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The Function of Female Characters in the Plots of J. R. R. Tolkien
and George MacDonald

(Bakalářská práce)

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ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

Ve své práci se zaměřím na roli ženských postav v díle George MacDonalda a J.R.R. Tolkiena, konkrétně na zapojení ženských postav do syžetu.

Nejprve v teoretické části představím naratologické metody a postupy zapojení postav do děje. Poté se zmíním o zázemí obou autorů a vlivech, které působily na jejich tvorbu. Dále srovnám roli stěžejních kladných i záporných ženských postav. Rovněž se zaměřím na charakteristické rysy těchto postav, jež mohou mít archetypální charakter.

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of women in the fantasy literature is widely discussed. Fantasy is generally a genre dominated by male heroes and the role of female characters is often overlooked. For this reason this bachelor thesis focuses more on the female characters and observes their role in the narrative. Its aim is to present a comparison between two very influential writers, George MacDonald and J.R.R. Tolkien, and their approach towards female characters and their involvement in the plot. MacDonald is often recognised as a founder of modern fantasy genre. His work is filled with maternal figures and strong courageous women. Another truly remarkable work for the development of the genre is J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy *Lord of the Rings*. In his younger years, Tolkien was greatly influenced by MacDonald's work in his younger years, but later he rejected some of his attitudes, especially allegorical nature of his stories, as can be observed from an edition of Tolkien's letters. Even though Tolkien's attitude towards female characters was often criticized for providing very limited space for them his work influenced many other authors.

This thesis will try to compare the most influential and distinguishable works of those two writers. Tolkien's trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* is the best example of modern fantasy novel and it established a model for fantasy narratives, it also had a great influence on promoting fantasy genre and influenced many of Tolkien's successors. Similarly, George MacDonald's *Phantastes* and *Lilith* provided new views on fantasy. The difference between MacDonald's fantasy novels and children oriented fantasy literature typical for the eighteenth and nineteenth century is the fact, that novels *Phantastes* and *Lilith* were not intended for children at all. For that reason they radiate obvious sexual and religious influences and by this provide opportunity for further development of fantasy literature beyond children's readership. In his narrative George MacDonald presents women of completely different roles in the narrative than Tolkien.

This thesis will also explore the way in which Tolkien and MacDonald managed to incorporate female characters into their works and the significance that the female characters have in the plot and in the thematic structure. From *The Lord of the Rings*

three most influential female characters will be discussed. Éowyn as the most active female in the narrative, Galadriel as the silent guardian of the main heroes and Arwen as the beautiful and inspiring presence. From the novel *Lilith*, it will focus on the characters of Lilith and Lona, who are crucial characters of the narrative and who have the greatest influence on the main character and the plot. Finally from *Phantastes* the bachelor thesis will describe the White Lady who, unlike other female characters in this novel, is in the most frequent interaction with the main protagonist throughout the narrative and who is the object of the main hero's quest.

The aim of this thesis is to show the differences as well as the similarities in the role of the female characters. Both authors tended to present characters in a way typical for fantasy genre and there is an apparent influence of MacDonald on Tolkien's work. Both the authors created strong and interesting characters, but the involvement of their characters in the narrative differs on many levels. This work will explore a difference in the narrative structure, which allows characters to have significant roles in the narrative.

2. NARRATIVE THEORY

This chapter will briefly explain the basic terms connected to the study of literary character and its connection to the plot of a narrative. Views on the topic will be presented and how they evolved during the centuries. Ways of character definition and the main character typologies will be summarized as well.

2.1. Plot

In order to describe the plot, one has to distinguish it from the term “story”. Steven Cohen and Linda M. Shires explain in *Telling Stories: A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction* that the story is reserved for chronological organisation of events, another term is “narration”, and it is used for organisation of the process of story-telling. Narration is therefore a system of organising the linear structure of events into a story.

Nevertheless, there are other aspects to the narration beside simple linearity. Events could be ordered either temporally, meaning their relation of succession, or logically, meaning relations of comparability or causality.¹ The term “story” was used by a novelist and critic E.M. Forster to specify a narrative which manages events in temporal order; on the other hand, the term “plot” specifies a narrative which manages events causally as well as temporally. Plot refers to a type of story structure which places events in relations to subordination, not mere coordination. Forster used the two sentences below as an example of the distinction of a story and a plot:

The king died and then the queen died (story).

The king died and then the queen died of grief (plot).²

In the first sentence the linearity of narration can be observed, on the other hand, second sentence presents not only linear structure, but causality and logical order of events and their interconnection as well. Therefore, these two terms are not

¹ Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires, *Telling Stories: A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1991), 58.

² Edward Morgan Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (New York: Harcourt Brace College, 1985), 86.

interchangeable and according to this theory, not every story necessarily requires a plot.

2.2. Character

The narrative theory distinguishes four basic categories necessary for construction of a text. These are time, space, character and narrator. The work will further focus on the category of character. In their analyses on narrative fiction, Cohan and Shires explain that all events require some agency of action: characters, which are also structured as units of meaning along syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes.³ Characters in the story function in the relation to the events which are occurring, therefore their function could shift during the narrative. The analysis of the events can assign function to the individual characters and the function of each character can also change according to the development of those events, because each event will assign different relations to them.

The concept of a character was observed for the first time in Aristotle's *Poetics*, where he stated the basic units of a tragedy to be: plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle and melody. At the same time he also points out that the plot is superior to the character, because incidents are basic unit of tragedy and they are only triggered by characters.⁴ Seymour Chatman summarized the principles of Greek tragedy in following words: "Action comes first; it is the object of imitation. The agents who perform the action come second."⁵ On the contrary, in E. M. Forster's opinion literary characters represent real human beings and as such they are superior to the plot, because the plot should be in agreement with the psychological typology of the character.⁶

Another important contribution to the theory of literary character was made by Tzvetan Todorov, who argues with Forster and Henry James, that character is not a key element of the narrative. Todorov claims that the character can become subordinate

³ Cohan and Shires, 69.

⁴ Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1978), 109.

⁵ Chatman, 108.

⁶ Forster, 66.

to the plot, and that the word character does not represent the psychological coherence or character traits. By this statement he differentiates two types of narrative: apychological (plot-centred) and psychological (character-centred).⁷

Chatman summarised this subject by stating that it is not important whether the dominant element is plot or character, because he said, "Stories only exist where both events and existents occur. There cannot be events without existents. And though it is true that a text can have existents without events (a portrait, a descriptive essay), no one would think of calling it a narrative."⁸ This statement may prove right his, because it seems to be the most reasonable solution to the question, whether or not the characters are superior to the plot. Every character which appears in the narrative may bring some development that cannot occur without them. Characters are the source of every story, no matter how minor they may be, they have to be present in order for the story to be told. Once the character is involved in the story it necessarily becomes a part of the plot, because characters are basic source of conflicts and resolutions.

2.3. Structuralism and Formalism

There were many studies concerned with narrative theory, but it became systematic only with structuralism in the second half of the twentieth century. This system of understanding narrative structure could be compared to the grammatical structure of a language where each constituent has its function and understanding of this system which is underlining the text is responsible for the acquired sense of the narrative.

There are two main approaches to the narrative theory, French structuralism and Russian formalism. French structuralism used its own distinctive terms to describe basic aspects of a narration: story and plot. Those terms have fundamentally the same meaning as fable (fabule) and plot (sjuzet) used by Russian formalists. According to Chatman in structuralism's and formalism's concepts characters have strictly functional status, they are the products of a plot, rather than human beings.⁹

⁷ Bohumil Fořt, *Literární postava: vývoj a aspekty naratologických zkoumání* (Praha: Ústav pro českou literaturu AV ČR, 2008), 29.

⁸ Chatman, 113.

⁹ Chatman, 111

The less linguistic approach to this matter had A. J. Greimas. He was trying to build a system which would be based more on narrative structure than on linguistic structure. Greimas presented six basic functions for division of the characters: subject, object, sender, helper, receiver, and opponent. However, it seems rather difficult to distinguish all characters only by using these few roles.¹⁰

The structuralism's methods are not very sufficient for description of a narrative structure. Linguistic structures are only partially applicable on a narrative and structuralism is capable of analyzing only certain aspects of it.¹¹ For this reason a system describing literary character in interaction with other narrative elements can be used. David Herman introduced a system which states that in order to interpret narrative characters, their interaction and connection within narrative world as well as their beliefs, desires and intentions have to be observed.¹² This could be considered the motivation aspect of the character and it can be considered the most sufficient way of dealing with literary characters, they have to be understood as human beings, because we need to decipher them in order to understand them, their desires, motivations and reasons.

2.4. Character Typology

Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp was the first literary scholar to be interested in the functions of characters. He examined subject matter in relation to Russian fairy tales. In his opinion a function represents action taken by the character, which provides a structure for the narrative. "Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of action."¹³ He also stated that functions are stable elements, independent of the character fulfilling them.¹⁴ In other words, characters are what they are required to be by the plot.

Forster presents a distinction between a flat and a round character. These two terms can be also used to define the type of a character. Flat characters are generally

¹⁰ Fořt, 24.

¹¹ Fořt, 33.

¹² Fořt, 34.

¹³ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, trans. Laurance Scott (University of Texas Press, 1968), 29.

