



## POSUDEK VEDOUCÍHO BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

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Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **Representation of Masculinity in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings***

Autorka práce: **Václava Bláhovcová**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Einat Adar, M.A., Ph.D.**

Oponent bakalářské práce: **doc. PhDr. Ladislav Nagy, Ph.D.**

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### Short characteristics of the thesis

The thesis studies gender roles, particularly models of masculinity, in J.R.R. Tolkien's novel *The Lord of the Rings*. It combines a review of criticism with analysis of particular characters to formulate an original thesis about the desired model of masculinity in the novel. The first part is concerned with the writing of the novel and the author's life, including early responses and criticism of the novel. The second part considers the issue of masculinity in fantasy literature more generally, and the third part analyses specific masculine representations in the novel: the various races of this world, Boromir, Faramir, Aragon, Sam Gamgee and Frodo Baggins.

The study of representations of masculinity in the trilogy found that characters which are considered close to ideal in the novel, such as Faramir and Aragorn, possess a mixture of characteristics which are partly masculine and partly feminine. This is contrasted with more exclusively masculine types, such as Boromir, whose exaggerated aggression lead to failure and death.

### Overall assessment

There is a wealth of feminist criticism about *The Lord of the Rings* and the movies based on it, which pointed out multiple issues with the representation of women, and equally important – the lack of it. This thesis sprang out of Ms. Bláhovcová's original idea that an examination of masculinity in the novel is equally important and can contribute to a more balanced view of gender roles in the novel. This insight can be easily correlated with the growing attention to masculine gender roles in the humanities and, as can be seen in the thesis, proved to be a fruitful path.

Ms. Bláhovcová have shown a high level of independent research skills, and her research into the topic was quite extensive for a B.A. thesis. The thesis is well-written in English despite some mistakes, has a clear structure, and follows the MLA style correctly. I must say I enjoyed Ms. Bláhovcová's critical arguments, especially regarding issues in which we did not see eye to eye. Overall, the thesis is the product of a meaningful course of study which evolved and matured over time.

The findings of the thesis cast a new light over issues of gender in the novels, since they reveal a complexity of masculine and feminine features which is not easily reducible to men vs. women. Without detracting from the problematic representation of women, it shows that representation of gender roles in the trilogy follows only partially the stereotypical masculinity common in the fantasy genre. If the author will choose to pursue this research, I would encourage her to expand her study of theories of gender in order to better support and fine-tune her literary analysis.



Another question that the current study raises is that of the role of 'childishness' and young age. Tolkien has been charged with creating childish characters, and the novel can be read in part as a coming-of-age narrative of the hobbit characters. It would be interesting to hear the author's views on this topic during the defence.

Práci doporučuji k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: **výborně**

15. 8. 2022

Datum

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Podpis