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THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING AS A SOCIAL GROUP

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Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o knize *The Lord of the Rings* od Johna Ronalda Reuela Tolkiena. Jejím cílem je analyzovat Společenstvo Prstenu jako sociální skupinu. První část práce vysvětluje termíny a definice spojené s pojmem sociální skupiny. Následující tři části se zaměřují na samotné Společenstvo, počínaje popisem ras, ze kterých je Společenstvo složeno. Následují charakteristiky devíti členů Společenstva a porovnání s jejich rasami. V poslední části jsou analyzováni jednak jednotliví členové Společenstva, jednak celé Společenstvo na základě teorie sociálních skupin, která je popsána v první části práce.

Klíčová slova: sociální skupina, Společenstvo Prstenu, skupinová pozice, vůdce, skupinový vývoj

Abstract

This Bachelor's thesis deals with the work of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*. Its aim is to analyse the Fellowship of the Ring as a social group. The first part of the thesis describes the terms and definitions connected with the concept of social group. The following three parts focus on the Fellowship itself, starting with the descriptions of the races that constitute the Fellowship. Then the individual nine members are characterized and compared to their races. Finally, the evolution of the individual members of the Fellowship is analysed, as well as the entire Fellowship based on the theory of social groups depicted in the first part of the thesis.

Keywords: social group, Fellowship of the Ring, group position, leader, group evolution

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Introduction

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien is the most famous writer of fantasy literature. His lifelong work concentrates on the fictional world of Middle-earth. Tolkien's works concerning this world create a profound mythology and sense of history and antiquity within the world.

Tolkien's most famous work from this setting, a trilogy called *The Lord of the Rings*, has been studied and observed in many different ways and from multiple points of view. This thesis focuses on the sociological aspect of the rich story that depicts the journey of the Fellowship of the Ring, nine characters of different races and cultures, on the background of a battle between the good and the evil. The nine characters have to learn how to work together as a group by making use of their abilities and qualities and by adapting themselves to different situations. The thesis aims to analyse the social evolution of the Fellowship and its members on their journey towards the destruction of the One Ring and thereby bring a new, different view on Tolkien's work.

The thesis is divided into four main parts. The first part will present the key elements of group sociology. It will introduce the aspects of social groups from the point of view of their types, functions, evolution and the positions of their members. The second part will introduce the five races that constitute the Fellowship of the Ring in order to explain the origins of the members. It will also serve as a base for comparison of the individual characters with their races, which will be the focus of the third part of the theses. The fourth and final part of this work will deal with the analysis of the Fellowship of the Ring. It will be analysed as a social group and the focus will be put on the distribution and redistribution of group positions, as well as on the development and evolution of individual characters. Both, the group as a whole, and the individuals evolve significantly throughout the three novels.

1. Social group

We spend most of our lives surrounded by people that come from various social groups. Some of them are from our groups, some not. Social groups are vital to us because most of our interactions take place within them. We create groups to find friendships and accomplish certain goals.

1.1. What is a social group?

Before we talk about the types, specifics, and functions of social groups and their members, it is necessary to explain what exactly a social group is. A social group is a type of alliance that people create as a result of the similarity of their opinions and goals. The definition on which the sociologists agree says that a social group is “a set of people who identify with one another and who interact in informally structured ways based on implicitly shared values, norms, and goals.” (Calhoun 205)

Social groups vary in size and can have any number of members, but the minimum number is two. The maximum can be any number, as long as the members are able to maintain regular interaction. The members of a social group need to interact with one another in order to cultivate the relationships in their group. Thanks to these interactions the members can influence each other and groups can change their values and goals.

Social groups are usually formed spontaneously on the basis of conversation and as people learn more about each other. It is important to stress that a social group is an *informal unit*. This means that the members are friends, they share their emotions and feelings with each other and they interact in their free time. It is therefore essential to distinguish between an *informal group* and *formal organisation*. A *formal organisation* can be defined as “a group designed and created to pursue specific goals, and held together by explicit rules and regulations.” (Bassis 327) However, it is not uncommon to find social groups formed on the basis of *formal organisations*.

1.2. Types of groups

There exist many different types of groups and many different criteria by which we can distinguish them. These criteria are of *structure, size, time, belonging, relationships, interaction, and membership*.

1.2.1. Structure

Firstly, I would like to talk about the types of groups based on their structure. We can distinguish between informal and formal groups. *Informal groups* are smaller social groups and their members have close intimate relationships.

Formal groups are also considered social groups; however, their members have more formal and less intimate relationships. It may seem that a *formal group* and a *formal organisation* are the same, but they are not. Though very similar, a *formal group* is less formal than a *formal organisation*. We can imagine the distinction between an *informal group*, a *formal group*, and a *formal organisation* as a scale where the least formal type of group is a very intimate social group and the most formal is a *formal organisation*.

1.2.2. Size

The group size is important because it impacts the interactions between members of a group. The more members a group has the more difficult it is for them to communicate. This facilitates the creation of smaller groups within a larger group. We can distinguish between two types of groups based on their size. Groups can be either *small* or *large*.

It is difficult to determine precisely how many members a group can have to be considered *small*. The decision is dependent on the observation of the frequency and quality of interaction between its members. However, “a small group is often described as a group with 2-20 members.” (Novotná, “Základy sociologie” 46) For members of a *small group*, it is easy to interact regularly on an intimate level and their interactions are spontaneous.

The smallest possible group is called a *dyad*. It is a group that consists of two people. The relationship between these people is very intimate and influential. “Dyads depend on a high degree of commitment; on the feelings of members that this relationship is unique and irreplaceable.” (Bassis 136) *Dyad* is thus a very fragile type of group because it can be destroyed with the departure of a single member. Typical examples of *dyads* are the relationships between spouses, parents and their children, and close friends.

By adding a third member we create a three-person group called a *triad*. This addition can dramatically change the dynamics of the group. It creates the possibility to form coalitions and alliances of *two against one*. The new member might adopt one of the following three functions: *unifying*, *mediating* or *divide-and-rule* function. If the new member has a *unifying* function, they bring the other two members closer together. A *mediating* function means that they serve as mediators in the group and help the other two members solve the problems they might have with each other. Finally, when the third member decides to apply a *divide-and-rule* strategy, they try to divide the other two members and try to set one against the other. By doing this, they hope to gain more power and control over the whole *triad*. (cf. Schaefer 150) *Triads* differ greatly from *dyads* because the addition of the third member guarantees that even in case one of the members decides to leave, the group will survive.

The addition of further members creates the possibility of developing even more relationships and the structure of the group becomes more complex. In fact, the bigger the group gets, the harder it is to maintain simple intimate relationships.

By adding more and more people, the group becomes a *large social group*. This type of a social group is defined as “a group with a large number of members, which means at least tens or even hundreds of members.” (Novotná, “Základy sociologie” 46) This clearly signifies that the relationships between members are more formal, superficial and less intimate. It is harder for them to have regular, spontaneous interactions. These *large groups* resemble approximate *formal organisations*, mentioned above. The members do not know each other as closely as members of small social groups. It is therefore quite common that they form smaller groups within a larger group to satisfy their needs for close relationships.

1.2.3. Time

We distinguish two types of time defined groups – *permanent* and *temporary*. The distinction between the two is always relative.

Sometimes a *permanent* group can last for decades and sometimes just days. Its members usually form the group because of friendships and close, lasting relationships they have or may create with each other. The typical example of a *permanent* group is a family.

A *temporary* group functions the same way as a *permanent* group. Sometimes it lasts for days or even hours, and sometimes years. *Temporary* groups are usually focused on accomplishing a particular goal and once it is done the group stops existing. An example of a *temporary* group is a group of children at a summer camp.

1.2.4. Belonging

The distinction between groups based on their type of belonging is relatively easy. We can distinguish between *in-groups* and *out-groups*.

If we feel that we belong to a group, it is our *in-group*. We feel that we belong somewhere and the group's members are close to us.

On the other hand, if we feel that we do not belong to a group it is our *out-group*. We either have literally nothing to do with the group, i.e. its members are strangers to us, or we are physically in the group but feel that we do not belong. Social groups usually view their *out-groups* as enemies and two groups do not cooperate with each other. However, if an important task arises the groups often lower their barriers and cooperate to achieve the task. The distinction between *in-groups* and *out-groups* does not concern only social groups, but also groups where we find only superficial similarities between the members such as gender, religion, race, or nationality.

1.2.5. Relationship

The criterion of relationships allows us to distinguish *primary*, *secondary*, and *reference* groups.

Members of a *primary* group enjoy close, intimate relationships. *Primary* groups are characterised by five features:

- “1. Continuous face-to-face interaction
2. Strong personal identity with the group
3. Strong ties of affection among group members
4. Multifaceted relationships
5. A tendency for the group to be very enduring” (Calhoun 188)

People in *primary* groups are bound by expressive ties – “social links formed when we emotionally invest ourselves in and commit ourselves to other people.” (Vander Zanden 93) This means that in *primary* groups we meet our basic needs such as the sense of *love, companionship and security*. They teach us social norms and help us

orient ourselves in social structures. There are three main conditions which allow people to create *primary* groups. The first is the size of a group. As we have seen above, it is easier to establish intimate and more durable relationships in smaller groups. The second is the possibility of sizing up the people we interact with. Thanks to a close interaction we are able to evaluate them and form an opinion about them. The third condition is that we have a regular and frequent contact with them. By continuous interaction, we can discover similar interests and hobbies. (cf. Vander Zanden 94)

Secondary groups are not as important for people as *primary* groups. Their members have close to none social intimacy. Sometimes, they do not even like each other. This does not pose a problem, because *secondary* groups are usually created for some specific purpose. They have the opposite features to those of the *primary* groups:

- “1. Limited face-to-face interaction
2. Modest or weak personal identity with the group
3. Weak ties of affection among group members
4. Limited, shallow relationships
5. A tendency not to be very enduring” (Calhoun 189)

People in *secondary* groups are bound by instrumental ties – “social links formed when we cooperate with other people to achieve some goal.” (Vander Zanden 93) This means that members are not valued for who they are but for what they can do to achieve the group’s goal.

The third type is a *reference* group. A *reference* group is not necessarily the group we belong in. For the most part, a *reference* group represents the ideal we want to approximate. We want to identify with the group and its standards and thus we start to act like members of that group. This facilitates the process of joining the group. However, it is possible that we will never join the group and it will remain our *out-group*. On the other hand, if the *reference* group is our *in-group*, it is very easy to be a part of it and feel like we belong. There is also another type of *reference* groups and that is the *negative* type. We do not only identify with groups; we can also differentiate from them. We may use them as deterrent examples and may want to be the complete opposites and thus emphasise the differences between the group and ourselves.

1.2.6. Interaction

Based on the interaction between groups and other groups or people who are not members of the group we can make a distinction between *open groups* and *closed groups*. *Open groups* are very welcoming to new members and it is very easy to join or leave them. Their members are also very open to each other and support one another. They are also open to new ideas and impulses.

On the other hand, *closed groups* are hard to join, as they are not open to new members and ideas. Their members usually do not divert from the groups' opinions. Unlike *open groups*, these groups hardly ever change their inner motivations and goals.

1.2.7. Membership

Lastly, we will proceed to the groups from the perspective of the membership of their members. We can divide them into *voluntary*, *mandatory* and *factual*.

People in groups with *voluntary* membership can decide whether they want to join in or not, or whether they want to leave when they do not want to be part of the group anymore. These groups are the most common ones. They are quite open and welcoming.

People in groups with *mandatory* membership have basically no control over the decision of whether to belong to a group. The involuntary membership occurs for example when someone has to join a political party to maintain the lifestyle he/she had before joining the party.

Factual groups give the impression that their members chose them voluntarily. However, they actually did not have any other choice and their membership is automatic. For example, when teenagers turn 18, they become adults. Their membership in the group of adults is voluntary, but they did not choose to be in that group.

It is important to note that all types of groups described above are only model types and it is rare to find a group that would perfectly fit into only a single type. Most groups are combinations of many different types.

1.3. Functions of a group

A social group has many functions that fulfil the needs of its members. A social group can shape its member's opinions, values, interests, stands, norms, and the overall perception of the world.

Social groups help us deal with our problems. "When we confront difficulties, the social support and feedback of others help us to put the problems into perspective and often to deal with them more effectively." (Vander Zanden 92) This is common mainly in *primary* and *in-groups*.

Members of our social group can make us feel validated, because "life and its satisfactions take on meaning and value primarily in the context of other people." (Vander Zanden 92) If the group approves of our behaviour or is satisfied with our performance during a task, they can praise us for it. Such praise makes us feel good and validated.

A member of a group can be influenced by the values and opinions of other members of the group. They can be influenced both in a positive or a negative way. The member changes his/her opinions to feel like he/she is a member of the group, and to feel a sense of unity and know that he/she belongs somewhere.

Social groups can also influence the interests of their members. For instance, if most of the group members like to play a certain sport a new member may start to practise it too. Even though, he did not show any interest in it before joining the group.

The *primary* social groups we join when we are very young, such as the family, teach us to socialize and show us the rules of society.