¹⁴ Fořt, 23

described by a single trait (thought or idea), they do not have the capacity to act dynamically and surprise reader by their actions. On the other hand, a round character is defined by several traits, which can be often contradictory and therefore the character is highly unpredictable.¹⁵ Flat characters might be less distinctly remembered, because there is very little to remember about them. Round characters, on the contrary, might evoke more intimate feeling in the reader. Chatman says, “We remember them as real people. They seem strangely familiar. Like real-life friends and enemies it is hard to describe what they are exactly like.”¹⁶

2.5. Character Definition

A character is generally defined by textual references, and even if they do represent living people as suggested by Forster, they do not have real life as explained by Chatman. On the other hand, Chatman also argues that there is no need to reject the terms of description based on the vocabulary of psychology, morality and other areas related to human experiences.¹⁷ In terms of a text, direct and indirect presentation can be distinguished. The direct presentation represents what we are told about the character, indirect presentation represents the actions of the character. Indirect presentation requires decoding of the narrative meaning. Character could be described in several aspects: appearance, behaviour, discourse, narrative awareness and proper names.¹⁸

2.6. Character Traits

In a story characters perform not only a function but they can also be analysed according to the semantic features recognised as traits. Chatman characterised traits as “relatively stable or abiding personal quality.”¹⁹ Those qualities are present over a part or whole of the story. According to Cohan and Shires it is also important to distinguish them from more ephemeral aspects of a human nature, e.g. feelings,

¹⁵ Forster, 68,78.

¹⁶ Chatman, 132

¹⁷ Chatman, 138.

¹⁸ Fořt, 64.

¹⁹ Chatman, 126.

thoughts or temporal motives. Nevertheless, those could be identical with the traits.²⁰ Once traits are stated directly, they appear briefly in the form of an adjective or an adverb linked to the character's name, or more profoundly while describing individual character.

Cohan and Shires stated, "The matching of traits to function marks certain events as signifiers over others because of the value it assigns to event."²¹ On the other hand, Chatman found it difficult to simplify characters' roles like this, pointing out that some aspects of a character do not necessarily connect to the plot, "We appreciate character traits for their own sake, including some that have little or nothing to do with 'what happens'."²² Todorov saw difference between agents and actual characters, he stated that only when psychological traits are added to the agent, it becomes character, otherwise it remains empty.²³ One may disagree on this statement, because it would be difficult to find a completely empty character, in every story characters do have certain character trait, be it minor. Character traits are significant, but one can agree with Chatman on the fact that not every character has to be significant for the plot. These traits provide a bridge between literary characters and readers, making characters distinguishable and memorable.

²⁰ Cohan and Shires, 126.

²¹ Cohan and Shires, 75.

²² Chatman, 112.

²³ Fořt, 31.

3. FEMALE CHARACTERS IN FICTION

This chapter will describe the evolution of female characters in fantasy literature from the Middle Ages to the present day. It will present the basic functions and typologies of those characters and how the social situation of each period influenced their image in literature.

3.1. The Middle Ages

When commenting on the role of female characters in the fiction, fantasy literature in particular, it needs to be realised that literature was for a long period of time considered mostly male's field, written by and for men, therefore, the influence of female aspect was often reduced to simple romance element, especially during the period of the Middle Ages. In this period "the most romances display a limited range of roles for women and focus on male heroes. Women are mainly objects of desire/love/marriage/testing."²⁴

On the other hand, when one looks back at the old fairy tales and folktales which used females to represent the natural world, clear connection to the fantasy literature depicting female heroines as personifications can be found. There were important and clearly feminine figures as Fortuna, Mother Nature or Wisdom. Subsequently, these elements were explored in Hagiographies which narrated the life of the saints. There was a very strong cult of virginal martyrs (Mary, Agnes, Barbara), they were appealing, because the church was focused on the "abstinence as a path to religious perfection."²⁵ The most popular during the Middle Ages would be story of Mary Magdalene as a redeemed sinner and her path through marriage and prostitution to sanctity.

Middle Age's Romances even contained some female main protagonist. Those were usually focused on romantic element. When considering the place given to women in typical heroic tale, there are very clear distinctions between the roles they are expected to play. Maness describes the role of a woman in the heroic quest, "If the

²⁴ Gillian Polack, "The Middle Ages," in *Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy, Volume 1* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2009), 8.

²⁵ Polack, 6.

quest journey is the archetype of masculine heroic activity, then the woman's archetype is to maintain the „world of common day“ so that it remains a place to which the hero may return.“²⁶ In a romance women played minor plot elements. For example in *The Alexander Romance* the life of Alexander the Great is depicted and an episodic storylines of city of Amazons or encounter with queen Olympias of Macedonia appeared there. Another role played by women was the one of a victim. “The most important difference is that, according to some medieval thought, women occupied different roles because of their intrigue nature, just as Jews did.”²⁷

On the other hand, the most important genre of the medieval period, which used female characters as an important aspect of the story, could be considered Arthurian Romance. In these tales women played quite important roles not only as romantic interest but also as active protagonists influencing the flow of a narrative. There were such figures as Guinevere, Morgan or Iseult. These characters were not simply victims of circumstances but they also had influential role for the whole narrative. Iseuld became very important literary model as her well drawn character traits were often copied in literature. However, thanks to the popularity which those tales received in the Middle Ages the character of Morgan had been given a great amount of modifications in various stories. She changed over the time from a genuine magical beauty to a purely evil creature.

Women were also given significant role in the Frame tales presenting stories within wider narrative structure. Most famous would be Geoffrey Chaucer's and Giovanni Boccaccio's tales from the fourteenth century. There are also frame tales of Arabic origin known as “Seven Sages”. Within those stories female protagonist tell the narratives and provide important roles for the plot as well.

²⁶ Kevin Mannes, "Taming the Wild Shieldmaiden: A Feminist Analysis of Tolkien's 'Heroicism' in The Lord of the Rings," (MA thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1995), 2.

²⁷Polack, 2.

3.2. The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century

Within the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth century the role of women changed rapidly, they became involved not only in social issues but they gained their merit as readers and writers of literature. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the social and cultural changes brought a strong shift in the attitude toward women not only in the field of literature. There was a strong movement demanding women's rights and "is certain that the period in question was tumultuous, particularly on the issue of social roles and most particularly, gender roles."²⁸ Within this period one encounters genres of writing known as Gothic, Romantic and Victorian. The range of literature was quite wide, but in the genre of fantasy the gender roles did not follow the same pattern as in other period genres.

While male writers were focusing on the male oriented plots in the genre of the gothic novel, some female writers, such as Anne Radcliffe, managed to put their heroines on the mysterious journeys filled with dangers as a counterpart to the male heroes. Another example of the use of female characters is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. In this novel the role of a female protagonist is noticeable as not substantial for the plot but the metaphor for birth as the central female issue and it is connected with male protagonists. According to Helen Pilinovsky, "The issue of power and gender are eloquently addressed, albeit at a remove."²⁹ At this point it is also good to mention the Brönte sisters as important writers of the gothic genre. In the fiction of Brönte sisters the female protagonists are the main characters and are main focus of the narrative.

With the approach of the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian period, marked by reign of the Queen Victoria, the suffragette movement was established and women began to gain much more attention in society. These were important changes also leading to a change of the female role in fiction. Heller stated that concerning heroic properties of male and female protagonists one has to realise the social space available to them for their actions, "The private sphere of the woman is immeasurably smaller than the male public sphere, so a woman's movements are necessarily

²⁸ Helen Pilinovsky, "Nineteenth-century Fiction," in *Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2009), 12.

²⁹ Pilinovsky, 14.

constricted; moreover, since women are to be auxiliary to the quest of the man.”³⁰ Therefore, the social position of women is mirrored as well in the approach that they receive in literature.

At this period the archetypal fairy-tale female characters were carefully rewritten to serve new audience, along with the fantasy genre they were reduced to interest mainly children and women. In accordance to this move John Ruskin wrote his only narrative *The King of the Golden River*, in which he intentionally removed all female characters in order to eliminate any sexual and social commentary in this children’s story. When discussing female protagonist in the fantasy literature, Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found* cannot be omitted as an example of the Victorian fantasy. Those stories present female roles as crucial for the narrative. On the other hand, Helen Pilinovsky points out those books were criticised for anti-female views, because of employment of hostile maternal figures.³¹ Although George MacDonald was a mentoring and encouraging figure for Carroll, his work is filled with particularly pleasant maternal figures and strong courageous women. “As in much of MacDonald’s work, his hero is guided by a mentoring enchantress, indicating a somewhat different mentality from that of Carroll.”³² MacDonald is often referred to as a founder of modern fantasy genre, because of his unconventional depiction of secondary worlds in which he differed from the period writers.

3.3. The Twentieth Century

The role of females in the twentieth century literature is quite variable, there are plenty of female and male authors and topics with various attitudes towards women. This thesis will focus mostly on the fantasy literature in the twentieth century, as there was a rapid increase in popularity of the genre in this period. The narrative models for the genre were established at the beginning of this era and many authors published their works. The basic structure of epic fantasy consisted mostly of a male hero warrior and an attractive and dangerously erotic female figure. Later in the period female

³⁰ Dana Heller, *The Feminization of Quest-romance: Radical Departures* (Austin: University of Texas, 1990), 4.

³¹ Pilinovsky, 17.

³² Pilinovsky, 17.

warriors also appeared, but they did not have any leading role for the narrative, “warrior-women are the hero’s companions (and usually come to a bad end) rather than the heroes themselves.”³³ For example, those females are either companions or mistresses of the main male protagonist as in work of E. R. Eddison. On the other hand, strong female characters can be found in the books by Robert E. Howard, depicting women warriors and Amazons.

