Lord of the Rings

The Chess

Chess game

Chess is an abstract strategy game originating is Persian-Indian cultures. Today's 'southern' version emerged in Europe around 15th century. The game is played on a square board with 64 squares arranged in the grid. Each player has 16 pieces of 6 kinds to play with. The objective is to block (check) the opponent's king. The game can also end with a draw.

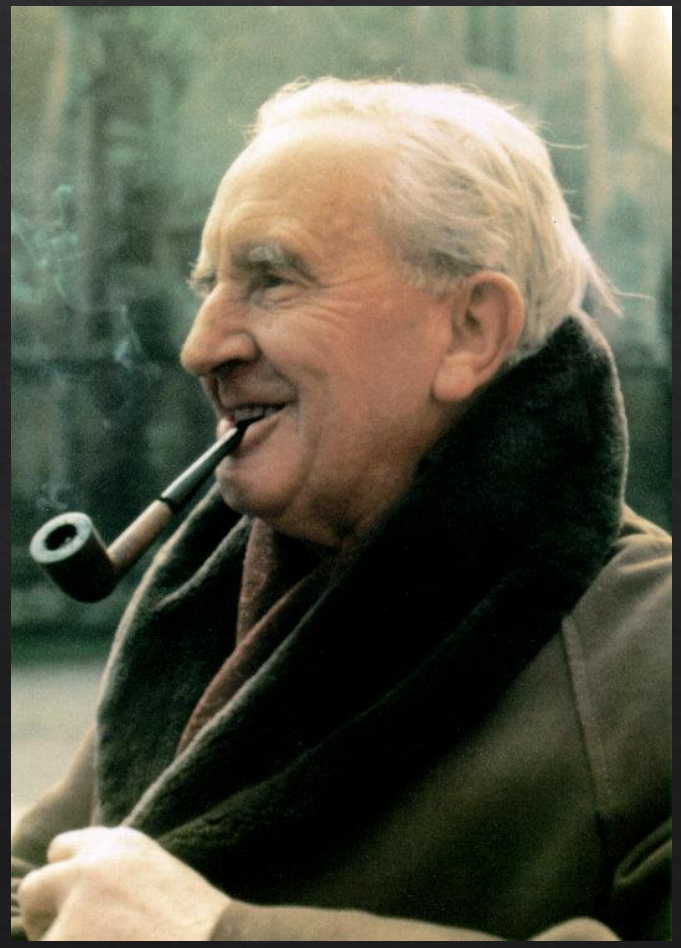
Chess pieces

After being brought to Europe chess quickly became a game that would be played mainly in royal courts and nobles' residences. Therefore, the chess pieces and the board were usually very ornamental and manufactured using expensive materials, such as the ivory.

Chess pieces

One of the most famous and the oldest chess pieces were found in Scotland. They are dated to the late 12th century and they are made mainly of walrus ivory and sperm whale tooth. They depict kings, bishops and knights.

The Lord of the Rings



The inspiration to our chess set was the fantasy world created by J.R.R. Tolkien and in particular his famous trilogy: ‘the Lord of the Rings’. It occurred to us that mystic fight between the good and the bad which is the main theme to the books can be easily translated into the chess game. The white side of would be depicted by the characters from the ‘light’ side, whereas the black pieces would be impersonated by allies of Sauron, king of the shadows.

Chess board

Chess board is the battlefield between the good and the bad. We wanted to reflect this idea by modeling a four-tower castle, half of which is build like Gondor's white city, and the other half is more organic and dark, reflecting Sauron's frightening style. On both sides there are emblems of the fighting sides. One side is Gondor's emblem: white tree and 7 stars. On the other side there is Sauron's eye.

White side

In the books the side of the good was strongly associated with the kingdom of Gondor. Their most valued ally was the wizard: Gandalf. He was the one who arranged the battles and the alliance in general. He also got different tribes involved in the events: the hobbits, dwarves, elves and people.

White side: chess base

White side: the king

Aragorn was a close friend of Gandalf and part of the quest to destroy the One Ring and defeat the Dark Lord Sauron.