Groups provide their members with rules for interactions between the members of the group. There is usually a hierarchical structure within the group, so the member has to address each member differently, depending on their status. For example, in a family, the children talk to their parents with more respect than they talk to their siblings. Groups also set the rules for interaction between their group and other groups. Members of one group usually address members of the other group with hostility.

Members of a group also learn to cooperate with each other. It is important for them to finish their tasks and goals and for that they need to learn to work together.

We can also look at the function of a social group from the perspective of an outsider. A group can have an excluding function. If a group is closed, someone who is aspiring to be its member will always feel excluded, because the group will never let

him in. Group can also have excluding function for its members. When they start to rebel or do not follow the customs of their group the group, may exclude them.

1.4. Evolution of a group

The group goes through five main stages at the time of its existing. This model of five stages was first created by Bruce Tuckman. He named them *forming*, *storming*, *norming*, *performing*, and *adjourning*.

During the initial process of *forming*, the members of a group test the boundaries of their behaviour. They are getting to know each other. They start making friends and realize that they belong to the group. The members also establish the expectations they have from the other members and the group as a whole. They start to identify with the group. There is a lot of uncertainty among the members because during this stage they are building the group's identity.

Before someone becomes a new member of the group, they go through an inclusion process. This process first starts when they orient themselves towards the group, then aspire to be its members. Finally, they start to socialize with the group. (cf. Novotná, "Sociologie sociálních skupin" 47) New members integrate into the group, however, this integration is never perfect, because as we have seen, each member brings their own values into the group.

The second stage of group development is *storming*. During this stage, the group goes through a conflict. It is a time of struggling for power and group position. The members question one another and the entire group. It is a hard and demanding time for every member. "However, this conflict is assumed to be essential to the development of cohesion and the establishment of shared values." (Blackwell 167)

The third stage is called *norming* and during this phase the members start to distribute the group roles. They are more open to the ideas of other people and they are willing to consider different views on the group's problems. The group becomes more unified at this point.

During the fourth phase, *performing*, the group is able to easily solve tasks and problems. The members are able to work with each other. They concentrate on the group goals. "Group unity is still important, but individual members become important to the extent that they can help the group achieve its goals." (Blackwell 472-473) Moreover, the members grow to have warm relationships towards one another.

The fifth and last stage is called *adjourning*. This is the last phase of the group's existing: the group evaluates the past work and the members express their feelings about other members. They no longer concentrate on the group needs but start to favour their individuality over the group identity.

1.5. Group position

Group position is very important because it determines the functions of a member. It defines the expectations that the group has from that particular member. Group positions are created because the group has a need for them. If there is no longer a need for a position, it ceases to exist. On the other hand, if a position is needed, but the member who held that position decides to leave the group, some other member has to take it to keep the group functioning. Having a position in the group means assuming the responsibility of having a certain set of competences. This means that a member with a particular position can act in a way that the others cannot and vice versa.

Every group has its own unique set of positions. However, there are eight standard positions that most groups have. (cf. Novotná, "Sociologie sociálních skupin" 36)

The most important position is the *leader*. There are two different types of *leaders*. There can be either a *task specialist* or a *social-emotional specialist*. "A task specialist is devoted to appraising the problem at hand and organising people's activity to deal with it." (Vander Zanden 98) This type of leadership is instrumental and is oriented on fulfilling a set goal. "A social-emotional specialist focuses on overcoming interpersonal problems in the group, defusing tension, and promoting solidarity." (Vander Zanden 98) The *leader* exercises instrumental leadership and he is focused on creating a peaceful atmosphere. It is possible for one person to occupy both of these positions; however, it is very unlikely. We can also divide the *leaders* based on their style of leadership. We recognize *authoritarian*, *democratic*, and *laissez-faire* styles. Each has its pros and cons and each suits different groups. The *authoritarian leader* possesses all the power and gives the group precise instructions what to do. The *democratic leader* allows the members to participate in the decision-making process and he/she is usually friendlier than the *authoritarian* type. The *laissez-faire leader* is very passive and leaves most of the work and decision-making on the rest of the group. He may be even overly friendly to the point where nobody respects him. (cf. Vander

Zanden 99) The position of a *leader* is very important because they are the person who binds the rest of the group together. “Many movements fade away when their leaders die or lose their influence.” (Giddens 690)

The following group positions are not as important as the *leader*, because their owners are fairly easily replaceable by other members of the group. However, they are still relevant, because most groups would not be able to function without them.

The first is the *thinker*. The *thinker* creates ideas and goals of the group. The next position is that of a *critic*. He/she questions the decisions of the group and may even rebel against them. However, this position is quite important, because by criticising and questioning the group, it may improve itself and therefore minimize the criticism of other groups and non-members. Another important position in a group is that of an *organiser*. This position is quite self-explanatory because this member organises the activities of other members. Then there is the position of the *completer*. This member finishes the group tasks, even the smallest ones like turning off the lights in a room after a group meeting. A position that is important for a good mood of the group is the *group clown*. He jokes around and overall, keeps everyone happy. The last but not an unimportant position I will mention is the *extrovert*. The *extrovert* ensures good relationships among his and other groups. (cf. Novotná, “Sociologie sociálních skupin” 37)

It is important to know that one member can occupy more than one position and one position can be occupied by more than one group member. It is therefore very common to find well-functioning *dyads* or *triads* because their members distribute the group positions in such a way that each one has three or four different positions.

2. The five races

I will now proceed to the discussion of the races that constitute the Fellowship of the Ring. It is important to characterize not only the individual members of the fellowship but also their races and the origin of those races because many of the characteristics of the nine members derive from their cultural backgrounds and customs.

Before discussing the individual races, I will introduce the creators of Middle-earth and all the things in it. There are mentioned some important places in this part, as well as in the following parts. For the sake of easy orientation in the physical world of *The Lord of the Rings*, there are maps of Middle-earth and Undying Lands placed in the appendices of the thesis.

In the beginning, the supreme being, Eru Ilúvatar created divine spirits from his thoughts to help him create Arda which represents our Earth. These divine spirits were called Ainur. The Ainur may be divided into two groups – *the Valar* and *the Maiar*. *The Valar* were more powerful than *the Maiar* and they were closer to Eru Ilúvatar. *The Maiar* were less powerful, they had the role of servants of *the Valar* and *the Valar* were also their tutors. To *the Valar* belonged, for example, Aulë, the Smith, Varda, the Queen of the Stars, or Yavanna, the Giver of Fruits. Of *the Maiar* we can name Olórin, also known as Gandalf, Curumo, known as Saruman and Mairon, known as Sauron.

2.1. Wizards

The *Wizards* are the oldest beings in Middle-earth. The name “Wizards” was given to them by people of Middle-earth, but they were of *Maiar* origin.

At the end of the first millennium of the third age, five of the *Maiar* were sent to Middle-earth. They were called *Istari* or *Wizards*. They were sent to Middle-earth to help fight against the evil power of Saruman. Even though they are the great spirits of *Maiar*, their power is limited in Middle-earth. They are restricted by the human form and by the forces of human world.

As mentioned above, there are five of the *Istari*. The greatest and most powerful is Saruman the White. At first, he walked the Middle-earth and fought the evil, but later changed his allegiance and turned to Sauron, because he longed for more power. Slightly less powerful is the *wizard* named Gandalf the Grey. We will discuss this character later since he is a member of the Fellowship of the Ring. Third important *Istar* is Radagast the Brown. He has the best knowledge of nature and flora and fauna of

Middle-earth. The last two *Istari* did not play important roles in the history of Middle-earth. They are called Ithrin and Luin and they are the Blue wizards. There is not much known about these two *wizards* apart from the fact that they travelled to the East of Middle-earth and probably got lost. (Day 108-109)

This is how the *Istari* are described by Tolkien in *Silmarillion*:

“In the likeness of Men they appeared, old but vigorous, and they changed little with the years, and aged but slowly, though great cares lay on them; great wisdom they had, and many powers of mind and hand.” (Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*” 361)

They wear long cloaks in the colours that appear in their names– white, grey, brown and blue. Each of them has a staff. Some of them wear hats. And all of them have a long beard.

As stated above, they were supposed to help the people of Middle-earth. However, the motives of some of them changed. We do not truly know what happened to the Blue wizards; Radagast the Brown invested himself into the world of nature; Saruman the White was consumed by the want for power; only Gandalf the Grey cared about the people of Middle-earth and travelled the land to understand them and help them.

2.2. Elves

Elves, also known as the Quendi or Eldar, were the first ones to walk the land of Middle-earth. They were created by Eru Ilúvatar and are therefore often called the Children of Ilúvatar or the Firstborn. They first awoke in the East by lake Cuiviénen. The first thing they saw were the stars made by Varda, the Queen of Stars. Thanks to this event, they loved and enjoyed the light of stars. Eru Ilúvatar created them to be the most beautiful beings on earth. When he was creating them, he said:

“But the Quendi shall be the fairest of all earthly creatures, and they shall have and shall conceive and bring forth more beauty than all my Children; and they shall have the greater bliss in this world.” (Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*” 47)

The Valar longed to have the *Elves* by their side and invited them to join them in the Undying Lands (see Appendix 2). At that time, the *Elves* split up. Some went to the Undying Lands, some wanted to go, but got lost along the way or took a liking to

Middle-earth and stayed. They went in three groups – the Vanyar, the Noldor, and the most numerous group, the Teleri. The Teleri then further split to the Sindar, the Falathrim, Nandor and others. The Sindar Elves later overruled other races of *Elves*.

As stated above, the *Elves* are the fairest of the races in Middle-earth. They are similar to the race of Men, but they are always surrounded by light. Their hair, eyes and even their clothes sparkles with the light of stars, which represents the stars they saw when they awoke. The *Elves* have quite slender physique and their ears are pointy.

They are able to walk quietly without leaving any traces. They love nature and animals and this love can be seen in the fact that they do not feel the need to use saddles or bridles when riding horses. (cf. Čudrnáková 44) In comparison to the race of *Men*, the *Elves* are wiser, stronger and, most importantly, immortal. It is this quality that approximates them to the Ainur. They do not age, nor do they suffer from any illnesses. They can die only from grief or when they are killed. They could, however, end their life in Middle-earth by sailing to the Undying Lands. They are skilled in archery and are able to see clearer and further than other races of Middle-earth. This is apparent, among other situations, when Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli follow the orcs and Aragorn sees a moving shadow in the distance and Legolas, standing beside him “[...] saw not a shadow, nor a blur, but the small figures of horsemen [...]” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 430). Legolas was even able to count them and describe their appearance and armour.

Since the *Elves* were the first to inhabit Middle-earth they were the only ones who were able to talk at the time, so they called themselves the Quendi – meaning *speakers* or *those who speak with voices*. Their language was *Quenya* and all of the Elven languages evolved from this one. In the third age, the common Elven language was *Sindarin*. Because in the beginning, the *Elves* were the only ones who could speak they taught other races to speak. Among these races were also the Ents – treelike creatures also called the Shepherds of the Trees. The most powerful of Ents, Treebeard, said this to Pippin and Merry. “Elves began it, of course, waking trees up and teaching them to speak and learning their tree-talk. They always wished to talk to everything, the old Elves did.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 468)

The *Elves* do not like only speech, but they also adore music, poetry, and tales of all kinds. Frodo was able to experience the beauty of the Elven languages and songs and was enchanted by it.

“Almost it seemed that the words took shape, and visions of far lands and bright things that he had never yet imagined opened out before him; [...]

he felt that an endless river of swelling gold and silver was flowing over him.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 233)

As mentioned above, the *Elves* are connected with nature. In fact, in the third age a great number of them live in the woods. Their most known settlements are Rivendell, a hidden valley at the foothills of the Misty Mountains; Lothlórien in the Lórien forest; and Woodland Realm in the middle of the Mirkwood forest (see Appendix 1).

The *Elves* are peaceful beings and treat everything living with love. The only exception are the *Dwarves*. *Elves* do not like *Dwarves* from the beginning of the ages, because they were created by Aulë and not Ilúvatar. The origin of *Dwarves* is discussed in more detail later.

2.3. Men

The third race that is represented in the Fellowship is the race of *Men*. The race of *Men* is the same as our human race. It is like that because Tolkien thought about the history of Middle-earth as if it were the history of our Earth. *Men* were, just like the *Elves*, created by Eru Ilúvatar. Therefore, they are also called the Children of Ilúvatar. However, they came much later than the *Elves*. *Men* were awoken at the beginning of the first age at the first rising of the Sun. As they came second, they are also called the Followers, the Secondborn and many other names suggesting this fact.

Contrary to the *Elves*, *Men* are mortal and are susceptible to illnesses. The mortality of *Men* was a gift from Ilúvatar, so they would not have to live through the ages unchanged, while the world around them would change. However, the evil and most powerful of Ainur, Melkor, persuaded *Men* that mortality is not a gift, but a burden.

“Death is their fate, the gift of Ilúvatar, which as Time wears even the Powers shall envy. But Melkor has cast his shadow upon it, and confounded it with darkness, and brought forth evil out of good, and fear out of hope.” (Tolkien, “Silmarillion” 48)

Men started fearing death and became envious of the immortality of *Elves*.

