instrument of this examination can be applied throughout his journey and deeds. It reveals the reasons of his decisions and his character development. Fortunately, the instrument can be used in the whole existing story; it gives us a chance to predict the forthcoming events of Jaime Lannister's life and the outcome of his efforts. Even if we do not know the end of his story, our expectations might be fulfilled in the end.

¹⁸ Most people recall violence and cruel monsters when fantasy is mentioned. In real fantasy monsters exist to be the counterparts of the heroes.