

An Examination of the Extent to which the Figure of Éowyn Amalgamates the Two Traditional and Contrasting Feminine Archetypes, as Depicted by Eve and the Virgin Mary

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Declaration

Hereby I, Candace Paasche, declare and assure that I have composed the present thesis with the title: 'An examination of the extent to which the figure of Éowyn amalgamates the two traditional and contrasting feminine archetypes, as depicted by Eve and the Virgin Mary' independently, that I did not use any other sources or tools other than indicated and that I marked those parts of the text derived from the literal content or meaning of other Works – digital media included – by making them known as such by indicating their source(s).

Place: London, United Kingdom

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to analyze whether Tolkien's female character Éowyn in the Lord of the Rings can amalgamate the two traditional and contrasting feminine archetypes of the biblical figures: Eve and the Virgin Mary. It is important to note that the exploration of this phenomena is the first study of its kind. The thesis covers areas such as Mariology, Spirituality and Literary Studies. It is traditionally perceived that the Virgin Mary and Eve are opposing and polarized feminine archetypes. Society has often portrayed them as rivals that can never be amalgamated. These archetypes have contributed towards the way in which society views women, as a result to the patriarchal ideals throughout history. Modern feminism is keen to eradicate this archaic notion and strives towards complex and layered representations of woman. Modern feminism also challenges the validity and oppositionality of the archetypes of Eve and Mary. The figure of Éowyn demonstrates this successfully.

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Chapter 1: An Introduction to the Lord of the Rings

J.R.R Tolkien's (1892-1973)¹ astounding imagination was the catalyst towards many of his literary masterpieces². Tolkien's legendarium³ has vastly contributed to modern society, especially that of popular culture. From Peter Jackson's multi-billion cinematic classics;⁴ to an upcoming record high and over a billion-dollar TV series in 2022; to die-hard fan clubs celebrating national Hobbit day⁵ annually, Tolkien's conceptualization of his fantasy world has evidently taken the world by storm. It has introduced a new wave of literature never attempted before. The most recognizable of Tolkien's works is the Lord of the Rings Trilogy⁶ (the abbreviation of LOTR shall be used throughout this thesis). LOTR was introduced to me as a young child barely able to comprehend the world around her. But it was at one distinctive moment that would cause a ripple effect leading into my adult years and eventually instigating my gradual devotion and appreciation towards Tolkien's hyper-creative mind. Indeed, it was:

'the Fellowship of the Ring movie that 'lit up splendidly on the small, black hazy television screen playing on an ancient video cassette. One female character stood out to me in particular. It was her gentle, ghostly, ethereality that consumed me with endearment, awe, and wonder. I later learnt this was Galadriel'⁷. Although in my

¹ The author of the Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien, was born on the 3rd January 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. He died on the 2nd September 1973, Bournemouth, England. He was professor of Anglo-Saxon language and literature at the University of Oxford from 1925 to 1945 and had written at least thirty-three books in his lifetime (Paasche, 2020, pg. 1).

²The list of Tolkien's books in non-chronological order are as followed: The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings Trilogy, The Adventures of Tom Bombadil, The Road Goes Ever On, Bilbo's Last Song, The Silmarillion, The Letters of J.R.R Tolkien, The Monster and the Critics and Other Essays, Unfinished Tales, The History of Middle-earth, J.R.R Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator, The Children of Húrin, The History of the Hobbit, Beren & Lúthien, The Fall of Gondolin, The Nature of Middle-earth (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

³The term legendarium is the entirety of J.R.R. Tolkien's works concerning his imagined world of Arda (See Middle-earth footnotes for the term Arda). Tolkien himself used the term, and also referred to his "mythology" in the same sense (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

⁴ The Lord of the Rings movies (2001-2003) were directed by Peter Jackson (1961- present) and had a box office success consisting of \$2.991 billion in total.

⁵ National Hobbit Day is celebrated on 22nd September every year. It is the date of Bilbo Baggins (Frodo's Uncle) and Frodo Baggins birthdays, as introduced during chapter 1 of the Fellowship of the Ring. Tolkien fans all over the world dress up as various characters from Tolkien's books and have Hobbit inspired parties. It is heavily celebrated by Tolkien fans in New Zealand (where the movie set was based) and paid tours to Frodo's hometown of the shire are available.

⁶ The Lord of the Rings trilogy consists of: The Fellowship of the Ring (1954), The Two Towers (1954), The Return of the King (1955).

⁷ 'Galadriel was the "Lady" of the woods of Lothlórien... One of the greatest of the Elves in Middle-earth, she surpassed nearly all others in beauty, knowledge, and power. She bore Nenyá, one of the three Elven rings of

young mind I failed to understand the masterpiece of Peter Jackson's movie adaptation, eleven years later I read the book in high school, and then revisited it by chance, in depth whilst at university in America. My re-encounter with LOTR held significance. I now understand why there is a wide-spread obsession with these books' (Paasche, 2020, pg.1).

