

# **الخبث و التضامن السلبي لكريما في رواية تولكين رفقة الخاتم: من منظور دوركهايم**

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**GRIMA'S MALICIOUSNESS AND FALSE SOLIDARITY IN TOLKIEN'S  
NOVEL THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING: DURKHEIM PERSPECTIVE**

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**Abstract**

This study will scrutinize the excessive ambition and negative solidarity of Grima as a servant of two masters who are the king Theoden and the White Wizard Saruman in Tolkien's novel The Lord of the Rings. To this end, the novel is analyzed with respect to the concept of negative solidarity according to Durkheim's perspective. According to Durkheim, a few types of solidarity that are negative in which social relations and connections are at the basic rank essential for coexistence. In fact, negative solidarity is a problematic order because it is untrue solidarity and cannot make any kind of integration by itself but rather assumes it. Besides, the solidarity of Grima with the king, Theoden, and Saruman was not real but built on mutual benefit. Saruman was in need of Grima as an instrument to involve in destroying the king, Theoden, in order to take control over Rohan and Grima was in need of Saruman to marry the woman he wanted and probably even Theoden's kingdom.

**Key words:** negative solidarity, Grima, Theoden, Saruman..

**المستخلص**

ستفحص هذه الدراسة الطموح المفرط والتضامن السلبي لغريما كخادم لسيدين هما الملك ثيودن والساحر الأبيض سارومان في رواية تولكين سيد الخواتم. تحقيقاً لهذه الغاية، يتم تحليل الرواية فيما يتعلق بمفهوم التضامن السلبي من منظور دوركهيم. وفقاً لدوركهيم، هناك أنواع قليلة من التضامن السلبية تكون فيها العلاقات والصلات الاجتماعية في المرتبة الأساسية اللازمة للتعايش. في الواقع، يعتبر التضامن السلبي نظاماً إشكالياً لأنه تضامن غير صحيح ولا يمكنه إجراء أي نوع من التكامل في حد ذاته بل يفترضه. إلى جانب ذلك، لم يكن تضامن غريما مع الملك، ثيودن، وسارومان حقيقياً، بل بُني على المنفعة المتبادلة. كان سارومان في حاجة إلى غريما كأداة للتدخل في تدمير الملك، ثيودن، من أجل السيطرة على روهان، وكان غريما بحاجة إلى سارومان للزواج من المرأة التي يريدتها وربما حتى مملكة ثيودن.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التضامن السلبي، غريما، ثيودن، سارومان

## 1. Introduction

In Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*, Middle Earth was an important world, a vast continent and most of the events happened in it but it was not the whole world. The societies of Middle Earth inhabited by men, the hobbits and the dwarves while the rest beings were completely from another place that was represented as the everlasting lands. With regard to the relationship between Saruman and Grima, it was also packed with tricks. Saruman probably never meant to complete his duty concerning their pact of making Grima gets what he desired. Actually, Saruman was unable to give Grima Eowyn's love, nor was he entitled to push her to get married. Yet as Gandalf pointed out, Saruman appeared to ignore all his dealings, which Grima at first was not able to believe. Grima served him well for several years and with his help, Saruman spied out the ways of Rohan. With an agreement with Grima, Saruman knew about Rohan's politics, customs, laws and the decisions and secrets of statesmen, and he knew about the things that were happening in Rohan perhaps more than the king, Theoden, who was ruling it. Yet his efforts were soon overlooked, and the only prize that Grima got was hurting and severe condition of hunger "get up, you idiot!" he shouted to the other beggar, who had sat down on the ground; and he struck him with his staff. "Turn about! If these fine folk are going our way, then we will take another. Get on, or I'll give you no crust for your supper!" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1288).

## 2. Methodology

The concept of social solidarity is defined by Durkheim as a power that links people with each other for a mutual aim. Durkheim declares that "its true function is to maintain social cohesion intact while maintaining all its vitality in the common conscience" (Durkheim, 1893, p.108). The collective consciousness is significant, but not quite enough element in social solidarity. As discussed in *The Division of Labor in Society*, "Negative solidarity is possible only where there exists some other of a positive nature, of which it is at once the resultant and the condition" (Durkheim, 1893, P. 120).