After he helped destroy the ring, Aragorn was acclaimed as King by the people of Gondor, and crowned King of both Gondor and Arnor. He then married Arwen and ruled for 122 years.

White side: the queen

Arwen is a half-elven, who is very beautiful and possesses some magical powers.

She comes from a noble family of elves. In the novel, she marries Aragorn, who becomes King of Arnor and Gondor.

White side: the bishop

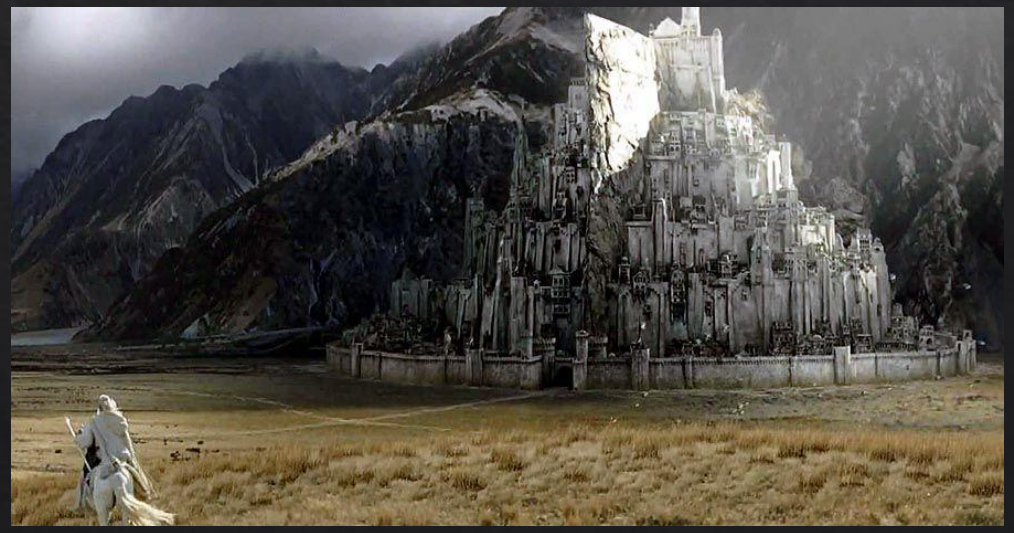
White bishop is **Gandalf the Gray**. He is the one who suspected that the ring that Bilbo stole from Gollum was the ‘one to rule them all’. Moreover, he arranged the journey which objective was to destroy the ring. He was told to be dead after fighting with Balrog on the exit of Moria minery, but he has survived and came back as Gandalf the White, and then lead the armies to confront Saruman and then Sauron

White side: the knight

Gimli is a Dwarf warrior, who is chosen to represent the race of Dwarves in the Fellowship of the Ring. As such, he is one of the primary characters of the novel. Gimli participates in the war against Sauron, and is recognized as a great warrior. After the ring is destroyed Gimli becomes a lord, and lead and settles a new land for his fellow dwarves.

White side: the rook

It was chosen that the white rook will be depicted as the **Minas-Tirith** city. This is the Gondor's Kingdom capital city and it was built during country's golden age, when the part of elvish blood was still noticeable in Gordonians' blood.



White side: the pawn

Sam was Frodo's (he who carried the ring) gardener, and was drawn into the adventure while eavesdropping on a private conversation Frodo was having with the wizard Gandalf.