The race of *Men* is more adaptable than other races. They are sadly also more susceptible to be corrupted. Morgoth, and later Sauron, used this weakness of *Men* to

their advantage. This weakness of *Men* is seen in Sauron's servants, the Nazgûl, who were *Men* corrupted by the nine rings of power.

Not all *Men*, however, were corrupted by Melkor and many of them headed west to help the *Elves*. These *Men* were called Edain. After the Great War, that ended the First Age, the *Valar* created a new land between the Middle-earth and the Undying Lands, called Númenor (see Appendix 2), and gave it to Edain as thanks for their help in the war. The Valinor also strengthened the minds and bodies of the Edain and prolonged their lives. The Edain were later renamed to Númenóreans. After their land was destroyed, they returned to Middle-earth and were called the Dúnedain, meaning west-men. They settled in the lands of Arnor and Gondor and founded their realms there.

The most known kingdoms of Middle-earth are Rohan and Gondor with the cities of Edoras and Minas Tirith (see Appendix 1).

As mentioned above, the Dúnedain were slightly different from the other *Men*. That can be seen in their description in *Silmarillion*:

“[...] they were mortal still, though their years were long, and they knew no sickness, ere the shadow fell upon them. Therefore, they grew wise and glorious, and in all things more like to the Firstborn than any other of the kindreds of *Men*; and they were tall, taller than the tallest of the sons of Middle-earth; and the light of their eyes was like the bright stars.”
(Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*” 313)

Here we can see that they were in some ways similar to the *Elves*.

Most *Men* and other inhabitants of the Westlands used Westron as their language. For this reason, Westron was also called the Common Speech. Only the Dúnedain also learned the Sindarin tongue from the *Elves*. “And their men of wisdom learned also the High-Elven Quenya and esteemed it above all other tongues. (Tolkien, “*LOTR*” 1128) They were, therefore, the only ones from the race of *Men* who could understand and use the Elvish tongues. This is another sign that shows the proximity of the Dúnedain and the *Elves*.

Contrary to the *Elves*, *Men* do not live in the woods nor do they live as close and in such a strong bond to nature. As mentioned above, *Men* are very adaptable and therefore it was not hard for them to learn to use nature to their advantage. They built towns, cities, castles, and forts.

Men do not have any special or magical abilities as *Elves*. Their strongest asset and maybe even an advantage is their perseverance and stamina. (cf. Stanton 157) Even

though they have enough of endurance, they are also volatile, as it is stated by Gimli when he is talking about the old buildings of Men. “It is ever so with the things that Men begin: there is a frost in Spring, or a blight in Summer, and they fail of their promise.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 873)

2.4. Dwarves

Dwarves have a different origin than the other races of the Fellowship. *Dwarves* were created by a Vala called Aulë, also known as the Smith of *the Valar*. At first, he created the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves from which the tribes of *Dwarves* are derived. As it is written in *Silmarillion*, Aulë did not want to wait for the creation of the *Elves* and wanted to create beings on his own.

“[...] for so greatly did Aulë desire the coming of the Children, to have learners to whom he could teach his lore and his crafts, that he was unwilling to await the fulfilment of the designs of Ilúvatar.” (Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*” 49)

We can see that he did not create the *Dwarves* out of spite or want for power; he made them out of love for his craft. When Ilúvatar found out about the *Dwarves*, Aulë offered Ilúvatar that he would destroy them. However, Ilúvatar saw Aulë’s humility and decided to let the *Dwarves* live. Yet, he did not allow them to walk Arda before his children, the *Elves*. Moreover, he predicted that there will be many disaccords between his Children, the *Elves*, and the children he accepted, the *Dwarves*. This is the reason for the hatred between the *Dwarves* and the *Elves*.

Since Aulë created the *Dwarves* at the time of darkness when Melkor had power over Middle-earth, he made them very strong, tough and persistent, and because their work was hard he made their lives longer than two centuries.

Concerning their appearance, they are not very pleasing to the eye, because when Aulë was creating them he did not have a precise idea of how should the beings that will live on Arda look. *Dwarves* are short and thickset. Their faces are wrinkly and their beards are so long, that the dwarves would sometimes even tuck them behind their belts. (cf. Čudrnáková 74)

Their character derives from their strength and endurance because they are “[...] stone-hard, stubborn, fast in friendship and in enmity, and they suffer toil and hanger and hurt of body more hardily than all other speaking peoples.” (Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*”

38) Because Aulë did not say anything about his doings and the creation of the *Dwarves* to Yavanna, his wife and the Vala of all things that grow in the earth, decided that the *Dwarves*, just like their creator, would have appreciation only for the things they made themselves. She said the following to Aulë:

“They will love first the things made by their own hands, as doth their father. They will delve in the earth, and the things that grow and live upon the earth they will not heed. Many a tree shall feel the bite of their iron without pity.” (Tolkien, “*Silmarillion*” 51)

The *Dwarves*, therefore, truly love only their creations and because they are great craftsmen after Aulë, they have an appreciation for all the beautiful things, accessories, and jewellery they make. Their weapons are also unbelievably beautiful and they even crafted some for the *Elves*. In time, greed grew from this admiration of jewels and metals they dug out from under the mountains and they became obsessed with wealth. On the other hand, they are not concerned nor do they admire nature, just like the Yavanna said.

Dwarves did not only work in the mountains, but they also lived there. They dug tunnels and holes, and created entire cities under the surface of earth. The most known settlements of *Dwarves* were Erebor, also known as the Lonely Mountain, and Moria in the Misty Mountains (see Appendix 1)

There are seven kindreds of *Dwarves*. These kindreds are derived from the Seven Fathers of the *Dwarves*, created by Aulë. The descendants of the oldest and most important father, Durin, are called the Longbeards and these are the *dwarves* that are the friendliest towards *Elves*. After Durin awoke under a mountain at the North of Misty Mountains, he wandered along those mountains and then founded a city in them, called Khazad-dûm, also known as Moria. From there the clan spread to other places such as the Iron Hills and Grey Mountains, and in the Third Age to Erebor. However, Erebor was sacked by dragon Smaug and the Longbeards were left to wander in exile.

Concerning the abilities of *Dwarves*, they are very good craftsmen, as mentioned above. They are known for their finely crafted weapons and for mithril armour. Mithril is a metal that is stronger than steel, but it is much lighter. Since the *Dwarves* are good at making weapons, they are also very good warriors. Their weapon of choice is most often an axe. They are also able to move around quickly and relentlessly if needed.

The language of *Dwarves* is called Khuzdul, but we do not get much information about this language, because it is a secret language of *Dwarves* and they do not share it

with other races. Their names are also in this language and are also secret. When dealing with other races they use their names of Mannish origin. In usual situations, when they are communicating with other races, they use common tongue. This shows us another typical characteristic of the *Dwarves* and that is that they are incredibly secretive.

2.5. Hobbits

Lastly, we need to talk about the race of *Hobbits*. We have no information about the creation of *Hobbits*, also called the Halflings. They are probably related to the race of Men. It is stated in the prologue to *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

“It is plain indeed that in spite of later estrangement Hobbits are relatives of ours. [...] But what exactly our relationship is can no longer be discovered. The beginning of Hobbits lies far back in the Elder Days that are now lost and forgotten.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 2)

That they are of *Men* origin means that they are also mortal.

The *Hobbits* did not play an important role in the events of Middle-earth until the time of Bilbo and Frodo’s adventures. It was thanks to Gandalf, who saw that *Hobbits* had the potential to do great things, that they found themselves in the middle of quests to help save Middle-earth.

The *Hobbits* are unobtrusive, small people, with their height reaching only two to four feet. They like wearing clothes of bright colours, but they do not wear shoes, for their feet are big, hairy, and with tough skin. The fact that they do not wear shoes allows them to move around silently. Their hair is usually brown and curly, and their faces are good-natured, shining with bright smiles and framed with pointy ears.

Concerning their character, they are peaceful and afraid of other races. They do not concern themselves with the world outside of Shire. However, they are a merry folk; they love to laugh, joke around and enjoy parties. They love food and are always ready to eat. This characteristic is bound to their hospitality and appreciation for company. They like comfort and that is visible in their homes. (cf. Tolkien, “LOTR” 1-2)

In the Third Age, the *Hobbits* live in the Shire in the Western part of Middle-earth (see Appendix 1). They do not live in houses like Men, but in holes. These holes are, however, large, nicely furnished and decorated places. For example, Bilbo’s hole is described like this:

“The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats.”
(Tolkien, “The Hobbit” 3)

The description continues with the enumeration of bedrooms, bathrooms, and many other rooms. As stated above, the *Hobbits* like comfort, so their holes have only one floor, so that they would not have to climb any unnecessary stairs.

They are skilled craftsmen and prefer making smaller things. They have good hearing and sight. However, their biggest advantage is, as was already mentioned, that they are proficient at moving around quietly and they are able to disappear without anyone noticing. (cf. Tolkien, “LOTR” 1-2)

The *Hobbits* do not have their own, special language. They use the Common Speech, or more precisely, its slightly changed, local version.

There is one habit, which *Hobbits* are particularly known for; it is the smoking of pipe-weed. This is their invention, and they enjoy this activity very much. The hobbits even took the pipe-weed with them on the journey to save Middle-earth.

Hobbits do not just appear in the Shire. They used to live with other *Men* at the banks of river Anduin. At the beginning of the Third Age they decided to undertake a journey to the West and there they settled.

There are three different kinds of *Hobbits*. The Harfoots, which are smaller, shorter and beardless; the Stoors, which are heavier in build; and the Fallohides, which are taller, slimmer and had lighter skin and hair. But there are not many big differences between these kinds and many Hobbits are a mix of at least two of the kinds. (cf. Tolkien, “LOTR” 3)

3. Members of the Fellowship

Let's now introduce the nine characters that constitute the Fellowship. *Wizard* Gandalf, *Elf* Legolas, *Men* Aragorn and Boromir, *Dwarf* Gimli, and four *Hobbits* - Frodo, Sam, Pippin and Merry. I will show the similarities and differences between the members of the Fellowship and their races and describe their individual abilities and qualities.

At first, I will explain why there were nine members of the Fellowship, as it may seem an odd and random number. Also, the fact, that the Fellowship is composed of five different races is quite strange. However, the opposite is true. After it was decided at the Council of Elrond, that Frodo with the help of Sam will take the Ring to Mordor, the other members of the Fellowship were chosen by Elrond. He said to Frodo the following:

“The Company of the Ring shall be Nine; and the Nine Walkers shall be set against the Nine Riders that are evil. With you and your faithful servant, Gandalf will go; [...] For the rest, they shall represent the other Free peoples of the World: Elves, Dwarves, and Men” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 275)

Later, Pippin and Merry were added, because they wanted to take part in the adventure. We can see that the number was chosen to match the number of the Nazgûl, signifying that the Fellowship has the same power.

3.1. Gandalf

Gandalf is one of the five *Istari*, who were sent to Middle-earth. He is also known under other names, such as Olórin, his Valinor name, Mithrandir, his Sindarin name and many others. Just like the rest of the *Istari*, he came to Middle-earth from Valinor. There he served under four *Valar* who each taught him different things that combined, made him the wisest of the *Istari*. These *Valar* were Manwë, Lord of the Breath of Arda; Varda, Lady of the Stars; Irmo, Master of Visions and Dreams; and Nienna, Lady of Pity and Mourning. Even though Olórin dwelt in Irmo's Lórien, where he found his love for the *Elves*, he often visited the house of Nienna, who taught him compassion and patience. (cf. Tolkien, “Silmarillion” 34) This made him feel pity for all beings, even the servants of Sauron.

Gandalf is very wise and this helped him to obtain Narya, the Ring of Fire, which was one of the three rings of power given to the *Elves*. He was given the ring by the Elven shipwright Círdan, who saw Gandalf's wisdom and also foresaw his future and gave him the ring to empower him and help him on his journeys. Gandalf's wisdom also makes him the *leader* and guide of the Fellowship. However, he is not only a *leader* of the group, but also a great advisor since out of the nine members, he has the most knowledge of Sauron and of the One Ring.

Gandalf is the only *Istar*, who took interest in *Hobbits*. Because of his interest, he discovered the pureness of their hearts, their uniqueness and strength, and sent both Bilbo and Frodo on their adventures. He also enjoyed the carefree lifestyle of *Hobbits* and even adopted the habit of pipe smoking.

Concerning Gandalf's appearance, he looked similar to the other *Istari*. They were all disguised as old men dressed in long cloaks. This is how Gandalf is described in *The Hobbit* when he meets Bilbo. "[...] an old man with a staff. He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a silver scarf over which his long white beard hung down below his waist, and immense black boots." (Tolkien, "The Hobbit" 6) In the beginning, his signature colour is grey. However, later when he is resurrected his signature colour changes to white, indicating that he is more powerful.