For Durkheim, these problems can happen in modern society "where the division of labor does not produce solidarity because the functional activity of each worker is insufficient" (Durkheim, 1893, P. xxiii). There may be moments of tension or crisis. Clearly, there are two uncommon ways of labour division, according to Durkheim. "anomic and forced

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division of labour” (Durkheim, 2013, P. xxi). Anomic is a type of solidarity in it people are unaware of the general goal that they fulfill, and because of their status, they just fulfill their part in the objectives that are larger. Forced solidarity occurs when violence is used to preserve harmony in society. This is a condition in which individuals do not provide help for society but are forced to support it, which means that acceptance to society is a sufficient element of social solidarity. Similarly, to avoid aberrant anomic of social solidarity it is crucial that the participants are aware of the goal of society.

The forced concept of solidarity is discussed by Durkheim with its types. For Durkheim, it causes problems to give the lower class tasks which are not in accordance with their consent and not pleased with. This, furthermore, demands social order be changed so that something pleasing to him is done. He asserts that it is not enough for the division of work for establishing social cohesion for everyone to have a job, but the role must be acceptable to him. Generally, the division of social functions may cause unrest if it is not correlated to the allocation of natural capabilities. Constraint links individuals to their duties and there can be only a troubled sort of unity. Durkheim believes that there is no capacity for people to behave in their external world. People make decisions and restrictions alone do not restrict individuals to their undesired roles. In order to reach a preferred situation, individuals can impact the environment, but the surrounding environment can also have a direct effect on them, which may be restricting.

### 3. Grima's maliciousness and false solidarity

In *The Lord of the Rings*, nothing about Grima's former life was illustrated, but it was possible to say that the king trusted him as a close friend. Actually, the kings would never give the rank of the counsellor to someone whom they know little about or someone whom they do not trust. In fact, Grima was the counsellor of King Theoden and it appears that Grima's character had at all-time been an ambitious character. In his position, he was able to get everything he could but he could not hope more because he was not descended from a royal family. Therefore, he was not happy to only assist the king and he went after other less just methods to satisfy his false desires. It is not covered the time and the way in which he became in contact with Saruman. Undoubtedly, Grima was enchanted by the power of Saruman's voice. Perhaps, Saruman gave him a word that he would make him have anything he desired in case he was

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a good servant; specifically, the hand of the king's niece, Eowyn, whom he desired to marry for many years. Anyhow, he was not able to because she disliked him. Therefore, Grima turned to be one of those under the control of Saruman who stayed under his control and "he is used as an instrument for evil, but is not truly evil himself" (Fisher, 2013, P. 29). Thus, for a lot of years, Saruman took control of Rohan by using Grima in order to achieve his own desire of making the country weak. Undoubtedly, Saruman's desire that he wanted to be achieved, were to make his Orcs pass freely by the lands or achieving his ill desire in case of attacking the country in the afterwards fight.

When Theoden became sick at the age of 66, Grima took this opportunity to be the one who is responsible for his medical care. Clearly, the king's disease was caused by a natural reason, but it appears to be a sequence of the medicines of Grima, because he was toxic for the king, Theoden, not only by his lies but also by his medicines. Throughout five years, he tried hard to make the king incapable of making his own choices by himself. In addition, by utilizing his wordcraft abilities to force his thoughts upon Grima in a method that made him feel that they were his own, and therefore do laws as he desires and needs. Moreover, Grima let what was happening in the country hidden from the king, as a result, the king was not aware of its true situation. At any time someone brought the truth about it up, he criticized him for being a liar. He even more made going after the Orcs and murdering them forbidden and denied their stealing of the country. Thus, Grima revealed problematic solidarity because it "is not a true solidarity"; because it cannot "produce any integration by itself", however rather assumes it (Durkheim, 1893, P. 119-129).

Anyhow, there was no way to eliminate Grima's position and ill desire, because the king relied on him to a great extent. At the time Grima noticed that his tricks were not effective, he chose a worse plan which is confinement. For instance, he put Éomer in a prison for many causes. Firstly, not following the rule and going after and murdering the supply of Orcs who were to take to Isengard the captivated hobbits. Secondly, for allowing Gimli, Aragon and Legolas to wander around in Rohan freely in place of taking them first to meet the king to decide their faith, and furthermore, for lending the horses of Rohirrim for them. Lastly, for posing a threat to Grima that they would kill him when they reached a disagreement when Eomer made Theoden know about it all.

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After that, he prohibited the outsiders from entering the city to meet Theoden, which was a malicious choice because he became aware that Aragon was obliged to get back and give the horses back. If the guards put the order into action that would put Aragorn in a place to break his word which, in response, would make a suitable reason to punish him.