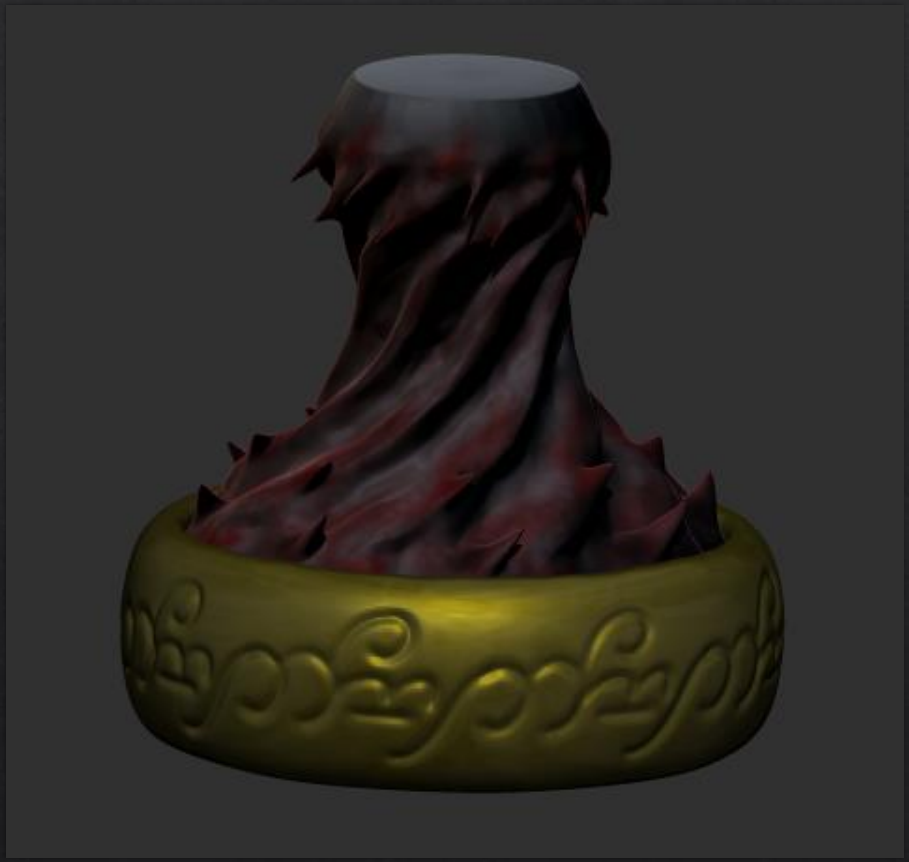
Sam was a steadfast companion and servant, portrayed as both physically strong for his size and emotionally strong, often pushing through difficult parts of the journey and at times carrying Frodo when he was too weak to go on.

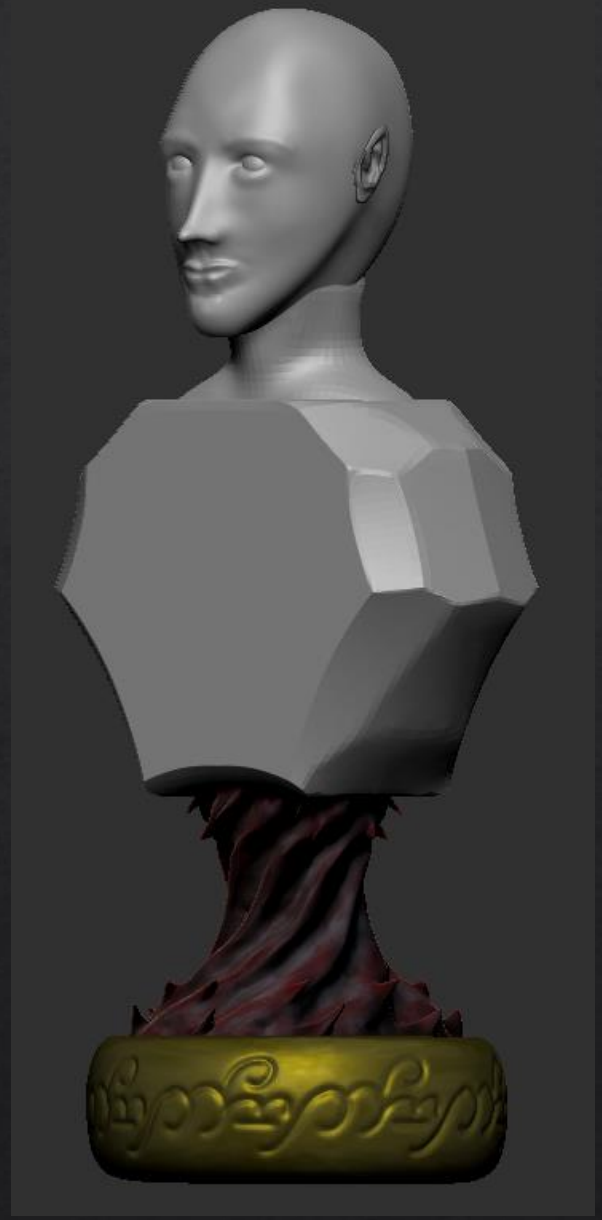
Following the War of the Ring Sam returned to the Shire and his role as gardener, helping to replant the trees which had been destroyed while he was away