Gandalf is a member of the White Council, also known as the Council of the Wise. This council was created to oppose the dark power from the East. Other members of the council are Saruman, Galadriel, Elrond and a few other lords of the Eldar. Saruman was their chief, because he knew the most about Sauron and his powers, and because Gandalf refused the position. Gandalf did not want to be tied to one place, because he preferred to travel the lands of Middle-earth. (cf. Tolkien, "Silmarillion" 362) This shows us that Gandalf does not care for power and wants to help others and for that he needs to be free and not be bound by other responsibilities.

This leads us to the fact that Gandalf does not live in one place. He is a traveller and that makes it easier for him to study and help the people of Middle-earth. Because he was so helpful, he was friends with representatives of most races and animals. It is because of his travels that he acquired his many names.

Gandalf is a skilled speaker. However, he often seems to be talking in riddles, but as he himself says, he is not doing that on purpose, as he is simply thinking aloud. He speaks many languages including the Common Speech, Sindarin and Black Speech, the language of the Orcs. The only language he seems to have little to none knowledge

of is Khuzdul, the Dwarven tongue, because, as described in the previous part, it is a secret language and the *Dwarves* do not share it with anyone.

The biggest test of Gandalf's character is the incident in Moria. There, Gandalf shows his true strength and selflessness, when he chooses to fight with Balrog and die in order to save the rest of the fellowship and give them a chance to carry the Ring to Mordor. We later learn that he has been resurrected. However, he himself suggests that he is not the same as he was before. Therefore, we can and should regard Gandalf the White as a new, different character. "As Tolkien makes clear in his letters, Gandalf the Grey *did* die, was given a new body, and was returned by Ilúvatar to Middle-earth as Gandalf the White." (Davis 130)

Gandalf is now more powerful, wiser and stronger. He cannot be hurt by any worldly weapon which makes him a strong opponent to the evil side. His new strength and power are visible when he throws away his grey hood. "His hair was white as snow in the sunshine; and gleaming white was his robe; the eyes under his deep brows were bright piercing as the rays of the sun; power was in his hand." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 495)

As stated above, Gandalf is a *wizard* and his magical abilities helped him many times. For example, in *The Hobbit* when he set fire to pinecones to use them as weapons against the orcs. However, he is not known for his magical skills only in the times of need, but also in the time of joy. Especially in the Shire, he is well known for his mesmerizing work with fireworks. Whilst performing magic, he sometimes uses his staff to extend his power.

He also uses the staff as a weapon to fight enemies. His other weapon is sword Glamdring, which he acquired on his adventure with Bilbo.

3.2. Legolas

Legolas, also called Greenleaf, is the representative of *Elves* in the Fellowship. He was sent to Rivendell to inform Gandalf, that Gollum, who was a captive at the Woodland Realm, managed to escape. There, at the Council of Elrond, he was appointed by Elrond to be a member of the Fellowship.

As mentioned above, Legolas comes from the Woodland Realm, situated in the northern part of Mirkwood. He is the son of king Thranduil and he is of Sindar origin. As most woodland *Elves* he uses a bow as a weapon accompanied by a long knife.

During the journey, he replaced his old bow for the bow of the Galadhrim, a gift from Galadriel, Lady of Lothlórien.

As other *Elves*, Legolas is tall, slender, strong, and moves with grace and lightness. He is dressed in green and brown garments, just like other woodland *Elves*, and it helps him to hide in forests. As mentioned in the previous part, he has a brilliant sight and sense of hearing. Just like other *Elves*, he is quite old. We do not know how old exactly Legolas is, but we can assume that he is much older than any of the other members of the Fellowship (excluding Gandalf).

Legolas's interesting characteristic that gives him an advantage on the quest is that he does not get tired and does not need to sleep. This characteristic stands out the most, when he, Aragorn, and Gimli chase the orcs who took Pippin and Merry. Whilst Aragorn and Gimli need to rest every once in a while, and sleep at night to have enough energy for the pursuit, Legolas can continue tirelessly and all he needs is the occasional meal in the form of lembas, a filling elven bread.

Another similarity between him and the other *Elves* is that he longs for the sea. As stated above, the *Elves* were supposed to join *the Valar* in the Undying Lands, but some of them did not leave Middle-earth. However, they still feel the inner calling and desire to cross the sea to go to Valinor. This yearning does not leave him and after Aragorn's death, when nothing was holding him in Middle-earth, he sailed West and took Gimli with him.

Legolas's character is different from other *Elves*, because he is not as stiff, so to say. He sometimes acts as a young boy, rather than a centuries-old Elf. He is not overly confident and does not act superiorly. It is precisely this quality that makes him approachable to other characters and enables him to befriend the Dwarf Gimli, which is very uncommon. (cf. Stanton 130)

He is incredibly loyal to the members of the Fellowship. This is proven on many occasions, for example, when he decides to go on the Paths of the Dead with Aragorn.

3.3. Aragorn

Aragorn is one of two representatives of the race of *Men* in the Fellowship. He is an heir of Isildur, the king who cut the One Ring off Sauron's finger, so the quest to destroy the Ring has a special meaning for him.

Even though Aragorn is the heir to the throne of Gondor, he was raised in Rivendell by Elrond. Thanks to this childhood, he was wiser than other men and his mentality approximates that of the *Elves*. Later, he left Rivendell because he fell in love with Elrond's daughter Arwen, and Elrond would allow their marriage only on the condition that Aragorn becomes the king of Gondor. So, he travelled through Middle-earth, became a ranger, fought for the free people and served the king of Rohan and steward of Gondor. On his travels, Aragorn met Gandalf and they became friends. (cf. Day 15) Thanks to this friendship he is able to persuade the hobbits at Bree to let him help them.

Since Aragorn was raised in Rivendell and is of Dúnedain origin, he speaks not only Westron, like other men, but he can also speak Sindarin and Quenya.

Just like Gandalf or Legolas, Aragorn is known under multiple names. His other names are for example Strider, as he was called around Bree and Shire, or Elessar, as he was called after the War of the Ring.

Concerning his appearance, he is as other Númenoreans lean, strong and tall; tallest of the Fellowship, actually. His origin also makes him look younger than he in reality is. At the time of the quest, he is eighty-seven years old but looks as if he is around forty. We get a little more detailed description of Aragorn when Frodo first meets him at The Prancing Pony in Bree. "As Frodo drew near he threw back his hood, showing a shaggy head of dark hair flecked with grey, and in a pale stern face a pair of keen grey eyes." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 156)

Aragorn's clothing is the typical clothing of a ranger – a dark green cloak and leather boots. All without any embellishments or unnecessary accessories. His clothes contrast with Boromir's attire, that is more decorated and pleasing to the eye.

Aragorn symbolizes a typical hero. He is wise and brave; he is confident, but not too proud; he takes advice from other people and before making a decision, he listens to the opinions of others. He is always ready to take responsibility for his actions and mistakes. Adding to that, he feels responsibility for the mistakes of his ancestors and tries to repair them. The biggest mistake being that of Isildur, who failed not only to resist the temptation of the One Ring, but also failed in destroying it. Aragorn feels that if he helps to destroy the Ring he will do what Isildur should have done. It is this respect to the past and fear of making the same mistakes that keeps him from trying to take the Ring from Frodo.

Aragorn is a skilled warrior and he is able to use many different weapons, such as a bow and a knife. However, his most used weapon is a sword. Since the Council of Elrond, he uses Andúril, a sword forged from the shards of Narsil, Isildur's sword. By bearing this sword, he proves that he is the heir to the throne of Gondor. Because of his sword, he is able to summon the army of the Oathbreakers.

Aragorn is not only a warrior but also a healer. He is able to use a herb called athelas to heal others. As it is formulated in the following poem, athelas works only in the hands of a true king of Gondor.

“When the black breath blows
and death's shadow grows
and all lights pass,
come athelas! come athelas!
Life to the dying
In the king's hand lying!” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 865)

This proves to us once again that Aragorn is the true heir and he is fit for the role of king.

3.4. Boromir

The second representative of the race of *Men* is Boromir. He is the older son of Denethor, the steward of Gondor and he is of Númenorean descent. He is a noble man, who believes in the greatness of his kingdom.

We can see that Boromir is proud of his origin in his appearance. “And seated a little apart was a tall man with a fair and noble face, dark-haired and grey-eyed, proud and stern of glance. (cf. Tolkien, “LOTR” 240) In comparison to Aragorn, Boromir looks much nobler and fitter to be king. It is apparent also in the way he dresses. His garments are visibly rich, he has a silver collar and a cloak lined with fur. Being forty years old, he looks about the same age as Aragorn. However, he is slightly shorter, but broader and heavier in build. The only language that Boromir speaks is the Common Speech, which again differentiates him from Aragorn, who is more educated and contemplative.

He is a skilled warrior, interested in warfare, and has a position of commander in the army of Gondor. Boromir sees the true purpose of life in war victories and in heroic acts. Because he is so courageous and successful in his battles, he is considered one of

the greatest of the men of Gondor. Because Boromir is Denethor's favourite son, he puts his hopes concerning the future of Gondor on him and this makes Boromir confident and assured in his actions.

Boromir is very selfless and loves his people and especially his family, as he proves in the beginning when we learn the reason of his arrival to Rivendell. One night, Boromir and his brother Faramir had a dream which included a riddle and the answer to this riddle could be found in Rivendell. Faramir wanted to go, but because the road was too dangerous, Boromir took the journey upon himself. This action shows us that Boromir loves his brother because he does the dangerous task to keep his brother from harm. At Rivendell, he learns that Frodo has the Ring and joins the Fellowship to accompany him on his quest to destroy the Ring. However, he is not completely persuaded that destroying the Ring is the right thing to do and he thinks that it would be better and wiser to take the Ring to Minas Tirith, to his father and use its power to destroy Sauron.

From the members of the Fellowship, Boromir most resembles us, the readers, because he has the same qualities. He wants to do the right thing but sometimes fails to do so, because he is used to being the commander and *leader*. He does not come easily to terms with the fact that he is not the *leader* of the Fellowship and cannot give orders to others. We can also see his inner battle between good and evil, which most people experience. It is most prominent when he tries to take the Ring from Frodo because he is angry at first, but immediately realises his wrongdoing and regrets it. "What have I said?" he cried. "What have I done? Frodo, Frodo!" he called. "Come back! A madness took me, but it has passed. Come back!" (Tolkien, "LOTR" 400)

3.5. Gimli

Gimli is the only representative of the race of *Dwarves* and he belongs to Durin's kindred. He is the son of Glóin, who took part in Bilbo's adventure. They were both sent to Rivendell to seek Elrond's advice and to warn Bilbo because Sauron offered an allegiance to the *Dwarves* and told them about the One Ring. At Rivendell, they were invited to the Council of Elrond and Gimli was appointed as one of the members of the Fellowship of the Ring.

At the time of the events of Lord of the Rings, Gimli is one hundred and forty years old, which is the prime age for a Dwarf, since as stated above, *Dwarves* were made to live for more than two hundred years.

There is not any precise description of Gimli's physical appearance, but we can assume, that he looks exactly as other dwarves, i.e. he is short, strong, thickset and has a long thick beard. Concerning his garments, we also do not get much description. However, when the company is leaving Rivendell, it is said that "Gimli the dwarf alone wore openly a short shirt of steel-rings, for dwarves make light of burdens; and in his belt was a broad-bladed axe." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 279) This shows us the strength and stamina that Gimli shares with the rest of his race, as he is the only one from the Fellowship who decides to wear any armour. It also brings us to his weapon, an axe, which is a typical weapon of *Dwarves*. As other dwarves, Gimli mastered the art of combat with his axe.

Not only Gimli's appearance, but also his character has typical features of the dwarven character. Gimli is stubborn, steady and somewhat grim and pessimistic. He is also loyal and honours the traditions of his folk.

Gimli has a great stamina and endurance and is able to travel quickly for a long time if needed. This comes in handy when he follows the orcs together with Legolas and Aragorn.

Gimli speaks Westron, just like all the members of the Fellowship. However, his own tongue is Khuzdul, the secret language of the *Dwarves*. He uses his language very scarcely. Mainly as a battle cry in a fight.

However, Gimli differs from other dwarves in his friendliness to other races. The strangest thing that happens to his character is that he befriends Legolas, an Elf. It is very uncommon for a Dwarf and an Elf to be friends. Legolas is not the only Elf Gimli takes to liking. He also feels great admiration for the elven queen Galadriel and carries with him a strand of her hair, which she gave him on his departure from Lothlórien. Because of his friendship with Legolas and his overall friendliness and respect towards *Elves*, Gimli was called the Elf-friend. This proximity to *Elves* also allowed him to depart to the Undying Lands with Legolas when their time comes.

"Legolas took Gimli Glóin's son with him because of their great friendship, greater than any that has been between Elf and Dwarf. [...] But it is said that Gimli went also out of desire to see again the beauty of

Galadriel; and it may be that she, being mighty among the Eldar, obtained this grace for him.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 1081)

3.6. Frodo

Frodo is the first of four hobbits who are members of the Fellowship of the Ring. Frodo’s parents died when he was young. He was adopted by his distant cousin Bilbo and went to live with him in Bag End at Hobbiton. This means that he is well acquainted with the stories and adventures of Bilbo.