There is a prime reason as to why the books are so popular and how they have successfully captured the hearts of readers from around the world and it is simply this: LOTR reflects what our reality could be. Ultimately it is a form of escapism for both young and old alike. Many readers can agree that they find a type of solace and familiarity in Tolkien's mythological realm, formally known as Middle-earth or Arda⁸. Film critic Stephen Russell argues that the story of LOTR teaches one how 'to maintain your morale against insuperable odds' (Russell, 2014). Thus, LOTR core message is one of hope, in a world that is ridden with suffering and despair. This is the ingredient that possibly activates its relatability, as it is abundant with universally relevant truths for all. In my B.A thesis⁹ I argue that:

'From the intricate and meaningful details of 'simple' natural settings that the eye may overlook and render futile, to the wonderful construction of an entire mythological world- Middle-earth, with many kingdoms, languages, races, traditions and histories, J.R.R. Tolkien changed the course of fantasy and legendarium for a whole new generation' (Paasche, 2020, pg.1).

In fact, Tolkien scholar Thomas Shippey agrees that Tolkien is 'the author of the 20th Century' (Tolkien Gateway Contributors, 2015), whilst Shaun Gunner, chair of the Tolkien society believes that 'Tolkien is widely regarded as the father of modern fantasy' and also highlighted how 'a poll by the BBC declared LOTR the nations favorite book, whilst Amazon customers voted LOTR the book of the millennium' (Gunner, 2017). Russell states that until today Tolkien is 'destined to be an immense bestseller, as works, strengthening the case that he's one of the most influential authors of all time, on par with Dickens and Tolstoy' (Russell, 2014). The praises towards Tolkien and his literary works, especially LOTR are seemingly endless and evokes such strong reactions from readers worldwide.

power. J.R.R. Tolkien thought of her...as one of the mightiest and fairest of all the Elves left in Middle-earth in the Third Age' (lotr Fandom, 2022).

⁸ Middle-earth or Arda (meaning "Realm") was the Quenya (see footnote for this term) name for the world as a whole. Arda was created...by Eru Ilúvatar (see footnote for this term). Arda was the home of Elves, Men, Dwarves and other races (Tolkien Gateway, 2022). See Map of Middle-earth in Appendix A for more information.

⁹ My B.A thesis was based upon the character of Galadriel (see footnote 7 above) and whether she is able to amalgamate the figures of Mary and Eve.

In summary, LOTR tells the story of a humble Hobbit named Frodo¹⁰ who journeys on a treacherous quest to destroy the fatal Ring of Sauron¹¹ in order to save Middle-earth. To achieve this, the Fellowship of the Ring¹² is formed to assist Frodo on his mission and consists of various races¹³ within Middle earth. This includes a Dwarf, an Elf and Humans as well as Hobbits¹⁴.

¹⁰ Frodo Baggins was a hobbit of the Third Age, the most famous of all Hobbits in the histories for his leading role in the Quest of the Ring. During this epic quest, he bore the One Ring to Mount Doom and there destroyed it, giving him renown like no other Halfling throughout Middle-earth. He is also peculiar for being, as a Ring-bearer, one of the three Hobbits who sailed from Middle-earth to Aman, there to die in peace (Tolkien Gateway, 2022).

¹¹ Sauron was originally one of the greatest Maiar (a race of powerful wizards, such as Gandalf the Grey, who helped Ilúvatar shape Middle-earth) and is the main antagonist in the Lord of the Rings... He demonstrated the ability to take the form of a wolf, a serpent, and a vampire... he secretly forged the One Ring in Mount Doom. Thus, Sauron became "The Lord of the Rings" (Tolkien Gateway, 2022).

¹² The Fellowship of the Ring was formed as a brotherhood among members of the various Free Peoples of Middle-earth. Its purpose was to take the One Ring to Mordor so that it might be cast into the fires of Mount Doom, the mountain in which it was forged, so that it would be destroyed and ultimately eradicate the Dark Lord Sauron. The Fellowship was also known as the Company of the Ring, the Nine Walkers, or more simply the Company. Each of the members of the Company were representatives of their respective races, with Legolas and Gimli being the only Elf and Dwarf chosen, respectively (lotr Fandom, 2022).

¹³ See next page for the list of races of Middle-earth.

1.1. LOTR Background Summary: Races of Middle-earth

It is important to become acquainted with the different species within Tolkien's world of Middle-earth, to further understand their status or roles within the books. The following table displays them in their hierarchal forms¹⁵:

<u>Races of Middle-earth</u>
Ainur
Valar
Maiar
Children of Iluvatar
Elves
Men (and Hobbits)
Other Races
Dwarves
Ents
Orcs
Trolls
Sapient Beasts
Dragons
Eagles
Spiders

There are thirteen different species within Tolkien's mythological world and not all are solely tied to the realm of Middle-earth. Some are from the supernatural dimension of Valinor¹⁶ (the

¹⁵ See Appendix B for more information on each specie.