Lyman Frank Baum’s *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* presents a variety of important female figures. The main protagonist Dorothy is receiving help and support from other good female characters within the story and confronts the evil witch as the main antagonist. Another example could be Astrid Lingren’s *Pippi Longstocking*, in which the main protagonist is an unconventional girl with an unusual strength who deals with various problems on her own. At this period J.R.R. Tolkien published his fantasy novels. The most remarkable for the development of the genre is considered his trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*.

Many female writers emerged at the time as well. Feminist writers tended to present retold versions of fairy tales in order to return to the female hero, they presented their characters not as someone passively waiting for a rescuer but rather as someone actively taking charge of the situation. Nevertheless, in the second half of the twentieth century the roles of male and female protagonists varied depending on the writer and the story as well as the genre. Fantasy literature was considered male-oriented, presenting females mostly as a distraction, love interest or an antagonist. Of course, many exceptions to this rule can be found these days.

3.4. Female Characters

In conclusion, fantasy has its roots in folktales and fairy tales, which were filled with female characters, but they were allusive representations not real human beings. Although in the Middle Ages narratives contained various female characters as well, those had generally a supporting role for the male characters. They were representing love interest, enchantress and victims to be saved by a hero. Generally folktales had

³³ Christine Mains, "Fantasy, 1900-1959: Novels and Short Fiction," in *Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2009), 40.

space for female characters as long as they were personifications or symbols and medieval romance needed them to represent a passive victim opposed to the male hero taking the actions. The role given to women was always marked by their social position in the era, therefore not many developed and influential female characters were actually presented until the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century the fantasy genre started to develop and even some influential female writers emerged. Fantasy was for this period interchangeable for children literature a new approach to the genre had to be applied in order to make the female role more equal to the male protagonists. It can be stated that fantasy is considered to be a male-centred genre, but many important female protagonists can be found when looking long enough. Their role has changed during the centuries from allusions to victims to actual heroes.

4. J.R.R. TOLKIEN

The focus of this chapter will be on the female characters depicted in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954). There are many things which could be said about Tolkien's attitude towards women within this narrative, nevertheless this work's attention is paid to the three most prominent and significant characters, warrior Éowyn, wise Galadriel and enchanting Arwen. Those three women all present certain sides of feminine power and they are connected to the narrative in various aspects. Firstly, general characteristics of Tolkien's attitude toward women within the *The Lord of the Rings* will be given and then the roles of these three characters will be discussed in greater detail.

4.1. J. R. R. Tolkien and Female Characters

Tolkien's works have been always subjected to strong criticism, especially his attitude towards women. Nancy Enright mentions that the absence of female characters in the battles is not necessarily an implication of Tolkien's ignorance towards females, but on the other hand, he presents counter-parts to the masculine power, offering an alternative in the form of healing and protecting female force.³⁴ However, he is also being accused of general disinterest in the female characters.³⁵ It is difficult to completely deny any of those views. Tolkien was not being very generous with the amount of influential female characters, but on the other hand, the few he presented were not diminished, their role in the plot was not very apparent. His female characters are still very strong and well depicted characters, even though they do not have much space to prove this.

In her paper Justine di Giovanni explains that the reason for Tolkien's treatment of female characters is based in his own life. Tolkien lost his parents at a very young age, he was raised by a Catholic priest and as a result he was not used to the ways of maternal love and coped with this disadvantage by somehow omitting this relationship

³⁴ Nancy Enright, "Tolkien's Females and the Defining of Power," *Renaissance* 59.2 (2007): 93.

³⁵ Roger Schlobin, "Tolkien and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," in *J.R.R. Tolkien and his Literary Resonances: Views of Middle-earth* (Westport: Greenwood, 2000), 73.

whatsoever.³⁶ He was also a member of the Inklings, the literary group associated with the Oxford University and supporting fiction and fantasy writers. In *Women among the Inklings* Candice Fredrick and Sam McBride stated, that the world of *The Lord of the Rings* is very similar to the state of the Inklings, in which the women may exist, but their significance can be easily omitted.³⁷ We cannot forget that Tolkien does manage to present several important characters as wise and powerful Galadriel, enchanting Arwen and the most wilful and courageous of them Éowyn. On the other hand, their parts in the narrative seem insignificant. This subject will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Those women may not have any crucial role for the narrative, but they are incorporated as important counterparts to the male ruled world, which is at the same time approaching its end as the Third Age of Middle-earth is closing at the end of the narrative and the elves depart to the Undying Lands. Jane Chance thinks that the characters considered weak, the females, hobbits and even elderly, actually occupy the most heroic roles in Tolkien's works.³⁸ I agree that those are the characters forced to stand against prejudice and underestimation and each time they exceed the expectations.

The best example of a courageous and underestimated female character is Éowyn. She is a very significant example of a woman gaining power and taking control over her own destiny. Galadriel possesses an undisputable power exceeding male characters in the narrative. On the other hand, Giovanni notes that although Tolkien obviously tries to write in a progressive manner, he is unable to allow such a rebellious and untraditional behaviour without strict restrictions.³⁹ This is present in the fact that Éowyn actually acquires her active role through accepting male properties, suggesting that the only way she is allowed to influence the plot is by hiding inside man's disguise and Galadriel is barely given chance to show her power. Nevertheless, it may not be Tolkien's intention to suppress their roles in this manner but he was not able to

³⁶ Justine di Giovanni, "I Am No Man: J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as Gender-progressive Text," (BA thesis, The College of William and Mary, 2011), 7.

³⁷ Candice Fredrick and Sam McBride, *Women among the Inklings: Gender, C. S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2001), 108.

³⁸ Jane Chance, *The Lord of the Rings: Mythology of Power* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 72.

³⁹ di Giovanni, 15.

provide enough narrative space for those characters to have chance to prove their power.

Even though the role of female characters is not obvious, they present their own form of influence more on the level of a metaphorical counter-part to the current state of the world as a sigh of the dying age ruled by masculine power. Tolkien's females are remarkable and significant in their own way, but they are not crucial parts of the narrative. Even though they have symbolic meaning which goes through the whole story of the transition to the Age of Men, they are mostly only a background for other characters and actions.

4.2. *The Lord of the Rings* – Plot Overview

The Lord of the Rings is a set of three volumes titled: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*. Each volume consists of two books. The story is written as a sequel to previous book *The Hobbit*, and also works with mythology established in *Silmarillion*. The narrative depicts "the secondary world" of Middle-earth and follows the main protagonist, a young Hobbit Frodo Baggins and his companions who are forced into journey to destroy the One Ring of Power, which would be used by Dark Lord Sauron as a source to rule and destroy Middle-earth.

4.2.1. Éowyn

Éowyn seems to be the most prominent female character in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy when considering her description as a literary character. She is introduced as a niece of the Rohan king Théoden. Right at the beginning she is described as a fair lady, beautiful and noble, but at the same time she radiates strength and decisive will. Roger C. Schlobin in *J.R.R Tolkien and His Literary Resonances* considers her the only significant, multidimensional female character among many male ones in *The Lord of the Rings*.⁴⁰

Éowyn gained her significance after king Théoden had left to the battle and she had to take care of the kingdom, despite the fact that he did not consider this option convenient for a woman.

⁴⁰ Schlobin, 75.

“Is there none whom you would name? In whom do my people trust?”

“In the House of Eorl,” answered Háma.

“But Éomer I cannot spare, nor would he stay,’ said the king; ‘and he is the last of that House.”

“I said not Éomer,” answered Háma. ‘And he is not the last. There is Éowyn, daughter of Éomund, his sister. She is fearless and high-hearted. All love her. Let her be as lord to the Eorlingas, while we are gone.’

“It shall be so,” said Théoden. “Let the heralds announce to the folk that the Lady Éowyn will lead them!”⁴¹

Éowyn received sword and a corselet as symbols of her new role, but at this moment her only duty is to maintain the place and in a case of defeat supply a shelter for the survivors, she is not expected to use those items ever.⁴² She has a strong will and she might be given an extraordinary power but she is also constantly pushed back into traditional female roles. She demands to ride with Aragorn to battle, because she claims to be „weary of skulking in the hills, and wish to face peril and battle.”⁴³ On the other hand, she is quickly reminded about her duty to stay behind and govern her people. Chance thinks that she actually serves Rohan better than any male warrior in the battle of Pelennor Fields.⁴⁴ She is faced with a decision, whether to obey her king and stay behind or challenge not only his orders but abandon her duties as well and ride to the battle. She chooses to take disguise under the man’s armour and hide her maiden beauty, at some point she must sacrifice her feminine self in order to achieve her goals. Tolkien mentions in his letters that she “like many brave women was capable of great military gallantry at a crisis.”⁴⁵ It could be said she is not a hero but a mere woman who desires to find her place in the world, she fears to be caged as a housewife, not to be capable of great deeds.⁴⁶ She breaks from this metaphorical cage

⁴¹ John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), 512.

⁴² Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 512.

⁴³ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 767.

⁴⁴ Jane Chance, *The Lord of the Rings: Mythology of Power* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 72.

⁴⁵ Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien, eds., *Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1990), 344.

⁴⁶ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 1027.

and carries out her greatest deed. During the battle king Théoden is fatally wounded and Éowyn as the only one of his guards stands to revenge him with all her strength. Éowyn becomes the one who actually slaughters the leader of enemy army, also she fulfils prophesy stated many years ago that no man can kill the witch-king.⁴⁷ Witch-king is certain of his invincibility because of this prophesy, 'Hinder me? Thou fool. No living man may hinder me!' Éowyn answers him with pride and removes her disguise, 'But no living man am I! You look upon a woman.'⁴⁸ This could be considered as moment when her own role is expanded from simple coincidence of her choice to disobey and to go into the battle, into the resolution of the whole battle. The implication of this prophecy was always considered as no living human can actually slaughter the witch-king, but Éowyn sheds completely different light on the statement, she is not only revenging her king, she is suddenly being the tool of this prophecy. She was meant to be there and fulfil her role as a slayer of the witch-king.