When Frodo leaves the Shire to take the Ring to Bree (see Appendix 1), he is already fifty years old. Because he is the oldest of the four, he is held in higher regard which may be seen in the use of his name. Unlike the other hobbits of the Fellowship, Frodo is never given a nickname.

Frodo is not much different from other hobbits. We get his description at The Prancing Pony when the innkeeper tells the hobbits how Gandalf described Frodo. “A stout little fellow with red cheeks [...] But this one is taller than some and fairer than most, and he has a cleft in his chin: perky chap with a bright eye.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 166) His height indicates that he is at least partly of the Fallohide descent. Just like other hobbits, he wears a shirt, a waistcoat, and does not wear shoes. Later, he added to his attire a cloak that the *Elves* of Lothlórien gave to all remaining eight members of the Fellowship. The cloaks are very useful because they help the wearer to blend with the surroundings.

Although Frodo does not differ from the other hobbits in his looks, he differs from them in that he is less cheerful and he is more educated in the matter of *Elves* and their language. He is also more adventurous than other hobbits. (cf. Day 75-76) He probably takes this quality after Bilbo, since he has lived with him from a young age.

Frodo is a very unlikely hero. He is quite ordinary, but in this lies his greatness. He is inexperienced but wants to do what is right. Even though Frodo is shy, he is very brave, selfless and curious. He is also very compassionate, which can be seen in his treatment of Gollum and his sympathy for him. He does not see him as Gollum, the horrid creature, but as Sméagol, the poor Hobbit corrupted by the power of the One Ring. He may see him that way because he is also feeling the same power of the Ring and realizes that Gollum is just a victim of its power.

Frodo speaks Westron, just like every single Hobbit. However, as mentioned above, Frodo is educated in the Elven tongue, he is thus able to put together a few sentences and understands some words in Elvish.

From the start, Frodo has a clear role of the ringbearer. Originally, he is supposed to bring it only to Rivendell, but there he shows his great courage and volunteers to take the Ring to Mordor. He shows his selflessness and courage again, when he decides to leave the Fellowship and take the Ring to Mordor by himself.

Unlike other races, *Hobbits* are not skilled in combat and do not have weapons or armour. However, during his quest, Frodo gets to use two weapons; a Dagger of Westrenesse, which the Witch King, one of the Nazgûl, later broke at the Ford of Bruinen; Frodo's second weapon is Sting, a small sword he receives from Bilbo. This sword gives Frodo great advantage, as it glows blue when orcs and goblins are near and therefore warns him about the danger. Bilbo also gives him his coat made of mithril and it proves to be a very useful gift, as it saves Frodo's life twice.

Frodo by himself does not have any special abilities. Because of his origin, he is able to walk very quietly, which is a quality that all hobbits share. However, Frodo has the power to disappear. This magical quality is given to him by the One Ring. When he puts it on, he becomes invisible to the people around him. But, because the Ring is from the enemy, whenever someone wears it, they become much more visible to the Nazgûl, the servants of Sauron.

The impact of the One Ring on Frodo is great and after the quest, he is forever changed and realizes that he cannot live amongst the other hobbits.

3.7. Sam

Samwise Gamgee is the second Hobbit in the Fellowship. He is a few years younger than Frodo and has a friendly master-servant relationship with him because he worked as a gardener for Bilbo, and when Bilbo left the Shire and Bag End was passed to Frodo, Sam continued to work for him. He is a typical Hobbit in that has never been on any kind of quest and never stepped outside of the Shire. However, since he spent a lot of time with Bilbo, he was interested in the tales of the faraway lands and particularly in the *Elves*.

Sam is mostly of the Harfoot descent, meaning that he is smaller and shorter than Frodo and he is also quite agile. However, his small stature does not stop him from

carrying heavy baggage. Concerning his clothing, he wears the usual hobbit garments and in Lothlórien he receives the Elven cloak.

Sam's involvement in the entire quest is actually an accident because he was sent to accompany Frodo to Rivendell as a punishment for eavesdropping on Frodo and Gandalf's conversation.

Sam is a shy, clumsy with little self-confidence. A very important aspect of Sam's character is his friendship towards the members of the Fellowship and mainly to Frodo. Even though Sam is Frodo's servant, they are also friends and their friendship strengthens over the course of their journey. However, Sam always holds Frodo in high regard and always calls him master.

Sam is very loyal to Frodo. This loyalty stems from Sam's conviction, that Frodo is a good man and thus deserves his services. Sam always makes sure that Frodo has everything he needs and desires and that he is as comfortable as he could be. This is well demonstrated already at the beginning when the hobbits are leaving the Bag End. "I am sure you have given me all the heaviest stuff," said Frodo. "I pity snails, and all that carry their homes on their backs. I could take a lot more yet, sir. My packet is quite light and," said Sam stoutly and untruthfully." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 70)

Sam is also quite stubborn when it comes to keeping his promises. This is best seen when he jumps into the river to follow Frodo, even though he cannot swim, or when he quite literally carries Frodo to Mount Doom (see Appendix 1). Both instances were because he gave a promise to accompany him on his journey to Mordor.

Sam is always optimistic, trying to cheer up Frodo even in the darkest moments and his optimism does not help only Frodo but also gives Sam the strength to continue on the journey.

Just like Frodo, Sam is a very unlikely hero. However, he is very important, because even though he is not the main protagonist of the story, if it were not for him, Frodo would likely not have been able to finish his quest. Sam is always there to help Frodo and because his heart is truly pure, he resists the temptation to take the Ring when he has the chance.

Sam had one of the four Daggers of Westemnet. The other three belonged to Frodo, Pippin, and Merry. They were given the daggers by Tom Bombadil after he saved them from the mound at Barrow-downs (see Appendix 1).

3.8. Pippin

Pippin is the third and youngest Hobbit of the Fellowship. He is only twenty-eight years old. He is a cousin of Merry and a distant cousin of Frodo.

As mentioned above, all hobbits of the Fellowship, except Frodo, are called by their nicknames and Pippin is not an exception. His full name is Peregrin Took, but he is scarcely called by that name.

He is of Fallohide descent, meaning that he belongs amongst the taller hobbits. He again wears the usual clothing of *Hobbits* supplemented by the elven cloak and a silver belt, both received at Lothlórien.

Pippin was a member of the Conspirators; a group of four hobbits (Pippin, Sam, Merry and Fatty Bolger) who noticed Frodo's strange behaviour. They decided to investigate and it was their decision to send Sam spy on Frodo and Gandalf. They later revealed this to Frodo and all, except Fatty, joined him on his quest to Rivendell.

As mentioned above, Pippin is the youngest member of the Fellowship and it defines his character. He is cheerful, playful, silly, always ready to laugh, eat and have a joyful time. Being a Took, Pippin is curious and he is always ready for an adventure, sometimes without considering the gravity of his decision. This is not apparent only at the beginning when he decides to go with Frodo, but also when Elrond is choosing the members of the Fellowship and Pippin, along with Merry, also wants to be chosen.

“‘There remain two more to be found,’ said Elrond. ‘These I will consider. Of my household I may find some that it seems good to me to send.’ ‘But that will leave no place for us!’ cried Pippin in dismay. ‘We don’t want to be left behind. We want to go with Frodo.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 276)

Throughout the journey, Pippin shows his optimism, which similarly to Sam, helps him to keep on going.

He is also very courageous, which is proven when he runs away from the orcs, to give the rest of the Fellowship a sign, that him and Merry are alive.

Pippin has just like Sam, Frodo, and Merry, the Dagger of Westernessee. It becomes useful to him when he pledges his service to Denethor, and Denethor upon recognising the value of the blade accepts Pippin's offer. In this situation, we can see an enormous change and growth in Pippin's character. By pledging his services to Denethor, he shows that he feels responsibility for Boromir's death and he is ready to face the consequences.

3.9. Merry

Merry is the fourth and final Hobbit of the Fellowship. As mentioned above, Merry, seldom called Meriadoc Brandybuck, has family relations with Frodo and Pippin. Therefore, he also belongs to the Fallohides, signifying that he is quite tall and lean.

He joined Frodo, Sam, and Pippin later on their quest when their conspiracy was unmasked.

Upon leaving Lothlórien Merry received from the *Elves* exactly the same gifts as Pippin. A cloak and a silver belt.

Merry is one of the most intelligent hobbits, as he takes interest in educating himself at the Shire and later in Rivendell. His knowledge comes in useful later in the story, when Merry and Pippin escape the orcs. Merry, unlike Pippin, recognizes where they are, moreover, he is able to lead them. His intelligence is also proven early on in the story when he discovers that Bilbo has a ring that gives him the power to disappear.

Merry is a loyal friend to Frodo which is most apparent in his decision to accompany him to Rivendell. He is not willing to let Frodo go without him and Pippin, because they want to help him.

“You can trust us to stick to you through thick and thin - to the bitter end. And you can trust us to keep any secret of yours - closer than you keep it yourself. But you cannot trust us to let you face trouble alone, and go off without a word.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 105)

In this quote, we can see that Merry is very courageous because he is prepared for the journey. He does not know much about it, but he realizes that it is going to be difficult and dangerous and he still goes.

Merry was given the Dagger of Westernesse, just like the other hobbits. He used it at Parth Galen when the fellowship was attacked by the Orcs and he fought with them cutting their hands and arms. However, his blade came in handy once more and on a much more important occasion. Merry uses it to weaken the Witch King in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. This becomes the bravest thing Merry has ever done.

4. The evolution of the Fellowship of the Ring

In this part of my thesis I will show how the Fellowship develops, how the relationships between the members change, and how the members themselves evolve over the course of their journey.

I will focus on the characters from the forming of the Fellowship. It would be possible to start observing their relationships and evolution earlier since the hobbits knew each other and knew Gandalf and later got to know Aragorn. However, the entire Fellowship with all its members is formed later with the unifying goal of taking the Ring to Mordor and destroying it. I do not finish the analysis of the characters when the Fellowship divides into smaller groups, even though it is marked as the “Breaking of the Fellowship” because the members continue to work towards the same goal and try to help each other, even if it is only from afar. I end my observation when the task of destroying the One Ring is accomplished and the members of the Fellowship return to their homes.

4.1. Council of Elrond

The story of the Fellowship of the Ring starts at the Council of Elrond. There, it is decided that the Ring shall be taken to Mount Doom in Mordor, as it is the only way the Ring can be destroyed. It is also decided that only a small group will accompany the ringbearer because that way the enemy may not notice them or it will be at least harder.

As the members of the Council search for a suitable candidate for the task, Frodo volunteers and this marks his first act of courage. “‘I will take the Ring,’ he said, ‘though I do not know the way.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 270) We can see how brave he is since he is ready to save Middle-earth without hesitation and further knowledge of the road. Frodo’s decision is very grave, more so than he realizes at that moment.

“His decision to carry the Ring, however, means that he is not only responsible for destroying the Ring, but he is also responsible for the individuals who help him achieve his Quest.” (Wright 196)

Just a short moment after Frodo’s decision we see how loyal his servant Sam is when he refuses to let Frodo go alone and demands to accompany him.

As mentioned above, the rest of the members of the Fellowship are chosen later by Elrond. They are not chosen randomly, nor are they chosen because some of them

are already friends. They are chosen simply because they are the best possible candidates to help Frodo on his quest.

The fact that the members are chosen means that the Fellowship was formed as a *small, formal group*. However, this *formal group* includes *informal groups*. As mentioned above, some of the members knew each other before the formation of the Fellowship. The most informal of these groups within the Fellowship is the group of four hobbits who have known each other since their childhood. Another *informal group* is the *dyad* of Aragorn and Gandalf. Then there is the group of the hobbits and Gandalf. The hobbits see Gandalf as a superior, but unlike Aragorn, they do not consider him to be as serious. As mentioned above, it is because he is known in the shire as a magician creating marvellous fireworks and not as a serious *wizard*. Then there is the *informal group* of the hobbits and Aragorn that was formed on the road from Bree to Rivendell. The rest of the members do not know each other or they know one another only very vaguely.

The Fellowship was formed with the intention of being only a *temporary* social group because the goal of the members was to destroy the One Ring and then their paths were supposed to diverge. It was also impossible to predict if all of the members will survive the journey.

Concerning the relationships in the group when it was formed, it was a *secondary* group. At this stage, the members are tied by instrumental ties and they are valued mainly for their abilities. However, as stated above, the hobbits knew each other since they were young, so they constitute a *primary* group within the Fellowship. Right before the completion of the Fellowship, it also represented a *reference* group. It was a *reference* group for Pippin and Merry because they were not considered to join the Fellowship, but they wished to be its members.

The Fellowship represents a *closed group* since the members were specifically chosen and their number has an added special meaning. Hence, they do not have the need or intention to invite any new members to the group.

All the members were free to refuse their participation in the Fellowship, which signifies that their membership in the Company is completely *voluntary*.

4.2. Road from Rivendell

As the Fellowship sets out of Rivendell, they enter the second stage of group development – *storming*. After they go through this stage, they go also through the third and fourth stages – *norming* and *performing*. They divide the positions in the group and they are able to work together as a team, which is proven in their crossing of Misty Mountains and their journey through Moria.