The five-year-long influence of Grima authority over Theoden made the king seemed and felt older several years than he truly was. He was illustrated as getting "so bent with age that he seemed almost a dwarf.... His beard was laid like snow upon his knees" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 668, 669). He was in need of a stick to help himself to stand up and he couldn't walk by himself without assistance. The only sign of his real age was his hair that was thick with great braids as well as the shining light that was glowing in his eyes. When Rohan's people noticed that Grima was not genuinely looking after their country and King, Grima attempted to do whatever he can to diminish them. However, just a small percentage of people opposed him openly for the reason that they scared how they would be tortured by him at the time he showed no mercy for the members of the royal family. He was called Wormtongue by everyone except the king. But Gandalf was able to clarify his real character calling him "a witless worm have you become. Therefore be silent, and keep your forked tongue behind your teeth. I have not passed through fire and death to bandy crooked words with a serving-man till the lightning falls" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 671).

The treason of Grima was not revealed entirely to Theoden till Gandalf visited him to cure him. In this scene, the extent to which Grima crushed the king was best demonstrated. At all times, when Gandalf talked to the king in a straightforward way, Grima replied in place of him. Additionally, when Theoden talked to Gandalf, it was only Grima's words that uttered and also the king's behaviour with him was influenced clearly by Saruman's effect upon Grima.

When Gandalf brought Theoden back to life and caused him to know the reality again, the king asked to get his sword which cached in Grima's chest. Actually, Grima was unwilling to give it and when they cracked his chest open, it was discovered that several items which the king's men overlooked were hidden there by him. When Theoden questioned Grima if he was sad to give back the sword to him, he replied "assuredly not, lord ... I care for you and yours as best I may. But do not weary yourself, or tax too heavily your strength. Let others deal with these irksome

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guests” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 677). In place of that, Grima attempted to concentrate the king's interest on a less related topic and saying “your meat is about to be set on the board. Will you not go to it?” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 677). After being aware that Theoden himself desired to fight on the battlefield, Grima turned almost mad. Indeed, Grima behaved just as the only person who genuinely took care of the king, suggesting that “those who truly love him would spare his failing years” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 678). Grima accused Gandalf of casting a spell on the king; however, he attributed his own savage traits to another person in an effort to throw the blame off himself. But Theoden was at the current time conscious of his behaviors and replied: “if this is bewitchment ... it seems to me more wholesome than your whisperings. Your leechcraft ere long would have had me walking on all fours like a beast” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 678).

Grima then pleaded for the king's compassion but Theoden offered him an option that he will “not send [Grima] from [his] side. I go myself to war with my men. I bid you come with me and prove your faith” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 678). Durkheim explains that there may be moments of tension or crisis because Grima's negative solidarity against Theoden “is an evil it is above all because society suffers from it, since a society cannot exist without cohesion and regulation” (Durkheim, 2013, P. 11). Plainly, Grima feared the punishment of Theoden, and moreover, he was more afraid of Saruman's penalty. Yet much of the time he feared death in combat thinking that it would be prompt for him since he lived in peacetime and had little experience in it. Then, Grima told the king to “let your counsellor Gríma keep all things till your return – and I pray that we may see it, though no wise man will deem it hopeful. [In his eyes was a] look of a beast seeking some gap in the rings of his enemies” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 678).

Thus, Grima was playing his malicious part when he dared to say that at the time of Théoden's absence, he would be the steward of the king's royalty. This improper declaration led only to the rage of Gandalf who named him a snake and notified Theoden: “with safety you cannot take it with you, nor can you leave it behind. To slay it would be just... Give him a horse and let him go at once, wherever he chooses. By his choice you shall judge him” (Tolkien, 2008, P. 679). Eventually, Grima preferred exile and opening his mouth like he wanted to utter something. But after that, he escaped from Theoden and his eyes sparkling with such



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hatred that the men who were by-standing were frightened by him. Then, Grima decided to get back to his real master Saruman.

When Saruman and his servant, Grima, arrived at the Shire, Grima did a lot of wicked work for Saruman with tiny or no gain but the hobbits did not know a thing about them. Saruman stayed hidden, commanding anything he wants through his dupe. Once Frodo and his friends came back, they never thought they would meet Saruman there personally until he welcomed them at the main entrance of Frodo's ancient home. Saruman appeared "well-fed and well-pleased, his eyes gleamed with malice and amusement" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1332). Plainly, Saruman was pleased to devastate their homeland for his sake and hoped they would never be able to redeem the injuries that he was the reason for in their homeland. But Frodo showed pity towards him for that and told him to get away from the Shire promptly as he knew it was pointless to seek vengeance for vengeance because it would not cure anything. The hobbits considered that unfair and asked him to murder Gollum. Then, Saruman chuckled at this and told them "whoever strikes me shall be accursed. And if my blood stains the Shire, it shall wither and never again be healed" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1333).