Nevertheless, she was left gravely ill, her arm was paralysed and she had to be sent to the city for healing. She stood as a hero for a brief moment, but then she has no choice but to return to her original role. According to Mannes, "her story shows not only what women should act like but the terrible injuries and mental anguish they will experience if they act in any other way."⁴⁹ This statement may be a little too harsh, of course some people may see the radical twist in Éowyn's role in the story as a sign of Tolkien's reduction of her importance, on the other hand, she had indisputably a crucial part in the battle and her choice of calm and peaceful life is hardly a punishment, it is rather a reward. Of course, she had to undergo wounding and healing in order to fully understand her own desires in different light as any male warrior would.

Faramir is in a similar position, held in the healing house, unable to fight. This situation points to the conclusion that it is not a suppression of a female character, it is rather a healing process necessary for every injured warrior. Enright considers the relationship Éowyn develops later with Faramir to be metaphorically linked to the destruction of the Ring, it is a part of the healing process not only for two injured

⁴⁷ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 823.

⁴⁸ Tolkien, *The lord of the Rings*, 823.

⁴⁹ Mannes, 20.

characters but also for Middle-earth, which now enters the Age of Men.⁵⁰ Éowyn decides, "I will be a shieldmaiden no longer."⁵¹ She also abandons her desires for battle and suddenly becomes pure feminine figure in eyes of society. She is described to be "golden as the sun and white as snow"⁵² but this time without any masculine properties.

Éowyn's role in the story is very brief in comparison to other characters, she appeared in a few chapters only, but her action had a significant impact. The battle of Pelennor Fields could not have been won without her determination and even though she had to hide herself in man's disguise in order to be a part of the battle, she also had to be a woman in order to fulfil her role as the slayer of the witch-king. Her decision to abandon her desire for the battle seems as a sigh of peace which sets upon the Middle-earth after the war is won rather than her being reduced to a housewife. Éowyn proved herself to be not only as strong as other male characters but even stronger, because she had to sneak her way into the battle, similarly as Merry the Hobbit did with her assistance.⁵³

4.2.2. Galadriel

Galadriel is one of the most powerful characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. She presents strong will and her role is to provide guidance and support. She played her role in the rebellion against Valar (angelic guardians) in the First Age, she was proud and refused forgiveness for this deed and she spent her life in the Middle-earth along with her husband Celeborn, she ruled the Lothlorien.⁵⁴ At the end of *The Lord of the Rings* she is finally redeemed by proving her strength and refusing power of the One Ring. Enright describes her as "one of the most important characters of either gender in the story."⁵⁵ On the other hand, there is an argument that her role is eventually simply fading away and disappearing.⁵⁶ It should be agreed that she was playing an active part in *Silmarillion*, but in *The Lord of the Ring* she is merely a shadow of her actual power

⁵⁰ Enright, 106.

⁵¹ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 943.

⁵² Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 955.

⁵³ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 787.

⁵⁴ John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, *Silmarillion*, trans. Stanislava Pošustová (Praha: Mladá fronta, 2003)

⁵⁵ Enright, 99.

⁵⁶ di Giovanni, 24.

and strength. Tolkien describes her in his letters as “the last remaining of the Great among the High.”⁵⁷ According to this, she is the last remaining great power in the Middle-earth. The battle she has to fight is only with herself as the last step for her character in order to finish her path and depart to the West. It can be concluded that Giovanni is right, because Galadriel’s strength is presented only as a reminiscence of her actual power and her presence is mostly in the background, she is not directly participating in any action. Galadriel is strong and very interesting character, but her influence is generally indirect.

There are hints in the trilogy to support the assertion of her being powerful character and that she is not a conventional female character. Enright sees her as a mover and planner whose decisions affect all people of Middle-earth.⁵⁸ This is proven by the fact that she is one of three Elven Rings bearers and she mentions that she established The White Council and had very different intentions for the future of Middle-earth.

“I it was who first summoned the White Council. And if my designs had not gone amiss, it would have been governed by Gandalf the Grey, and then may hap things would have gone otherwise.”⁵⁹

She also tests the weakness of the members of Fellowship by tempting them with their desires⁶⁰, just to be later tested herself by Frodo offering her the Ring.⁶¹ Jane Chance calls her “company’s spiritual guide.” Chance also points out that Galadriel stands out as a very empathic character, whose power is in her hospitality, understanding and forgiveness, by which she inspires others as a model for tolerance.⁶² For example, this can be observed on her desire to forgive the hatred between Dwarves and Elves.⁶³ When her husband scolds Gimli the Dwarf for entering Moria, where Gandalf fell to shadow, she advises him to understand Dwarf’s desire to see his ancient home, and

⁵⁷ Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien, eds., *Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1990), 197.

⁵⁸ Enright, 99.

⁵⁹ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 348.

⁶⁰ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 350.

⁶¹ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 356.

⁶² Chance, 54.

⁶³ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 346.

she also gains great respect from Gimli.⁶⁴ On the other hand, Schlobin argues that it is her idealised image that makes her stand beyond humanity and singular.⁶⁵ But Chance, on the contrary, sees her gentleness only as a mask for her wisdom.⁶⁶ These are several possibilities of understanding her character, but she is after all one of the oldest and most powerful beings dwelling in Middle-earth, therefore she can be hardly considered part of humanity. She stands above others, but it is her wisdom and age which have to separate her from the rest of the characters. Her role is not to be equal to them but to provide them with the knowledge and wisdom she acquired during the years. She does not give them direction, she only offers options.

“I will not give you counsel, saying do this, or do that. For not in doing or contriving, nor in choosing between this course and another, can I avail; but only in knowing what was and is, and in part also what shall be.”⁶⁷

Her greatest moment comes when she is offered the One Ring by Frodo. She is aware of the power which comes with the Ring. She realises that she would have to become the same as the enemy in order to defeat him and soon she would lose everything she stands for. Giovanni explains that her choice to reject the Ring as a choice to refuse taking the power that would both save her and destroy her.⁶⁸ Galadriel would gain the strength to defeat Sauron, she would become the power which heals the land, but she also understands she would not be able to resist that power. “‘I pass the test,’ she said. ‘I will diminish, and go into the West and remain Galadriel’.”⁶⁹ She makes her choice to retain her current strength, to redeem herself and to be able to pass to the West. Galadriel presented each member of the Fellowship with a gift, always thoughtful and special. Frodo received phial with the light of Eärendil’s star.⁷⁰ This gift proves to be essential for Frodo, when he encounters spider Shelob.⁷¹ Schlobin explains that Galadriel presents direct opposite to Shelob, and that is why her light burns Shelob

⁶⁴ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 347.

⁶⁵ Schlobin, 75.

⁶⁶ Chance, 54.

⁶⁷ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 348.

⁶⁸ di Giovanni, 18.

⁶⁹ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 357.

⁷⁰ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 367.

⁷¹ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 705.

back into her lair.⁷² She guides Frodo and every time her gift helps him he is reminded of her wisdom until he can finish his task. Sam used the phial to provide light in the darkness several times, when searching for Frodo as well.⁷³

She is not physically present, but her action is important. Galadriel stands as a luminescence in the story, observing and enlightening, when darkness or peril comes. Her role is not in the story itself, but she is underneath it. Her role was described more as a reminiscence of what she has done in the past. One should admit that even though she is powerful beyond other characters, she is not present as an active character but as an influence of her character.

4.2.3. Arwen

The last of the females from *The Lord of the Rings* world which is worth mentioning is elven princess Arwen. She represents the pure aspect of beauty in the narrative. In *The Lord of the Rings* is stated: "Such loveliness in living thing Frodo had never seen nor imagined in his mind."⁷⁴ Arwen is mentioned very rarely in the trilogy itself, but her story is more explored in the Appendices in "The Tale of Aragorn and Arwen". Tolkien considers her role much more important than might seem on the first look. "I regard the tale of Arwen and Aragorn as the most important of the Appendices; it is part of the essential story, and is only placed so, because it could not be worked into the main narrative without destroying its structure."⁷⁵ She is the least influential female character in the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* and she is not described beyond the merits of her beauty. On this subject Enright points out that her beauty is not only physical but intellectual and spiritual as well and that Arwen's inner power is subtly conveyed in the narrative, yet still present.⁷⁶ She has very obvious influence on Aragorn. He became grim and stern during his perilous journeys⁷⁷ and he is refreshed and light comes to his eyes when he remembers the time spent with Arwen in Lórien. She offers inspiration to the characters by her beauty and purity, yet there is not much

⁷² Schlobin, 75.

⁷³ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 882, 924.

⁷⁴ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 221.

⁷⁵ Carpenter and Tolkien, 255.

⁷⁶ Enright, 96-97.