Even though Frodo is the most important member of the Fellowship, he is not the *leader*, because he is inexperienced, and he does not even know the way to Mordor. The *leader* of the group is Gandalf. As mentioned above, he knows the most about Sauron and his powers and he knows many roads and paths in Middle-earth, as he has travelled it for years. This makes him perfect for the role of the *task specialist* kind of *leader*. However, as Gandalf is a *democratic leader*, he does not decide all alone what the Fellowship should do, but rather listens to others and their opinions. This can be seen in the following scene when Aragorn mentions that he finds the calmness of the surrounding nature disturbing.

“Gandalf looked up with sudden interest. ‘But what do you guess is the reason?’ he asked. ‘Is there more in it than surprise at seeing four hobbits, not to mention the rest of us, where people are so seldom seen or heard?’”
(Tolkien, “LOTR” 284)

Gandalf shares his leadership with Aragorn because Aragorn takes the quest very seriously and has natural authority. Gandalf is not only the *task specialist* but also the *social-emotional specialist*. As he is very compassionate, he understands why someone feels in a certain way. He helps them to overcome their problems and defuses the tension between the members. Gandalf has also the position of a *thinker*, as he creates the goals of the Fellowship.

Aragorn, as mentioned above, shares Gandalf’s leadership, although he is more of an advisor and consultant at this point. As was said before, he has a natural authority and it helps him to gain respect among the other members of the Fellowship.

When the Fellowship enters *storming* – the second stage of group development, we can watch Boromir’s struggle for power. Even though Boromir would like to be the *leader*, since he is used to it, he does not acquire this position in the Fellowship of the Ring. He is not known among the other members and it makes it hard for him to get to the top. However, he advises Gandalf and gains a position of an *organiser* and *thinker* of the group. We can see that when the Fellowship is passing the Misty mountains.

“I will add a word of advice, if I may,’ said Boromir. [...] We shall meet bitter cold, if no worse, before we come down on the other side. It will not help us to keep so secret that we are frozen to death. When we leave here, where there are still a few trees and bushes, each of us should carry a faggot of wood, as large as he can bear.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 287)

This proves to be a very wise decision, as the fire saved the Fellowship from dying in the cold snow.

Legolas has the position of a *completer*. He walks last, as he has an astounding sight and is, therefore, able to spot any followers of pursuers of the Fellowship. He also proves to be a great archer in the mines of Moria when the Fellowship is attacked by orcs.

Gimli does not have a great or very important position at the beginning of the quest. However, when the Fellowship decides to go through the Mines of Moria, he shortly shares the position of a *leader* with Gandalf, who says: “And we will come through. In the ruins of the Dwarves, a dwarf’s head will be less easy to bewilder than Elves or Men or Hobbits.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 297) Gimli happily accepts this role, because he is eager to enter the halls of his ancestors. In Moria, we can see his admiration for the past of his kind but also his sadness upon seeing what is left of the once famous and great underground realm of *Dwarves*. This moment reminds us of his soft side, unusual for the *Dwarves*.

In the beginning, the hobbits do not have much say in the decision making as they are inexperienced. The rest of the Fellowship does not exclude them. The other members encourage them to take part, showing that the group is unifying, and the members want to work together, as a team. However, the hobbits do not yet know what exactly they should do, so they leave most of the decision making on the others and they try to help them as much as they can. Merry and Pippin, being the youngest of the Fellowship and more carefree than anyone else acquire the roles of *group clowns*.

The entire Fellowship proves to be a well-working group when they are passing through Moria and they fight off the orcs. At that point, the courage, selflessness, and determination of everyone are tested. The one who proves his courage and loyalty to the Fellowship and the entire quest to save Middle-earth is Gandalf, as he pays the ultimate price when he fights the Balrog. His last words to the Fellowship “Fly, you fools!” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 331) demonstrate his selflessness for the sake of the quest. By this heroic act, he allows the rest of the Fellowship to continue their journey.

Throughout the journey from Rivendell, the relationships between the members change from *secondary* to *primary*, and they newly tied by *expressive ties*.

4.3. The Fellowship of eight

When Gandalf dies, the Fellowship has to reform itself. The members have to redistribute their roles and positions because their *leader* is now gone. However, it is remarkable that the Fellowship does not disintegrate. As mentioned above, it is likely for a group to disintegrate after its *leader* dies or leaves. The characters realize that even if it would be easier to go their separate ways, the destroying of the Ring is more important and they stay together.

Thanks to this decision, the Fellowship re-enters the second stage of group development. The members must choose a new *leader*. The obvious and wisest choice is Aragorn. He proves that he is fit for the role by his decisiveness, as he is the first to think it is time to continue the journey. “He turned to the Company. ‘We must do without hope,’ he said. ‘At least we may yet be avenged. Let us gird ourselves and weep no more! Come! We have a long road, and much to do.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 333) Aragorn becomes the *task specialist* type of *leader* but struggles with the position of the *social-emotional specialist*. However, he tries his best to acquire also this role. We can see this when the Fellowship arrives to Lothlórien and Gimli is to be blindfolded. Aragorn proposes that all the members are blindfolded to calm Gimli down.

As Boromir has not acquired the role of the *leader*, he grows slightly bitter. He gradually acquires the position of the group *critic*, as his opinion on what should be done with the Ring differs from the rest of the Fellowship. He is also doubtful of Aragorn’s decision to go to Lothlórien and continue to Mordor and not Minas Tirith. We can see Boromir’s discontent in the following quote when the Fellowship is deciding where they should go once they leave Lothlórien. “‘If my advice is heeded, it will be the western shore, and the way to Minas Tirith,’ answered Boromir. ‘But I am not the leader of the company.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 367) He continues to disagree with the Fellowship even in the most basic matter – the destruction of the One Ring. He would prefer to use it against the dark lord, rather than destroy it. As was said before, we later learn that he is not completely himself and that he is slowly being corrupted by the Ring.

Since the creation of the Fellowship, Legolas had a minor role and obeyed the rest of the group. However, when the group enters Lothlórien, he gains the role of *extrovert*, because he deals with the *Elves*, who recognize him as one of their kind. He is, therefore, able to ensure a safe passage for the Fellowship through the forest. Once the Fellowship leaves Lothlórien and floats on the river, Legolas uses again his elven skills in archery to shoot Sauron's spy down from the sky.

Gimli develops greatly in this part of the journey. Upon entering Lothlórien Gimli does not like the *Elves*, as it is normal for his race. He even grows angry with them, when they suggest, that he should be blindfolded before they take him to Lady Galadriel. However, later, as he spends more time in Lothlórien, he comes to appreciate *Elves* and becomes friends with Legolas. They even share a boat when the Fellowship is leaving the forest. His change is also demonstrated in his humble request for a strand of Galadriel's hair, a very unusual, yet honest act.

“‘There is nothing, Lady Galadriel,’ said Gimli, bowing low and stammering. ‘Nothing, unless it might be - unless it is permitted to ask, nay, to name a single strand of your hair, which surpasses the gold of the earth as the stars surpass the gems of the mine.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 376)

In Lothlórien, when Frodo looks into the Mirror of Galadriel, we can watch him realize the true greatness and power of the One Ring. He doubts himself and thinks that he is too weak to bear such a burden and he offers the Ring to Galadriel. “‘You are wise and fearless and fair, Lady Galadriel,’ said Frodo. ‘I will give you the One Ring, if you ask for it. It is too great a matter for me.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 365) However, Galadriel convinces him, that it is her who is in fact weak. She makes Frodo realize that he is the one who should possess the Ring until its destruction.

Sam, on the other hand, shows his strength, because upon seeing the horrifying images of Shire, in Galadriel's mirror, he wants to go back and save his home. However, he calms himself down and remembers that his loyalty lies with Frodo and the Ring, and that he has to continue and support Frodo to the very end of their quest. His strength is not seen only in his former decision, but mainly in his latter one.

4.4. Amon Hen

The next big event that the Fellowship goes through is the incident at Amon Hen, a peak near the Anduin river. The Fellowship has to decide where they will

continue from here and the responsibility falls on Frodo. This places the role of a *task specialist leader* on Frodo. As he has never before faced such an important decision, he asks for some alone time to decide. However, Boromir follows him and tries to take the Ring from him. It is here that we witness Boromir's fall, as he loses all control over his decisions and is fully corrupted by the Ring. Frodo manages to escape and decides to secretly leave the Fellowship behind and take the heavy burden only upon himself, proving his selflessness and courage.

Sam too shows his strength, loyalty, and wit, when he recognizes, that Frodo wants to leave, and decides to join him without hesitation, almost drowning himself in the process.

As mentioned above, Boromir realizes his terrible fault after Frodo flees from his sight and pays for his mistake with his life, because he finds again courage within himself and tries to protect Merry and Pippin from the orcs who have just attacked the Fellowship. Thanks to this heroic act, he regains his status of loyal, courageous friend. In spite of Boromir's efforts, the two hobbits are taken by the orcs.

4.5. The broken Fellowship

With the loss of Boromir, the departure of Frodo and Sam and the abduction of Pippin and Merry, the Fellowship is divided into three *small* and *temporary* groups, that have to reform themselves. The members re-enter the stage of *norming* because the characters need to redistribute their group roles. Even though the Fellowship is broken and its members do not know what happened to the others, they continue to work towards the destruction of the One Ring. This, with the fact that they still think about each other and try to help each other from afar means, that they still consider themselves members of the Fellowship, though they acknowledge that physically, the Fellowship does not exist anymore.

4.5.1. Frodo and Sam

Frodo and Sam leave the rest of the Fellowship and they are isolated from them until the very end of their journey. From the time of their departure, Frodo and Sam struggle on their way to Mordor and often get lost. Frodo becomes the *leader* of the *dyad*, as Sam still considers him his master rather than a friend. Sam acquires the position on the other end of the spectrum, as he becomes the *completer*. He always takes

care of their food, cooks and makes sure that Frodo has everything he needs. Sam is also the dyad's clown, as he amuses Frodo by his clumsiness. "Sam fell over, and the long grey coils slithered silently down on top of him. Frodo laughed. 'Who tied the rope?' he said." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 611)

As mentioned above, the hobbits are mostly lost in the land, until they are attacked by Gollum, who has been following the Fellowship from the Mines of Moria. The hobbits catch him and travel with him. Gollum knows the road to Mordor and promises the hobbits that he will lead them there if they free him. He gives his word to the hobbits because he knows that Frodo is the ringbearer and he thinks that he must serve the master who bears his "Precious", as he calls the One Ring. At that moment, the *dyad* becomes a *triad*. This event shows to us that this group is *open*, as they easily accept a new member, Gollum.

Upon meeting Gollum, Frodo shows his indulgence towards him, because he could kill him, but decides not to. He puts his trust in him instead and lets the creature lead them. Sam, on the other hand, does not trust Gollum at all. Because of this distrust between Sam and Gollum, Frodo has to adopt the *mediating* function. He tries to show Sam that Gollum is harmless, and vice versa, he wants Gollum to see that Sam will not hurt him.

Sam becomes the *critic* of the group, as he is not sure about Gollum and questions Frodo's decision to allow him to travel with them.

By allowing Gollum to lead them, Frodo passes the position of *leader* to him. Therefore, Gollum gains power over the hobbits and the Ring. However, he realizes that the position is only lent to him when he refuses to lead the hobbits through the Gate of Mordor.

"Pleading and kind words were no longer of any avail. It was not until Frodo commanded him angrily and laid a hand on his sword-hilt that Gollum would get up again. Then at last he rose with a snarl, and went before them like a beaten dog." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 635)

Here, we also witness the beginning of Frodo's horrifying transformation from the nice, friendly hobbit, towards a creature that is ruled by the One Ring.

Even though Gollum fears Mordor and the decision to go there, he remains loyal to his Precious, and his other personality, Sméagol grows to like the hobbits. However, this situation changes when Frodo and Sam are captured by Faramir. Whilst being the captives of Faramir, both Frodo and Sam have the position of *extrovert*, since they both

talk with him about Boromir and the Ring. However, Frodo is forced to help Faramir and his men to catch Gollum. Gollum feels betrayed and loses all sympathy for the hobbits. “‘Masster, master!’ he hissed. ‘Wicked! Tricky! False!’ [...] ‘Easy, easy!’ said Frodo. Trust Master!’ Gollum turned and spat at him.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 688) Gollum’s character, along with the help of the Ring’s influence on Frodo, gains the *divide-and-rule* function in the *triad*. Frodo gradually trusts him more than Sam until Gollum leads the hobbits to Shelob’s lair, the home of a great spider, and leaves them to their fate.

In the lair, Galadriel’s gift to Frodo, a phial with the light of Eärendil’s star, comes in useful, as it is able to scare off the spider. Nevertheless, Frodo is stung by Shelob and Sam thinks he is dead. At this moment, Sam shows his courage, as he fights the spider alone and wounds it. He also shows his loyalty to the Fellowship and its task, because he takes the Ring from Frodo to take it to Mount Doom by himself. Moments later, he has to prove his strength and courage again, when a few orcs arrive. Sam follows them and learns that Frodo is not dead. He fights the orcs to save Frodo, proving his courage and loyalty once again. However, when Frodo finds out that Sam took the Ring, he thinks that he wants to keep it. This shows us again the progression of the Ring’s influence over Frodo.