Black side

Black side is personified by Sauron and his allies from the Kingdom of Mordor. In the books this side is the embodiment of evil which wants to overrule the whole world. Mordor attracts wicked creatures from the whole world. Amongst them orcs, demons, fallen people, trolls etc. Sauron even created his own breeds of stronger and more evil orcs. The whole country of Mordor was covered in shadows which spread outside the borders on the days of war between the good and the bad.

Black side: chess base





Black side: the king

Sauron is the embodiment of evil in the world of Tolkien. It is a very old, and a very powerful creature. He manufactured the ring with which he could enslave all of the tribes in the Middle-Earth. It was the same ring the Hobbit Frodo destroyed causing Sauron's defeat.

He rules the kingdom of Mordor using orcs and other tribes, but his main goal is to enslave the whole Middle-Earth.

Black side: the queen

The Nazgûl were the dreaded ring-servants of the Dark Lord Sauron in Middle-earth.

They used powerful rings derived from the One Ring, to achieve great power, wealth, and prestige in life, but as time passed the Rings continued to exert a corrupting influence.

The Rings eventually rendered their bearers invisible to all but those who could see into the wraith world, and enslaved them to the will of Sauron. Their lives and their powers became bound to Sauron's via the One Ring.

Black side: the bishop

Saruman was the head of Council of the Wise. However, he betrayed the white side and collaborated with Sauron hoping to defeat him later and get all of his power. He communicated with Sauron using a Palantir, but soon lost control due to his master's surpassing power. His army of orcs was defeated by Rohan soldiers and he himself was locked in his tower by the army of Ents – the tree-shepards, who are even older than elves .

Black side: the knight

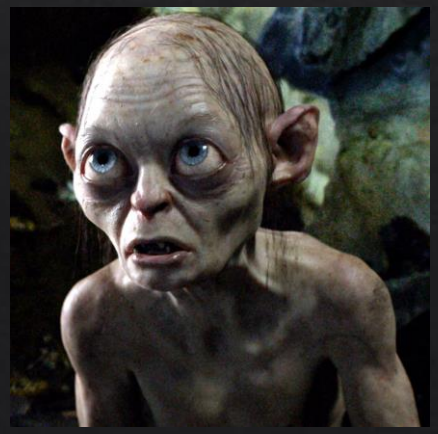
Orcs were the primary foot soldiers of the Dark Lords' armies.

Orcs were cruel, sadistic, black-hearted, vicious, and hateful of everybody and everything, particularly the orderly and prosperous.

Wickedness and violence were their nature, and it was not uncommon for them to kill each other in petty quarrels. They had a destructive effect on nature, especially forests, and often destroyed trees to fuel their war-making.

Black side: the rook

Barad-dur was a tower in the kingdom of Mordor. It was Sauron's residence from which he scrutinized every part of his empire, as well as the movements of his enemies outside of Mordor. The tower was standing in the very heart of the Land of Shadows, very close to Mount Doom, were Sauron manufactured the ring (the one to rule them all). The same mountain were Frodo destroyed the ring.

Black side: the pawn

Gollum is one of the most intriguing characters in Tolkien books. He once used to be a hobbit but accidentally he found the ring which enslaved him and unleashed his dark side. He lived in mines and caves, eating fish or small orcs until Bilbo stole his treasure. After that he travelled the world looking for the ‘thief Baggins’. He helped Frodo to enter Mordor (wanting to kill him later and retrieve the ring). In the end, his evil plan did not work out and fell off to the inside of the Mountain Doom with the ring on Frodo’s finger which he bit off in a fight.