⁷⁷ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 1036.

to be said about her own character beyond that. She is a sort of peripheral character but she closes the tale when she gives up her immortality for mortal life with Aragorn and gifts her passage to The Undying Lands to Frodo as a way to heal damage he suffered while bearing the One Ring.⁷⁸

According to Enright her sacrifice becomes a salvation for Frodo, whose actions saved the Middle-earth.⁷⁹ In the Appendix Arwen's father Elrond stated that his loss may help to restore kingship of Men,⁸⁰ again pointing to the sub-textual significance of her character. The marriage between Arwen and Aragorn, the king of Gondor, her sacrificing of immortal life and elves departing from the Middle-earth, this all signifies the shift to the Age of Men. Compared to Eowyn and Galadriel she does not have any active part in the narrative and her own story is told in the Appendix. Arwen is not a crucial character, but she seems to be the source of peace in the end, for Aragorn by becoming his queen and for Frodo by sensing his wounds and advising him to depart. She is not directly involved in the plot and she may be significant peripherally, but at the end it is noticeable that as a character she does not provide much action or influence in the story. Nevertheless, she is one of the females in the narrative, who leave impression of a round and emotional characters.

⁷⁸ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 952.

⁷⁹ Enright, 98.

⁸⁰ Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 1036.

5. GEORGE MACDONALD

The following chapters will explore fantasy novels by George MacDonald and the role of female characters within those narratives. At the beginning MacDonald's attitude toward women in his narratives will be shortly described then the focus will shift to his famous fantasy novels *Lilith* and *Phantastes* and to description of several key female characters in detail. In the novel *Lilith* the focus will be on the characters of Lilith and Lona as the most prominent female protagonists, and in *Phantastes* The White Lady will be described.

5.1. George MacDonald and Female Characters

George MacDonald was a Victorian era writer, he was influenced by Romantic period and allegory and symbolism of Dante and Milton as many authors of the period, for example in the educational journey theme in *Phantastes* and later he returned to this theme in *Lilith*.⁸¹ Many writers were later inspired and fascinated by his novels, including C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. George MacDonald wrote several fairy tale books, several non-fantastic novels, but his most remarkable works in the genre of fantasy would be *Phantastes* and *Lilith*. John Pennington stated that Lilith's revolt and then submission is actually a part of nineteenth century gender politics.⁸² This statement may be disproved, the story of Lilith goes much deeper than a period tale, the religious influence is very prominent in the theme itself and Lilith as a character has a bigger role than a gender statement. George MacDonald lost his mother at a young age, it seems that he dealt with this tragedy by presenting us a range of motherly figures throughout his work and his hero is often guided by a mentoring female figure.

In her book *The Christian Goddess: Archetype and Theology in the Fantasies of George MacDonald* Bonnie Gaarden explains that both *Lilith* and *Phantastes* are stories

⁸¹ Giorgio Spina, "The Influence of Dante on George MacDonald," *North Wind* 9 (1990): 22.

⁸² John Pennington, "Of 'Frustrate Desire': Feminist Self-postponement in George MacDonald's *Lilith*," *North Wind* 21 (2002): 34.

focused on psychological development of the main character.⁸³ MacDonald used fantasy genre to explore human psychology and his novels are filled with symbolism and allusions. Jennifer Sattaur points out that in MacDonald's plots several different female characters are necessary to provide sin and knowledge as a road to earn grace the of God.⁸⁴ She again describes significance of female characters for MacDonald's plots as well as deep religious influence. Although folk-tales and fairy-tales featuring range of strong female characters were popular in Victorian era, according to Gaarden only MacDonald „regularly Christianized these conventions.“⁸⁵ Gaarden also explains that in MacDonald's work we encounter Goddess-figures. His longer novels tend to feature one complex Goddess, for example *At the Back of the North Wind*, on the other hand, in less extensive novels as *Lilith* and *Phantastes* the role has to be split between several female characters.⁸⁶ These figures represent aspects important for the development of the main character, they serve as mother figures, enchantresses or virginal lovers. MacDonald presents archetypes of female figures typical for fairy-tale genre, but as well provides them with deep theological meaning, therefore all characters in his novels have some specific role. The wise woman in *Phantastes* serves as an educator, while White lady provides the source of inspiration. Lilith is a seducer and Lona is an innocent love. All these females provide experience important for the main character. Without them the stories would lose their meaning and become simple adventure, because both *Phantastes* and *Lilith* deal with their maturing.

5.2. *Lilith* – Plot Overview

Lilith (1895) is a symbolic tale, it is also called a romance. The plot is focused on the maturing of the main character while travelling the mystical land. This romance is based on a Christian allegory in which mankind must return to its creator. The main protagonist is Mr. Vane who enters another world through the mirror in his library. On his journey he encounters The Little Ones, eternal children who have been saved from being killed by a princess, and their leader Lona. He sets on the quest to help The Little

⁸³ Bonnie Gaarden, *The Christian Goddess: Archetype and Theology in Fantasies of George MacDonald* (Lanham, Md.: Fairleigh Dickinson University, 2011), 31.

⁸⁴ Jennifer Sattaur. "George MacDonald's *Lilith*: Whores in Babyland," *North Wind* 25 (2006): 24.

⁸⁵ Gaarden, 2.

⁸⁶ Gaarden, 92.

Ones and goes with them into battle against evil princess of Bulika, Lilith, who murders all children in her city and withholds water from the land, thus forcing The Little ones to never grow up.

5.2.1. Lilith

Lilith is not the main character of the novel, but she empowers it as the main source of conflict. She rejected her feminine role as Adam's wife and Lona's mother, she is the princess of the city of Bulika, and she slaughters all new-born children in fear of being destroyed by them, but it is actually her own daughter, Lona, whom she fears.⁸⁷ She is also a very complicated character described in terms of dichotomy, she is a beautiful angelic being on one side, and she transforms into a monster on the other. This conflict of appearance leads to Vane's confusion about her character, he becomes uncertain whether to love her for her beauty or hate her for her actions. "...if I did less than loathe her, I should love her."⁸⁸

The Background of her character comes from two sources, Jewish mythology, where she is a demon murdering children, and in apocryphal Jewish lore she is Adam's first wife. Both those descriptions are incorporated in the story. She is not just a secondary character. Sattaur claims that one of the main focuses of the plot is actually to redeem Lilith.⁸⁹ John Pennington stated that she overpowers the narrative space, which forced MacDonald to silence her at the end and imprison her in his Christian myth of redemption.⁹⁰ It is possible to disagree with the idea that the author's resolution of Lilith's situation was abrupt, she is not really saved but she is put to sleep in Adam's chamber of death.⁹¹ To proclaim that she was silenced seems quite accurate conclusion. The Christian myth is a strong part of the narrative, but in case of Lilith her sudden change of heart is difficult to trust. The narrative is focused more on Lilith than Vane. Although Vane undergoes his adventure in order to mature into a man, he serves as a rout for Lilith's penance at the end. It can be argued that Lilith is too strong character to be convincingly depicted in the novel. The complexity of her character

⁸⁷ George MacDonald, *Lilith* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University, 2006), 136.

⁸⁸ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 121.

⁸⁹ Sattaur, 20.

⁹⁰ Pennington, 27.

⁹¹ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 202.

exceeds the space she occupies in the narrative. She was Adam's first wife, but she rejected family, rejected the patriarchal status as a wife and mother and refused to be a slave of God's will. She has done all of this in order to maintain herself independent, instead of being transformed into a passive figure controlled by her husband or her creator. "She counted it slavery to be one with me, and bear children for Him who gave her being."⁹²

Pennington sees her as "negative transformation of female purity".⁹³ This seems accurate, because she was created as a wife and a mother, but she turned into a murderer and a vampire-like creature living from blood. On the other hand, Sattaur states that even though being negative, she is necessary for Vane's education, because by seducing him she gives him chance to mature and learn difference between desire and love.⁹⁴ She is given a role of "femme fatale" and Vane is divided between feeling of loath and uncontrollable desire towards her. He knows about her deeds, but he is fascinated by her beauty beyond common sense as he states: "For a moment I was tempted to love a lie."⁹⁵ Lilith is purely sexual creature, she does not know love and she does not seek it. Vane is first enchanted by her when he saves her from the trance and she secretly feeds on his blood.⁹⁶ Later he travels to Bulika to confront the princess and he is again fooled by her beauty. She constantly evokes love and hate, pity and rage in him. She is as confusing to Vane as she is to reader, who has to decide whether she deserves to be destroyed or saved.

The Little Ones are children saved from Bulika, who cannot grow up and mature. They are a direct product of Lilith's sin, because she withholds the waters,⁹⁷ and the Little Ones need water to grow.⁹⁸ She is their saviour, as they live in eternal innocence, and tormentor, as they are trapped in eternal ignorance. Lona takes care of those children and eventually she leads them into battle against Lilith. Lilith keeps this water in her clenched fist and it is released only as a symbol of her ultimate defeat. Even though she surrenders and repents, she is unable to open her fist on her own, it has to

⁹² MacDonald, *Lilith*, 136.

⁹³ Pennington, 28.

⁹⁴ Sattaur, 23.

⁹⁵ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 121.

⁹⁶ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 98.

⁹⁷ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 69.

⁹⁸ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 130.

be amputated by Adam.⁹⁹ Pennington sees the act of cutting her hand as a metaphor for feminine power being silenced by patriarchal power. He also claims that she is domesticated to become a passive angel like other women of the narrative (Eva, Mara, Lona).¹⁰⁰ It can be concluded that she is tamed at the end, her change is very abrupt and seems more like a result of a need to finish her story. Lilith may be redeemed by force, proven by the clenched fist, which will not open by her will but has to be cut off in order to finish Lilith's penance, almost like she is subconsciously still not willing to surrender, but is too tired to fight anymore, her strong unwillingness to submit could be observed in her words.

"I will be what I mean myself now."

"I would do after my nature."

"I will do as my Self pleases—as my Self desires."

"I will do what I will to do."

"I am what I am; no one can take from me myself!"

"Another shall not make me!"