When the hobbits flee the orcs, Frodo regains his position of the group *leader*, despite getting weaker and weaker under the weight of the One Ring. Frodo becomes so weak that Sam has to pick him up and carry him to the entrance of the Mount Doom, demonstrating his incredible determination and endurance. It also solidifies his role of *completer* as he literally completes the journey to Mount Doom. However, when the hobbits are attacked by Gollum at the cliffs of the mountain Frodo flees and decides that the Ring is now his. “‘I have come,’ he said. ‘But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!’ And suddenly, as he set it on his finger, he vanished from Sam’s sight.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 945) Frodo is therefore completely corrupted by the Ring, which shows us that even the pure souls of *Hobbits* are not immune to its power.

To the luck of the entire Fellowship and Middle-earth, Gollum manages to bite off Frodo’s finger with the Ring and falls with it into the fires of the mountain. Rid of the Ring, Frodo returns to his old pleasant, humble self. “‘For the Quest is achieved, and now all is over. I am glad you are here with me. Here at the end of all things, Sam.’” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 947)

In the story of Frodo and Sam, we can see that Frodo needed Sam to finish his quest, showing the importance of their friendship.

4.5.2. Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli

Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli are the only three members of the Fellowship that did not flee, die, or were kidnapped. Even though all three of the characters are voluntary members of the Fellowship, their membership in the *triad* is involuntary, as they were left to each other and their only other option is to be alone in the unknown land. Their group is also *closed* because they do not allow anyone to join them (until they reunite with Gandalf).

Aragorn proves to be the *leader* of this *triad*, as he decides that it is more important to save Merry and Pippin if they are still alive. Aragorn's ranger skills come in truly useful when he is able to track the orcs and more importantly, when he notices faint traces diverting from the main track and finds an elven brooch, proving that at least one Hobbit is alive. Aragorn's leadership is of the *democratic* kind, which is seen on many occasions when he seeks the advice and opinion of his companions. He also acquires previously Legolas's position of the *extrovert*. When the trio meets the riders of Rohan, it is Aragorn who deals with them and ensures peace between the Riders and his companions.

“‘He stands not alone.’ Said Legolas, bending his bow and fitting an arrow with hands that moved quicker than sight. ‘You would die before your stroke fell.’ Éomer raised his sword, and thing might have gone ill, but Aragorn sprang between them, and raised his hand.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 433)

Aragorn's other strong characteristics, loyalty and friendship, are manifested, when he chooses to enter Fangorn (see Appendix 1) to find Pippin and Merry, even though the *triad* has only little food left and there is a big possibility that they will die of hunger.

Similarly to Aragorn, Legolas is helpful to the group through his skills. As mentioned above, he has an astonishing sight and sees at first an eagle far up in the sky, guessing it marks the position of the orcs, and later sees the riders of Rohan earlier than his two friends. He is also of immense help, as he does not need to sleep and can thus keep a watch at night, allowing Gimli and Aragorn to get a full night's sleep.

Gimli has gained the role of the group *critic*. It corresponds with his stubbornness, which as discussed above, he inherited from his ancestors. He tends to be pessimistic and questions some of Aragorn's decisions. It is clearly visible when the group decides to enter Fangorn. Gimli states: "We cannot pursue them through the whole fastness of Fangorn. We have come ill supplied. If we do not find them soon, we shall be of no use to them, except to sit down beside them and show our friendship by starving together." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 491) However, Gimli is not only a *critic* but also an advisor, just like Legolas.

4.5.3. Reunion with Gandalf

As the *triad* continues their journey through Fangorn, they meet Gandalf the White. He joins the three companions, and they are no longer a *triad*.

Since Gandalf is now more powerful and wiser than he has been ever before, he regains his position of the *leader*. Gandalf is very valuable to the Fellowship. He is a respected man, able to free king Théoden from his gloominess and make him realize, that his advisor is, in fact, a servant of the enemy, and convinces Théoden to fight by the group's side.

"Now Théoden son of Thengel, will you hearken to me?' said Gandalf. [...] Too long have you sat in shadows and trusted to twisted tales and crooked promptings.' Slowly Théoden left his chair. A faint light grew in the hall again." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 515)

Gandalf is not only the group's *leader*, he is also its *organiser*, which can be seen when he orders the rest of the group and Théoden's army to go to Helm's Deep whilst he leaves to summon the Riders of Rohan.

During Gandalf's absence, Aragorn reclaims the position of the *leader*. However, when the three companions reunite with Gandalf, Aragorn quickly passes the status of *leader* back to Gandalf. Instead, he regains the position of Gandalf's advisor, much like before.

After the battle with the orcs of Isengard, Gandalf again uses his leadership skills, as he decides that his three friends and Théoden with a few men will go to Isengard (see Appendix 1), to defeat Saruman.

Legolas and Gimli keep their positions of loyal companions and advisors because they follow Aragorn to battle and Gandalf to Isengard. There, the four companions are reunited with Pippin and Merry.

4.5.4. Pippin and Merry

The two hobbits become involuntary members of their *dyad*, much like Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas became involuntary members of their group. During their captivity, the hobbits have to show a lot of their strength, courage, and endurance. The orcs force them to travel quickly for a long distance, which exhausts the hobbits. However, they do not lose hope and use their wit multiple times on the journey.

Pippin shows his wit and courage, when he cuts the rope on his wrists, which later contributes to the successful escape of the hobbits. As mentioned above, he also shows his courage and wit when he runs away from the orcs in the hope that Aragorn will notice his footsteps and brooch. Pippin's intelligence and quick thinking save him and his friend from certain death, as he recognizes that the orcs know the hobbits should possess the One Ring. Thanks to that, his loose handcuffs, and the Elven cloaks, the hobbits manage to run away from the orcs. During all of these actions, Pippin shows that he is the *leader* and *thinker* of this Hobbit *dyad*.

However, the hobbits' roles in their new group change over time. Once the hobbits are free from the orcs, Merry adopts the position of *leader* and *thinker*, since he has studied the maps of Middle-earth in Rivendell and knows the land, and is thus able to guide Pippin. Pippin is not against the exchange of the position. In fact, he himself proposes it to Merry. "Lead on, Master Brandybuck!" said Pippin. "Or lead back! We have been warned against Fangorn." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 459)

The typical nature of *Hobbits* comes through, right after they run away, as they have a light-hearted conversation as if they did not survive a terrible ordeal.

As the hobbits travel through Fangorn, we can observe that their group is an *open* one, since they accept Treebeard among themselves and even let him become their *leader* and guide. Upon meeting Treebeard, we can see another typical feature of *Hobbits*, their friendliness and openness, as they befriend and trust Treebeard fairly quickly.

The hobbits prove their courage again when they go to Isengard with the Ents, who want to take revenge on Saruman, for chopping down a great part of the forest.

4.5.5. The reunion of the six members

When the company from Rohan arrives to Isengard, the hobbits gladly join their friends and the group reforms again.

Gandalf has an opportunity to show his newly acquired powers when Saruman refuses to leave Orthanc, his tower in Isengard.

“He raised his hand, and spoke slowly in a clear cold voice. ‘Saruman, your staff is broken.’ There was a crack, and the staff split asunder in Saruman’s hand, and the head of it fell down at Gandalf’s feet.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 583)

This quote shows to us the changed Gandalf, who is now more confident and powerful.

When the Fellowship leaves Isengard, Merry continues to have the position of the *clown*, because as he rides with Gandalf, he asks him silly questions, which amuses Gandalf.

The company of six does not last for long. Pippin manifests his curiosity when he sneaks to Gandalf at night and takes the Palantír, a seeing stone in the shape of a globe. As Pippin proceeds to look into the globe, he loses control and allows Sauron to see him and look into his mind. Gandalf awakens and upon realizing what happened, decides to take Pippin to Minas Tirith. With that, the Fellowship is broken once again.

4.5.6. Gandalf and Pippin

Pippin is now in danger since Sauron believes that it is him who possesses the Ring, Gandalf takes him to Minas Tirith where he should be safer. In Minas Tirith, they are welcomed with hostility, because Denethor mourns for his son Boromir and blames Gandalf for his death.

As mentioned above, whilst listening to Denethor’s words, Pippin comes to the realization that he owes his life to Denethor as a repayment for Boromir’s death and offers his service to the steward. Strangely enough, Pippin has the role of *extrovert* now, because it is thanks to his proposal, that Denethor regains his composure. At this moment of courage and selflessness, we can see how much Pippin has grown and changed. Even though he maintains his light-heartedness and optimism, he is more serious, mature and conscious of the graveness of events happening around him. By his

decision to serve Gondor, Pippin abandons the Fellowship, as his allegiance and duty lie now elsewhere.

Although Gandalf is not welcome at Minas Tirith, he helps its citizens, as it is in his nature. He is able to save Faramir, by driving away a Nazgûl, using his new, greater power. When Faramir is wounded during the defence of a nearby city of Osgiliath, Denethor locks himself and his son in his chambers and Gandalf gains a new position of *leader*. This time not of the Fellowship, but of the defence of Minas Tirith.

Pippin later breaks his allegiance to Denethor and renews his bond with Gandalf and the Fellowship. when he sees that Denethor has gone mad and wants to burn himself and Faramir, who is still alive, he demonstrates his presence of mind as he rushes to find Gandalf to help him save Faramir.

4.5.7. The triad and Merry

Aragorn, Gimli, Legolas and Merry now ride with Théoden. Since Gandalf is not with them now, Aragorn is again the *leader* of the four which soon become three, as Merry similarly to Pippin offers his service to Théoden.

Aragorn shows his great strength and selflessness, as he masters the Palantír and manages to persuade Sauron, that he is the bearer of the One Ring and reveals to him that he is also the heir of Gondor and bears Andúril, Isildur's sword. This decision illustrates that Aragorn is still thinking about helping Frodo and Sam because Sauron focuses on Aragorn instead of searching for a hobbit. It also shows Aragorn's wit, because now, Sauron will release earlier, meaning that it will be weaker.

As the company continues, they come across the Grey Company, the Dúnedain from North and friends of Aragorn. Their message leads Aragorn to the Paths of the Dead, a hidden army of the Oathbreakers who can be summoned only by Isildur's heir. Aragorn follows the prophecy and Gimli and Legolas go with him, showing loyalty and friendship to their *leader*. "I will go with you even on the Paths of the Dead, and to whatever end they may lead," said Gimli. "I also will come," said Legolas, for I do not fear the Dead." (Tolkien, "LOTR" 781) This is a very brave act from the side of Aragorn and Gimli, which is proven by the fact that the Paths are so scary and dangerous that even Gimli is terrified.

Aragorn proves that he is the true heir of Isildur, as he successfully summons the Oathbreakers. Then they have to travel the long and difficult road to Minas Tirith. This

journey illustrates again the advantage of the *triad*, as their endurance is given by their origin. Before reaching Minas Tirith the company has to defeat the Corsairs of Umbar. The Oathbreakers therefore fulfil their destiny and Aragorn, being honourable and the man of his word, releases them. Then he leads his friends, the Rangers of the North, and the armies of the South to Minas Tirith.

When they finally reach the Pelennor Fields, Aragorn is no longer a *leader* of the company, but a *leader* of a great army which he guides to the battle, saving Gondor.

Meanwhile, Merry continues his journey with Théoden, completely separated from the Fellowship. Théoden does not want Merry to accompany him to war. However, Éowyn, who also feels underestimated gives an armour to Merry, so he could go to fight in secrecy, just like her. Both of them end up playing a key role in the victory of Gondor, since Merry severely wounds the Black Rider, the chief of the Nazgûl, “Merry’s sword had stabbed him from behind, shearing through the black mantle, and passing up beneath the hauberk had pierced the sinew behind his mighty knee.” (Tolkien, “LOTR” 842) And Éowyn then kills the Black Rider. As it is mentioned above, it is Merry’s most heroic act showing his maturity.

4.5.8. The Fellowship reunites

After the battle of the Pelennor Fields Aragorn manifests his humbleness when he refuses to sit upon the throne until the complete victory over Sauron is assured. Then he goes to the Houses of healing where his right to be a king is shown in his ability to heal the wounded with the help of athelas. As mentioned above, only the true king is able to do that.

As Gandalf again gains the position of *leader*, he decides that Gondor’s army shall go to fight to Mordor, because it will distract Sauron, and Frodo and Sam will thus have a better chance at destroying the Ring. Since it is an almost sure journey to death, the entire Fellowship (except for Merry who is too wounded to go to battle) show their courage, strength, and loyalty to Frodo and their task by going to another battle.

The Eagles appear and scare off some of the evil army. Moreover, moments later, the ground starts to shake and the company recognizes that Frodo has fulfilled his task and that the Ring, along with Sauron and Mordor are destroyed.

As Gandalf is a friend of the Eagles, he rides one of them to Mordor, and upon finding Frodo and Sam, two other eagles retrieve them from the evil land.