In reality, Saruman realized that he did not have other strength any more than his voice which can be defeated without difficulty. Saruman, after that, called upon Grima, whom he currently was named Worm, acting as if he was about to depart, but when:

Saruman passed close to Frodo a knife flashed in his hand, and he stabbed swiftly [the hobbits under Sam's control] leaped forward with a cry and flung the villain to the ground. Sam drew his sword [Fortunately] the blade turned on the hidden mail-coat and snapped (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1334).

Thus, no harm was done to Frodo but rather he revealed significant forgiveness to Saruman telling them "do not believe him! He has lost all power, save his voice that can still daunt you and deceive you, if you let it. But I will not have him slain. It is useless to meet revenge with revenge: it will heal nothing. Go, Saruman, by the speediest way!" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1333). Subsequently, Frodo prevented Sam to hurt him, declaring "he was great once, of a noble kind that we should not dare to raise our hands against. He is fallen, and his cure is beyond us; but I would still spare him, in the hope that he may find it" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1334). A reaction like this shocked Saruman because with his



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wickedness he could not believe that anyone else would act in a different way in these matters than him. Astonishingly, Saruman's eyes revealed a peculiar gaze mixed with hatred, respect and wonder. In addition, he told Frodo that:

You are wise, and cruel. You have robbed my revenge of sweetness, and now I must go hence in bitterness, in debt to your mercy. I hate it and you! Well, I go and I will trouble you no more. But do not expect me to wish you health and long life. You will have neither. But that is not my doing. I merely foretell. (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1334)

Furthermore, Saruman moved to get out immediately, but Grima was hesitant to go with him. Frodo told Grima to stay there to rest and have food for a period of time, till he became healthy enough to take his own path because he was aware that nothing sinister was done to him by Grima. Concerning Saruman's maliciousness, he told Frodo that Grima assassinated his cousin, Lotho, stating that he might even have consumed him as he was hungry recently. Grima objected that "you told me to; you made me do it" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1335). Saruman kept laughing at him because he would always put into action whatever he asked him to do. Immediately, "Wormtongue rose up, drawing a hidden knife, and then with a snarl like a dog he sprang on Saruman's back, jerked his head back, cut his throat, and with a yell ran off down the lane" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 1335). But many hobbits bowmen shot him and killed him before he was able to escape far, so the curse of Saruman reversed on him.

Like it was previously brought up, Grima's appearance and eyes with heavy lids brought Gollum to notice. Grima was depicted as "a wizened figure of a man, with a pale wise face and heavy-lidded eyes" (Tolkien, 2008, P. 669). Particularly, those eyes showed that he may be concealed some unfavorable secret and indicated some hiding, as Gollum whose eyes were at all times tumbling to the floor. Fisher remarked that his character "masks his true intents and deeds under a fair cloak of concern for his king's health and peace of mind" (Fisher, 2013, P. 29). In addition, his name originated from Old English referring to "'mask, visor, helmet' or 'spectre'.... It is also possible to link the name to the English word 'grim', which among other characteristics meant 'ugly'" (Tolkien gateway, 2021, P. 2). This first three terms may be utilized to hide the face, so Grima's name can be translated as someone wearing a mask. While the term 'spectre' indicated a mental picture for something brings threatening or disturbing. It is possible to point to his rhetorical ability in creating even nasty images in the minds of others.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The important thing to mention about Saruman and Grima's false solidarity was their end. The assassination was a result of their traitorous lifetime and their deaths were not a conclusion of any unexplained natural sequences or outsider factors but it was a sequence for their bad deeds and desires. The concept of punishment might be partly accurate in the case of Saruman. He was murdered by Grima who wanted to take vengeance from Saruman's harshness and disrespect dealings. Plainly, Saruman had insulted Grima whose fury gradually developed until at a certain point and took an action abruptly. The novel had communicated it powerfully and eventually established the impression that Grima was just as a victim and a persecuted character. Rosebury illustrated Grima's conduct was a classic event of a "sudden loss of self-control" [and]... sustained and ultimately unbearable provocation—a mitigating feature in English law and in many other jurisdictions, though he did have the option of abandoning Saruman some months earlier" (Rosebury, 2008, P. 11). While the death of Grima was a sequence of his illegitimate conduct of murdering Saruman and therefore Grima deserved to be murdered as a penalty for his prohibited deed and excessive ambition. Actually, such an end could not have happened in case they repented their vices and became virtuous and agreeable but they both declined every offer and therefore they were condemned to a devastating death.

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