"No one ever made me. I defy that Power to unmake me from a free woman!"¹⁰¹

Lilith is desperate to preserve herself and what she believes to be freedom and independence. She makes a point that no one else is fit to judge her and destroy her, not even God, and she is fully convinced about her truth. Lilith is being convinced over and over by Mara until she surrenders and decides to repent.

Lilith is a very hard character to read, she is presented as a pure evil, terrorising Bulika, keeping children from growing, and eventually killing her own daughter.¹⁰² On the other hand, she is redeemed at the end, when she sees her real self and surrenders to Adam and to God.¹⁰³ This surrender is often seen inevitable, as Lilith takes over the narrative and it is necessary to suppress her character. Pennington

⁹⁹ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 202.

¹⁰⁰ Pennington, 33-34.

¹⁰¹ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 184.

¹⁰² MacDonald, *Lilith*, 170.

¹⁰³ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 189.

explains that her presence is there only to “haunt the fringes of the novel.”¹⁰⁴ In my opinion, Lilith is not only the essential aspect of the narrative, she seems to be the focus of it. Lilith has her role as a seducer for Vane, which she fulfils perfectly, but she also overtakes the narrative for her own story, which at some point seems even more developed than the story of the main protagonist.

5.2.2. Lona

Lona is another very influential character from *Lilith*. She is Lilith’s daughter and also leader of The Little Ones. According to Gaarden she represents the maiden in the goddess trinity of Eve, Adam’s new wife as the mother, and Mara, her daughter, as a wise women.¹⁰⁵ Lona is described in terms of innocence and love. “...in Lona the dazzling beauty of Lilith was softened by childlikeness.”¹⁰⁶ According to Sattaur she is the antitheses to destructive nature of her mother. She cares for children, who would get destroyed by Lilith.¹⁰⁷ It might be agreed with Gaarden that Lona as well as all characters in *Lilith* represents some aspect of Vane’s experience.¹⁰⁸ She is an object of Vane’s desire, but unlike his sexual desire for Lilith his love for Lona is chaste. The desire for Lilith and Lona is disastrous for him, but at the same time necessary for his psychological development.

Lona is one of The Little Ones, although, she also serves as the mother figure to them. Gaarden describes her by these words, “She has never cried, never developed any depth, or complexity of character.”¹⁰⁹ This description is supported in *Lilith*, when Eva stated that she had been already dead when her mother killed her. She is a representation of a pure and innocent virgin, but she is not the whole person, she had no chance to grow up and she was alive only to bring Lilith’s doom. Lona leads The Little Ones to attack Bulika, and after their victory she is killed by her mother Lilith.¹¹⁰ Her childlike innocence and later death are very important aspects of Vane’s development into becoming matured identity. Vane advised her to take actions, so it is

¹⁰⁴ Pennington, 27.

¹⁰⁵ Gaarden, 170.

¹⁰⁶ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 151.

¹⁰⁷ Sattaur, 24.

¹⁰⁸ Gaarden, 170.

¹⁰⁹ Gaarden, 26.

¹¹⁰ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 170.

his grief and feeling of responsibility that marks the worst moment of his adventure, when he has to face the consequences. He carries her body to Adam to put her into his chamber of death, he watches over her all the way, protecting her.¹¹¹ Lona's real role is to redeem her mother. She is killed while expressing her love to her.

'Mother! mother!' cried Lona again, as she leaped on the dais, and flung her arms around the princess. An instant more and I should have reached them!— in that instant I saw Lona lifted high, and dashed on the marble floor. Oh, the horrible sound of her fall! At my feet she fell, and lay still. The princess sat down with the smile of a demoness.¹¹²

According to Gaarden her death causes Lilith's repentance as well, which leads to restoration of the water and salvation of The Little Ones.¹¹³ It might not have been Lona's death, which caused Lilith's change of heart but the fact that Lilith was still afraid of her daughter even after Lona's death.¹¹⁴ Lona reminds her of her sins, something waiting to turn back on her. The real reason for her surrender to Adam and God can be not only Lona's death, because Lilith never really regrets killing her daughter.

Lona is later resurrected in Eve's house into new fullness of life.¹¹⁵ Before that moment she was only partially alive, trapped in the ignorance and innocence of a child, now she has awoken as a woman. She is one of the central characters in the narrative, and even though she is not fully developed as a character her mere presence is linked to the symbolic nature of the story. She stands as a direct opposition to the pure evil of Lilith and she is also the way of Lilith's redemption and Vane's maturing. Lona's child-like innocence and sacrificial death leads to Vane's psychological development and is therefore necessary for his journey, she is his true lover at the end, after he managed to withstand temptations of Lilith. Therefore both females are necessary in the plot as symbolic guides for the main character.

¹¹¹ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 175.

¹¹² MacDonald, *Lilith*, 170.

¹¹³ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 170.

¹¹⁴ MacDonald, *Lilith*, 201.

¹¹⁵ Sattaur, 25.

5.3. *Phantastes* – Plot Overview

Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women (1858) is the first fantasy novel written by George MacDonald. Anodos, the main character, is pulled into dreamlike fairyland, where he travels to find his ideal beauty in form of The White Lady. His journey is an allegory to maturing into a man as well as in *Lilith*. Anodos has to face temptation in order to give up his ideals and develop into a grown individual.

5.3.1. The White Lady

One of many female characters in *Phantastes* is The White Lady. There are more female characters which could be considered influential, but White Lady is the focus of the main protagonist. She represents an imaginative power and is a sort of a muse figure, awakening his desire for ideal beauty, which he was not aware to exist before he first saw her. “What I did see appeared to me perfectly lovely; more near the face that had been born with me in my soul, than anything I had seen before in nature or art.”¹¹⁶ She is imprisoned in a piece of marble, once Anodos sees her he is so fascinated by her beauty that he immediately becomes obsessed by her. He attempts to free her by recalling old Greek legends about Pygmalion, because there is a bas-relief of this legend about sculptor who fell in love with his statue and woke her by kiss.¹¹⁷ Anodos attempts to free her by kiss, when this fails he is inspired by another legend and decided to sing to her and she is finally freed,¹¹⁸ unfortunately she immediately runs away from him.¹¹⁹ This becomes the source of Anodos’s motivation to follow and find his White Lady. “I gazed after her in a kind of despair; found, freed, lost! It seemed useless to follow, yet follow I must”¹²⁰ He believes he has finally found her, but he is being deceived by Alder Maiden, another female character. She actually betrays him to the Ash tree, whose wish is to destroy Anodos.¹²¹ This episode shows how vulnerable Anodos becomes because of The White Lady, he gets himself almost

¹¹⁶ George MacDonald, *Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University, 2007), 37.

¹¹⁷ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 40.

¹¹⁸ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 40.

¹¹⁹ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 47.

¹²⁰ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 40.

¹²¹ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 47.

killed just because he seeks the presence of a woman he does not even know. Later he enters the Fairy queen's palace, where he again dreams about his Marble Lady. There is an empty pedestal among the statues in the palace and Anodos believes it to be for her.¹²² He again sings to the pedestal and makes her to appear visible but he cannot control himself while being so close to his desired beauty and tries to touch her. Lady is startled by his attempt to free her from her death state and she once again flees away from him.

But no sooner had her feet ceased to be in contact with the black pedestal, than she shuddered and trembled all over; then, writhing from my arms, before I could tighten their hold, she sprang into the corridor, with the reproachful cry, "You should not have touched me!" darted behind one of the exterior pillars of the circle, and disappeared."¹²³

Nevertheless, he is still fascinated by her and willing to follow her even to the places forbidden by The Fairy queen, because as he says the queen is nothing to him, when he pursues his Lady.¹²⁴ He travels underground, John Docherty described his pursuit as lusty and misguided¹²⁵ but eventually he gives up on finding her and states, "I no longer called her to myself MY white lady."¹²⁶ He is proud for awakening her by his song and somehow this awakens a feeling of possession in him.¹²⁷ He was calling her his White Lady, following her in hope she would naturally return his feelings. According to Gaarden, in the Fairy Queen palace Anodos is forced to abandon the ideal of The white Lady as an erotic love-object, so he can embrace her as an internal capacity.¹²⁸ It can be stated that this is really the first time he can at least hear her talk, he can acknowledge her as a real being not just as a perfect and unemotional statue. The dream slowly becomes reality. White Lady keeps fleeing from him in the moments when the ideal becomes a material substance. She is the centre of his desires but

¹²² MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 112.

¹²³ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 121.

¹²⁴ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 122.

¹²⁵ John Docherty, "The Sources of Phantastes," *North Wind* 9 (1990): 26.

¹²⁶ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 125.

¹²⁷ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 129.

¹²⁸ Gaarden, 177.

unreachable as a real person. He tries to search for her, not comprehending her as a real person but more as an ideal. According to Courtney Salvey the White Lady represents spiritual embodiment of beauty and Anodos is trying to bring it into material form.¹²⁹ His quest is to materialize this ideal, but at the same time it becomes unreachable for him. He is faced once again with the loss of his Lady and he is slowly becoming aware of the possibility, that he will never be able to reach her. Eventually Anodos encounters the Old Lady on the island, in her cottage he is soothed by her over the loss of his lady and allowed to enter four doors, each leading to different experience. One of those leads him to the White Lady and he listens to her conversation with Sir Percival. She admits to have feelings for Anodos because he saved her twice from enchantment, but she would never love him as she loves Percival.¹³⁰ He finally realises that his Lady will never love him back. "She was near me, and I could not see her; near me in the arms of one loved better than I, and I would not see her, and I would not be by her."¹³¹ He also grows a great respect towards Percival, becomes his companion willing to serve the noble man, if he cannot be noble enough himself.¹³² He finally abandons his quest for ideal beauty and starts to work on his own personality, his sense of honour and respect. He matures to be a better man. It can be said that although the White Lady is not a supernatural figure and she does not possess any magical powers and does not do anything except running away from Anodos, she still is an important part of the plot. Her significance is the fact that she is the force driving the main character on his path, without her he would be just wandering the Fairyland with no purpose. White lady is an inspirational impulse, setting Anodos on his path, leading him through his maturing and providing experience.