Later, when the hobbits are well enough, Aragorn has his coronation, stabilizing his position of a *leader*. After few days, Frodo wishes to leave Gondor to go home and the Fellowship finally enters its last stage – the *adjourning*. The departure of Frodo and all of the other members marks the end of the Fellowship.

4.6. The evaluation of the evolution of the Fellowship

Throughout the journey of the Fellowship, we can see that the members change and grow as a group, but also as individuals.

Even though the group roles of the members change over time, as the Fellowship keeps dividing itself to many different *small groups*, when the members reunite, it is never hard for them to redistribute the positions. It is because of the hierarchical structure of the Fellowship. Gandalf has always the position of a *leader* because the rest of the group holds him in a high regard. After him comes Aragorn, as he is the heir to the throne of Gondor. Frodo is the *leader* of his *dyad*, because back home, in the Shire he has a higher status than Sam. The only two members who exchange their position of *leader* freely, as they like are Merry and Pippin because they see each other as equals.

As stated above, the characters evolve also individually by themselves. Some develop more than others. It is the hobbits that undergo the bigger change, as they were inexperienced and thanks to the journey found many new qualities within themselves. These new qualities are mainly courage, seriousness, and endurance.

On the other hand, Aragorn, Gandalf, Legolas, Gimli, and Boromir undergo smaller changes. Their characters rather deepen their qualities and dispositions.

Throughout the journey, the Fellowship becomes less and less coherent, as the members find their individuality and inner strength.

As it is mentioned above, the Fellowship was meant to be only a *temporary* group, as it seemed unlikely that all of its members could survive the quest. It also was not very likely that all of the members would become friends since their races did not like each other (this relates to Legolas and Gimli). However, the members of the Fellowship became lifelong friends and their relationships turned from *secondary* to *primary*, and from *temporary* to *permanent*. That is manifested for example in the destiny of Pippin and Merry, who returned to Gondor when they were old and were buried next to the king.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyse the famous work of J. R. R. Tolkien from a sociological point of view. It focused on the nine members of the Fellowship of the Ring and analysed their group behaviour and individual evolution.

The first part of the thesis presented the key facts about social groups. Their functions, evolution, and division, based on their *structure, size, time, belonging, relationships, interaction* and *membership*. It also dealt with the description of group positions and functions, mainly the position of the *leader*. Therefore, the theory was established and ready to be applied to the example of the Fellowship.

The second part of the thesis depicted the five races that are represented in the Fellowship. At first, the creation of Middle-earth and its inhabitants was described, in order to facilitate the understanding of the characteristics of the five races. The introduction of the races was necessary to show which abilities and qualities members of the Fellowship inherited from their ancestors and which they learned or developed individually.

The third part of the thesis offers the characterization of the nine members of the Fellowship, as well as a revelation of the similarities and differences between them and their races. The characterisation of the nine members was necessary to prepare the ground for the observation of their evolution and changes. We discovered that all of the nine members (except for Boromir) differ in some way from their races. Gandalf is the only *Istar*, who takes interest in all of the races and species of Middle-earth. Legolas is less noble than other *Elves* and does not feel as much hatred towards the *Dwarves*. Aragorn has longer lifespan than other *Men* and he is more certain about his decisions. As mentioned above, Boromir is the only one who does not differ from his race. Gimli, similarly to Legolas, feels less hatred towards the *Elves* and even admires them. All of the four hobbits display their strength and stamina, as well as their curiosity and courage. The former two being common amongst *Hobbits* and the latter two very unusual.

The last part of the thesis concentrated on the evolution of the Fellowship as a whole, as well as on the evolution of individual members. The development was described chronologically, making it easier to see the evolution. The Fellowship undergoes all of the five stages of group evolution, described by Bruce Tuckman. *Forming* occurs in Rivendell when the decision to create a company is made. *Storming*, *norming* and *performing* take place later, when the Fellowship is travelling through

Middle-earth. The stages of *norming* and *performing* occur on multiple occasions on the journey, as the Fellowship keeps breaking to smaller groups that need to redistribute the positions. However, the last stage, *adjourning* occurs only once, in the end, because up to that point the members of the Fellowship concentrate on the group needs and do not favour their individuality over others.

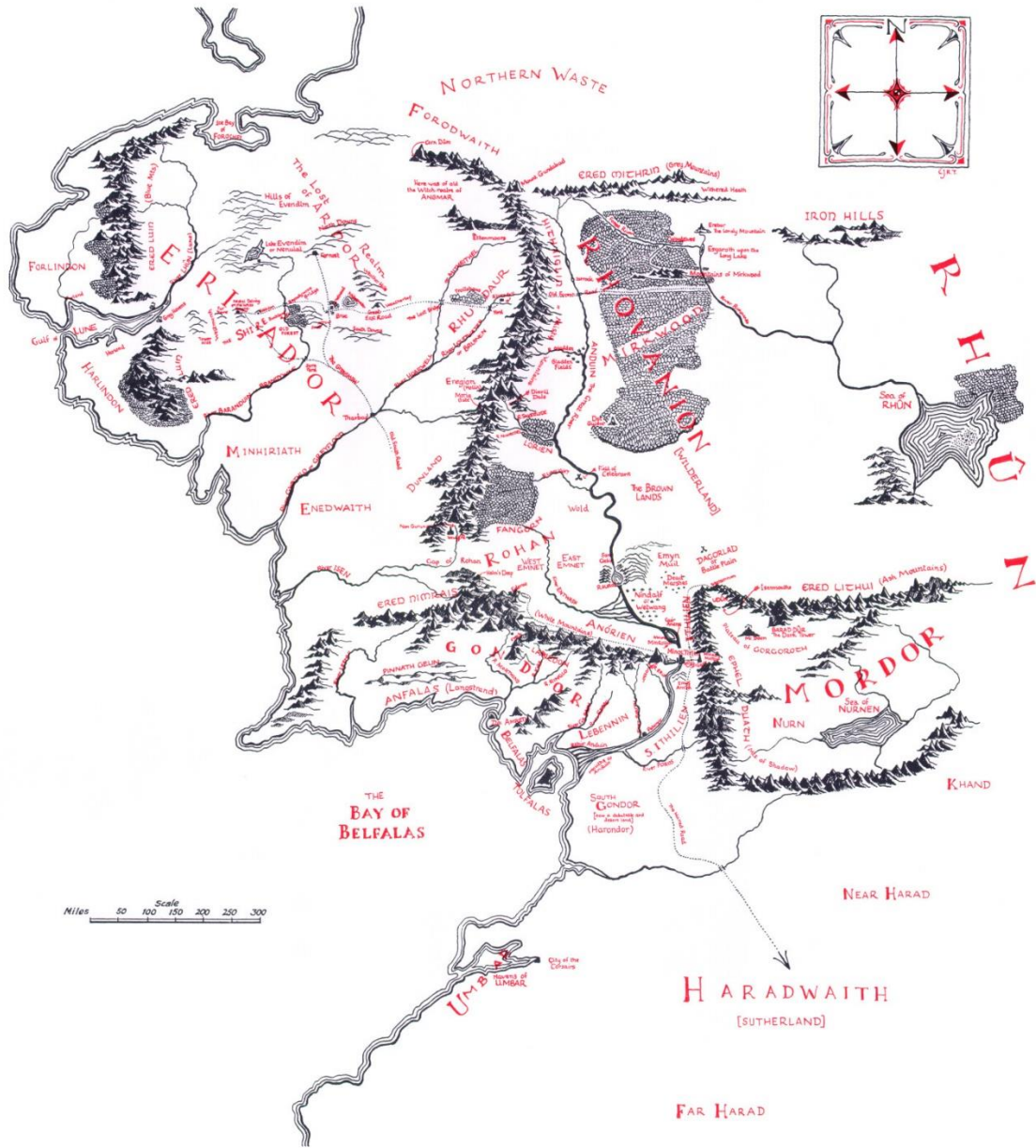
It was mentioned in the first part, that the most important position is the position of *leader*. However, in the Fellowship it is the one that the members exchange most frequently. Nevertheless, the changing of this position is never met with hatred, as the structure of the Fellowship is hierarchical and the position is always acquired by the member who has the highest status at that moment

Concerning the individual evolution of the nine members, all of them change on their journey. Some more than others. While Gandalf strengthens his power and through resurrection literally becomes someone else, Legolas deepens his love for other races, mainly the *Dwarves*. Aragorn strengthens his right to the throne of Gondor and intensifies his honourable qualities. Boromir learns the power of the One Ring and finds new strength and courage within himself. Gimli, similarly to Legolas, finds respect and admiration for the *Elves*. Frodo strengthens his relationship with Sam and discovers new aspects of his personality; positive, such as courage and selflessness, as well as negative, such as the want for power. Sam reinforces his loyalty to Frodo and finds courage and strength within himself. Pippin matures throughout his adventure and realizes the burdens of the real world. Merry also matures and finds honour and courage within himself.

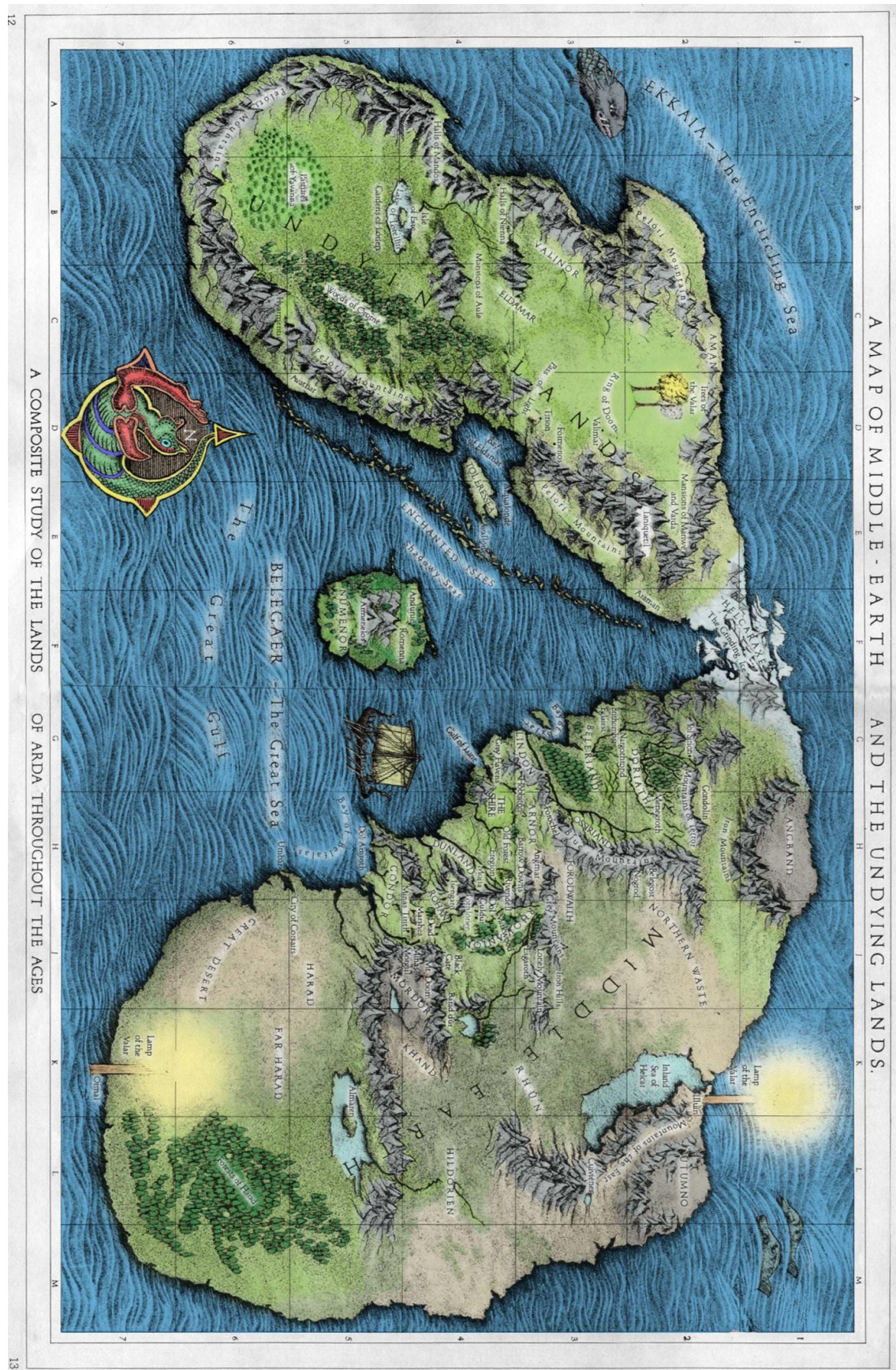
To conclude, the thesis showed a new approach Tolkien's work. It demonstrated how the nine characters depend on each other and how their individual qualities and abilities contribute to the completion of their goal of destroying the One Ring. The thesis also demonstrated, that since the members of the Fellowship differ from their races in unique and specific ways, they are the only characters who could successfully finish the task.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – A map of Middle-earth



Appendix 2 – A map of Middle-earth and the Undying Lands



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