¹²⁹ Courtney Salvey, "Riddled with Evil: Fantasy as Theodicy in George MacDonald's *Phantastes* and *Lilith*," *North Wind* 27 (2008): 20.

¹³⁰ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 147.

¹³¹ MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 148.

¹³² MacDonald, *Phantastes*, 184.

6. CONCLUSION

In this thesis the roles of female characters in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and George MacDonald's *Lilith* and *Phantastes* were explored. The aim was to describe two very different approaches towards the female characters and the way they were incorporated in the plot. As a conclusion it can be stated that Tolkien does not deserve to be accused of sexist attitude towards female characters, even though they do not have an important role in the narrative structure, they are well described as characters and even when it may not be obvious, each of them has some significance for the narrative. On the other hand, MacDonald is using his female characters in much wider range, they are closely connected to the plot, and necessary for the main character and for his journey to have meaning. This may be to the extent when they serve as a trigger for protagonist's actions only. Unlike Tolkien's women they are very simply described, they symbolise steps of the maturing process of a man. They may seem flat and undeveloped, except Lilith, who is a very complicated character and almost takes the narrative for herself. Even though both authors have similar sources for their writing, Christian symbolism, folk-tales and Tolkien even acknowledged the influence MacDonald had on his secondary-world, but in other aspects they vary. Tolkien refused to use characters in the same way as MacDonald did, therefore he is free to construct them with more depth and realism. On the contrary, MacDonald created them as symbols and allusions to maturing process.

Tolkien's narrative scale in *Lord of the Rings* trilogy is a much wider narrative, and therefore, there are many more characters to explore, and not all of them can receive such importance as in the less epic scale of MacDonald's novels, but we can follow even those few suppressed female protagonist through their own subplots in the main story. Tolkien was not inclined to present allegories of any kind, but Tolkien's women are also in a certain way symbolic characters. They represent transition from The Third Age to the Age of Men in the similar manner as MacDonald's women represent transition from boy to man.

The most explored character is with no doubt Éowyn, who is given her own storyline and psychological development and in the end of the narrative her involvement in the plot of the main story could be considered significant, after all she

is the one whose actions lead to the defeat of Sauron's most powerful minion. On the other hand, Galadriel is the character who does both, she influences the plot and provides guidance for the main characters, but only in the background and she is not present as a doer of actions. The last significant character is Arwen, who is depicted very scarcely in the main narrative. She is one of the characters considered significant and she provides emotional influence. Nevertheless, she is not as necessary for the plot as Éowyn or Galadriel. These are three women appearing among countless men in the narrative. When compared to the works by MacDonald it is obvious that they serve a very little role in the main narrative, but they take actions. MacDonald's females serve as a necessary device for the main protagonist's maturing process.

It can be said that the idea, that MacDonald's characters significance is deep in composition of the story, is correct, as they create complex unity and cannot be omitted. Lilith and Lona are crucial characters in the narrative, without them the main character would not be able to grow up and develop. Lilith represents the temptation and sexual lust which Vane has to overcome in order to understand chaste and innocent love to Lona. Lilith is also a very significant character, because she captures narrative for her own story, her redemption becomes much more prominent than Vane's psychological development. Similarly, the White Lady in *Phantastes* is not only a character, but also an object of Anodos's quest, she is his inspiration and source of his understanding that material beauty is not as important as inner qualities. He matures when he abandons his quest for the beautiful lady and joins honourable knight.

After exploring the main female characters in the three novels it was discovered that both Tolkien and MacDonald worked with their characters in very different manner. Tolkien did not give wide narrative space to his female characters, but they were still necessary in the narrative. It was shown in this thesis that Éowyn, Galadriel and even Arwen were incorporated in the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* in a significant manner. MacDonald created his female characters as symbols and allusions to the maturing process of the main hero. Lilith, Lona and The White Lady are undeniably deeply connected to the plot and they create unity with the whole narrative, but they seem to have less personality outside their symbolic nature. After comparing both authors a conclusion was reached that MacDonald was more generous when proving the plot significance for his characters, but Tolkien was not avoiding or

diminishing females, he simply expressed their significance in the plot in a less obvious manner.

7. SHRNUÍ

Cílem této bakalářské práce bylo prozkoumat roli ženských postav v syžetu. Téma bylo zvoleno s ohledem na skutečnost, že tento žánr je všeobecně spojován spíše s mužskými hrdiny, a přestože se v mnoha dílech vyskytují ženy, jejich role je často okrajová. Otázka zapojení ženských postav byla velmi diskutovaná hlavně ve spojitosti s J. R. R. Tolkienem a jeho proslavenou trilogií *Pán prstenů*. Zároveň je ovšem nutné poukázat na odlišný přístup k problematice, a proto je předloženo k porovnání dílo George MacDonalda, který je obecně považován za zakladatele moderní fantasy.

Práce je rozdělena do několika kapitol, nejdříve jsou představeny vybrané základní pojmy související s naratologií a teorií postavy. Hlavní otázkou je, jak podstatná je postava pro samotný příběh, což je otázka diskutovaná už od dob starověkého Řecka, proto je nabídnuto několik literárních teorií na toto téma. Můžeme se ztotožnit s názorem, že jak postava, tak příběh musí být úzce propojeny a není možné mít jedno bez druhého. Také jsou v této kapitole přiblíženy dva základní myšlenkové proudy spojené s výzkumem naratologie - formalismus a strukturalismus. Oba proudy přistupovaly k postavě, jakožto k prvku příběhu, stejným způsobem jako gramatika přistupuje k prvkům ve struktuře věty. Postava je podle nich součástí struktury a tak by měla být vnímána, spíše než jako lidská bytost. Ovšem právě protože se tyto teorie nezabývají postavou jakožto bytostí, se jeví jako příliš teoretické a nedostačují k plnému uchopení literární postavy v celém jejím rozsahu. Dále je uvedeno několik typologií, podle kterých se může postava odlišovat. Tímto se dostáváme k tématu charakterových rysů, které představují základní podklad pro bližší zkoumání literární postavy. Jak role postavy v syžetu, tak její charakterové rysy přibližují postavu čtenáři a vytvářejí její plný obraz a formu.

V následující kapitole je nabídnut stručný přehled role ženských postav, aby byl podán komplexní pohled na jejich vývoj a zapojení v literatuře a to hlavně se zaměřením na fantasy. Kořeny fantasy literatury můžeme hledat v pohádkách. Ženy zastupovaly abstraktní pojmy jako Moudrost a Štěstěna. Později, během středověku, byla jejich role značně pozměněna a redukována vlivem křesťanského učení. Ženy byly v literatuře stále přítomné, ale jejich osudy měly evokovat náboženský postoj k sexuální abstinenci a pokání. Nejpopulárnějším žánrem ve středověku byly romance,

keré sice oplývaly množstvím ženských postav, ale ty sloužily pouze jako objekty milostných zájmů hlavního hrdiny. Představovaly oběti, které měl hrdina za úkol zachránit, nebo byly odměnou za jeho hrdinství. Za zmínku stojí také poněkud odlišný přístup charakterizující artušovské romances, v nich se začínají objevovat již soběstačnější postavy a je jim dán větší prostor. Tuto polohu reprezentuje Ginevra, Morgana a nesporně také Isolda. V šestnáctém století se ženám rovněž dostalo pozornosti v rámcových příbězích. Například Geoffrey Chaucer a Giovanni Boccaccio je využívali ve svých povídkách jakožto aktivní prvky příběhu. Na přelomu osmnáctého a devatenáctého století se výrazně začalo měnit postavení žen ve společnosti a s tím byla spojena také změna v jejich zapojení do literatury. Během tohoto období se ženy projevíly nejen jako autoři, ale i jako silné literární postavy. George MacDonald také představuje svou vizi fantastního světa plného symbolů a sexuality. MacDonalldovo dílo ovlivnilo řadu jeho současníků a také mnoho pozdějších autorů. Největší rozkvět zaznamenala fantasy ve dvacátém století, kdy se na literární scéně objevilo mnoho autorů, a žánr si začal získávat mimořádnou oblibu čtenářů. Ženské postavy byly zobrazovány nejen jako milenky a pokušitelky hlavního hrdiny, ale také jako válečnice a silné emancipované bytosti, které se umí odvážně bránit proti nepřítelům. Právě J. R. R. Tolkien svým nejslavnějším dílem *Pán prstenů* významně přispěl k popularizaci do té doby opomíjeného žánru.

Po stručném přehledu teorie postavy a historie ženské postavy, se konečně dostáváme k samotnému dílu J. R. R. Tolkiena. Nejdříve je přiblíženo jeho vyobrazení ženských postav v obecné rovině a některé aspekty, které ho ovlivnily a celkový pohled, který převládá v hodnocení jeho práce s ženskými postavami. Všeobecně panuje názor, že se Tolkien práci s ženskými postavami vyhýbal, a že ženy dokonce záměrně vynechával z příběhu. Existuje však mnoho pohledů na jeho přístup, a ty jsou ty této práci zhodnoceny objektivně a bez předsudků. Je pravdou, že jeho ženské postavy jsou jakoby skryty v pozadí, ale zároveň by bylo nesprávné tvrdit, že to jsou méněcenné postavy v porovnání s mužskými hrdiny. Tolkienovy ženy jsou bravurně vykreslené literární postavy, ovšem jejich role v příběhu je zcela jiná otázka. Aby bylo možné posoudit roli, kterou Tolkienovy postavy hrály v rámci knihy, tato práce nabízí pohled na tři prominentní ženské postavy, které se v *Pánu prstenů* objevily.

Nejprve je zanalyzovaná postava Éowyn, protože jako jediná žena v příběhu výrazně přispěla svou aktivitou k vývoji děje. Éowyn je prezentována nejen jako krásná žena, ale i silná a sebevědomá osoba, která je ochotná se postavit předsudkům, které vůči jejímu pohlaví mají mužští protagonisté, když se vydá do bitvy v přestrojení za muže. Podstatné je nejen její odhodlání a vůle, ale také skutečnost, že její přítomnost na bitevním poli vedla k zásadnímu zvratu bitvy, když porazila velitele nepřátelské armády. Její vítězství je podmíněno právě faktem, že je ženou, jelikož v proroctví bylo řečeno, že žádný živý muž nemůže přemoci Černého jezdce. Tato postava je prezentována na stejné úrovni jako mužští hrdinové v tomto díle. Není jedinou postavou, která byla podobně jako hobiti podceňována, a která nakonec překonala všechna očekávání a prokázala své schopnosti. Je ovšem pravdou, že Éowyn se v rámci příběhu vyskytuje pouze sporadicky, ale bezpochyby zaujímá v *Pánu prstenů* nejaktivnější roli ze všech ženských postav.

Další výraznou postavou je Galadriel, která sice není příliš aktivní protagonistkou a její role v rámci struktury příběhu je poněkud okrajová, ale přesto je nepřehlédnutelnou osobností a to díky moci a moudrosti, kterou vyzařuje. Galadriel je postavou, která se vyskytla už v Tolkienově díle *Silmarillion*, kde jí autor dal větší vliv, než tomu bylo později v *Pánu prstenů*. Její ohromná moc a moudrost se jen jemně promítla v příběhu. Galadriel by měla potenciál přemoci Saurona a přinést mír Středozemi, ale zároveň by musela obětovat sebe samou, a podlehnout moci prstenu, proto bylo její rozhodnutí odmítnout prsten zásadní pro její postavu. Jejím největším vítězstvím je její silná vůle a schopnost uvědomit si své slabiny. Jako postava je přesvědčivá a velmi mocná, přesto je Galadriel spíše stínem, který se vznáší okolo hlavních hrdinů, ale není jejich rádcem ani ochráncem, pouze jim nabízí možnosti a nechává je si zvolit cestu.

Jako poslední postava z *Pána prstenů* je představena Arwen. Tato elfí princezna má ze všech tří postav nejmenší prostor působnosti v knize samotné. Celý její příběh je popsán až v apendixu. Její role je velmi malá, a přesto tato postava zanechává ve čtenáři dojem, který ji činí pozoruhodnou. Arwen je významnou motivací a inspirací pro Aragorna. Navíc její empatická osobnost dokáže vnímat škodu, kterou prsten způsobil Frodovi, a proto mu nabídla cestu na západ do zemí neumírajících, aby mu ulevila.

Následující kapitola se věnuje dílu George MacDonalda, konkrétně je zaměřena na jeho dvě fantasy knihy *Lilith* a *Phantastes*. Nejprve je přiblížen MacDonaldův přístup k ženským postavám v obecné rovině, aby mohly být později rozebrány jednotlivé postavy podrobněji. George MacDonald vytvořil obě knihy jako symbolické příběhy znázorňující dospívání hlavního hrdiny během jeho putování fantaskním světem, v něm se setká s mnoha postavami, které slouží jako prvky přispívající k jeho rozvoji. Z tohoto důvodu je zřejmé, že postavy v MacDonaldově díle jsou velmi hluboce propojené se samotnou strukturou příběhu, jejich role není jen v rozmezí jejich aktivity, ale také v jejich symbolické asociaci. MacDonald je na rozdíl od Tolkiena velmi štedrý v zapojení mnoha ženských postav. Jeho díla často obsahovala ústřední ženskou postavu, která v sobě nesla silný potenciál k pokoušení a nasměrování hlavního hrdiny, což přispělo k jeho psychickému zranění.

Nejprokreslenější postavou, se kterou se v *Lilith* setkáme, je samotná Lilith. Přestože zastává především roli svůdkyně, která pokouší hlavního hrdinu, je Lilith i velmi komplexní postavou. Její příběh je intenzivní a prakticky přehlušuje příběh hlavního hrdiny. Lilith se zřekla Boha a svého muže Adama, odmítla život, který pro ni plánovali, a přežívala z krve jiných. Smyslem její postavy je nabídnout hrdinovi sexuální pokušení, kterému musí vzdorovat, aby mohl plně ocenit nevinnou lásku, zároveň však ona sama musí projít vykoupením a navrátit se k Bohu. Její postava je velmi komplikovaná a především v závěru knihy celý příběh zcela ovládne. Lilith není titulní postavou, avšak je v mnoha ohledech významnější a dynamičtější než sám hlavní hrdina.

Další podstatnou postavou v *Lilith* je její dcera Lona. Lona pro hlavního hrdinu představuje nevinnost a pravou lásku, zároveň je nástrojem pádu Lilith a také jejího vykoupení. Lona na rozdíl od své matky, není výrazně komplexní postavou. Je popsána jako nedokončená bytost, uvězněná v těle a mysli dítěte, které nemůže dospět, je věčnou připomínkou hříchu své matky. Lona musí nejdříve zemřít, aby mohla znovu povstat jako skutečná celistvá osobnost. Podobně jako Lilith je Lona velmi úzce propojená se samotným příběhem, takže tvoří zcela nepostradatelnou součást knihy, její nevinnost a poté smrt jsou aspekty nezbytné pro prozření hlavního hrdiny a jeho přeměnu v psychicky vyspělého muže.

Poslední postavou, která je blíže analyzována, je White Lady z knihy *Phantastes*. White Lady představuje ideál krásy, po kterém hlavní hrdina Anodos pátrá. Od první chvíle, kdy jí spatřil, je jí posedlý a celá jeho cesta fantaskním světem, je vlastně hledáním tohoto ideálu. Tématem jeho pouti je podobně jako v *Lilith* jeho psychologická pout' od dětinskosti k dospělosti. Hrdina musí opustit své představy o dokonalé kráse v podobě White Lady a dospět k pochopení vyšších morálních hodnot, jako je sebeobětování. White Lady není aktivní postavou, většinu času stráví zakletá v mramoru nebo na útěku před hlavním hrdinou, který je posedlý touhou si ji přivlastnit, ale její existence je nezbytná, neboť ona je smyslem a nástrojem jeho vývoje.

Po zanalyzování děl dvou autorů s velmi odlišným přístupem k zapojení postav do syžetu se nabízí závěr, že přestože oba autoři přistupovali k zapojení postav do syžetu zcela rozdílně, nedá se tvrdit, že by některý z nich k ženským postavám přistupoval nevyrovnaně. Tolkien sice nenabízí nijak velké množství ženských postav ale ty, které se v knize objeví, jsou velmi mocné, moudré a odvážné. Na druhé straně MacDonaldovo dílo překypuje množstvím ženských figur, ale zároveň tyto postavy slouží v první řadě jako nástroj k rozvoji hlavního hrdiny.

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9. ANNOTATION

Author: Kateřina Ramazanová

Title: The Function of Female Characters in the Plots of J. R. R. Tolkien and George MacDonald

Faculty and department: Philosophical faculty, Department of English and American Studies

Supervisor: Prof.PhDr. Michal Peprník, M.Phil., Dr.

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This bachelor thesis is focused on the role of female characters in the plot of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and George MacDonald's *Lilith* and *Phantastes*. First chapter explains the basic terminology and background to narrative theory. Then a short overview of the female characters in fantasy during the history is presented. Next chapter deals with work of J.R.R. Tolkien and the role of female characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. It is focused on the characters of Éowyn, Galadriel and Arwen. Another part describes in the same manner George MacDonald's *Lilith* and *Phantastes*. It is focused on the characters of Lilith, Lona and The White Lady.

Key words: fantasy literature, J. R. R. Tolkien, George MacDonald, female characters, literary character

10. ANOTACE

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Název práce: Zapojení ženských postav do syžetu v díle J. R. R. Tolkiena a George MacDonalda

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Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na zapojení ženských postav do syžetu J. R. R. Tolkiena a jeho díla *The Lord of the Rings* a George MacDonalda a jeho díla *Lilith* a *Phantastes*. V první kapitole jsou představeny základní terminologie postoje spojené s naratologií. Poté následuje stručný přehled role ženských postav ve fantasy literatuře v průběhu historie. Další kapitola se zabývá dílem J. R. R. Tolkiena a rolí ženských postav v *The Lord of the Rings*. Zaměřena je na postavy: Éowyn, Galadriel a Arwen. Následující kapitola popisuje dílo George MacDonalda a roli ženských postav v knihách *Lilith* a *Phantastes*. Zaměřena je na postavy Lilith, Lony a White Lady.

Klíčová slova: fantasy literatura, J. R. R. Tolkien, George MacDonald, ženské postavy, literární postava