¹⁶ Valinor was the Quenya term meaning "Land of the Valar". It was the Land across the Sea, was the realm of the Valar (see footnote for this term)...It was known also as the Undying Lands, as Elves once dwelt there in eternal bliss, and could again later, in addition to the Ring-bearers (this is where Frodo goes after he destroys the Ring). Essentially it is akin to the Christian belief of heaven (lotr Fandom, 2022).

heavenly realm created by the Valar¹⁷). They are able to dwell in the environment of the Children of Ilúvatar¹⁸ but some reside in the undying lands¹⁹ inhabited by Ainur²⁰ and Eldar²¹. Paasche states:

'Every race constitutes to the makeup of Middle-earth and the lower the race, the less power, morality and importance they yield. Tolkien ensures that their kingdoms are unique in layout and setting and abide to the nature and persons of the beings. For example, the Elven base of Rivendell²² is described as a 'refuge for the weary and oppressed, and a treasury of good counsel and wise lore'. The Elves are depicted as a peaceful and wise species who are the guardians of Middle-earth, yet in the religious lense they are seen as being akin to God's holy angels' (Paasche, 2020, pg.4).

The races of Tolkien's legendarium are indeed vast, and even the slightest, most trivial detail is ingrained within the nature of their being. This establishes Tolkien's ability to successfully conceptualize an entire universe with a degree of profound consideration and technicality. It is simply extraordinary.

Nonetheless, this essay shall primarily focus on women, who are a part of the race of Men, the Children of Ilúvatar. The main question of this paper seeks to explore the ways in which Éowyn amalgamates the two traditional and contrasting feminine archetypes as depicted by Eve and the Virgin Mary. Before we identify the means in which she achieves this, it is vital to briefly become accustomed to Éowyn before embarking on an extensive character analysis.

¹⁷ The Valar were the Powers of Arda who shaped and ruled the world. They were angelic powers and sub-Gods, lower to the one true God of Middle-earth Ilúvatar (Iotr Fandom, 2022).

¹⁸ The Children of Ilúvatar were Elves and Men, the two earthly races created by Eru Ilúvatar, the supreme being of the universe (Iotr Fandom,2022).

¹⁹ See Valinor footnote for more information.

²⁰ The Ainur were divine spirits, the 'Holy Ones'. They were the first beings created by Ilúvatar, the 'order' of the Valar and Maiar (see Sauron's footnote for more information on this term) (Tolkien Gateway,2021).

²¹ Eldar (singular Elda) was the name given to the Elves... At first, the name was applied to all Elves, but after the summons of the Valar, it came to be used only for the West-elves (Tolkien Gateway, 2022).

²² Rivendell, or Imladris, was an Elven outpost in the Misty Mountains... Because of its location, it was called "The Last Homely House East of the Sea" from the point of view of a traveller going to the Misty Mountains and Wilderland. It was the place where the Fellowship of the Ring was established, and where Frodo placed himself in the position of the Ring bearer (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

1.2. An Introduction to the Character of Éowyn

Readers are first introduced to Éowyn during the second edition of LOTR trilogy (The Two Towers). Tolkien introduces Éowyn as a shieldmaiden and noblewoman of Rohan (Lotr fandom, 2021). Inspired by Scandinavian folklore, a shieldmaiden is a female warrior²³. Éowyn's other notable titles are Lady of Rohan, Lady of the Shield-arm, White Lady of Rohan and Dernhelm²⁴. Interestingly, Éowyn means 'Horse-joy' or 'lover of horses' in Old English (being a combination of her parent's names: Éomund and Théodwyn) the language Tolkien adapted to represent Rohirric²⁵ (Tolkien Gateway, 2021). Furthermore, 'Rohan was a Mannish (Men) kingdom on the northern borders of Gondor. It was the territory of the Rohirrim, a people of herdsman and farmers. Well-known for their horses and cavalry, they were Gondor's most important ally' (Tolkien Gateway, 2021). The kingdom of Gondor is the greatest kingdom of Men in Middle-earth and its capital city is referred to as Minas Tirith. Éowyn was the daughter of Éomund, a Marshall of the Mark (a high-ranking warrior of Rohan) and Théodwyn a noble woman. Her and her older brother, Éomer (also a member of the Marshall of the Mark) were orphans and her uncle of King Théoden of Rohan adopted them. King Théoden was 'the seventeenth King of Rohan, ruling for 39 years... but Théoden's health later began to fail. This was caused by the spells of Saruman the White' (Tolkien Gateway, 2021). From this, Éowyn's sorrow over her suffering uncle ensued. Saruman is an 'antagonist' and 'an extremely powerful wizard... corrupted by Sauron...and in doing so ended up serving as Sauron's chief lieutenant during the War of the Ring' (Villains Fandom, 2021).

Sauron, the main antagonist of LOTR 'was a fallen Maia²⁶, and creator of the One Ring... Sauron became the second Dark Lord and sought to conquer Middle-earth by creating the Rings of Power' (lotr Fandom, 2021). The 'War of the Ring... is illustrated in the third series of LOTR, 'The Return of the King' and there 'was a massive conflict brought by the Dark Lord Sauron upon the Free Peoples of Middle-earth for control of the One Ring and

²³ See Chapter 5 for more information.

²⁴ Dernhelm means 'hidden protector' in Old English and was the alias taken by Éowyn when she broke the command of her uncle Théoden. As Dernhelm she befriended Meriadoc Brandybuck who was under the service of Théoden and failed to recognize her. Together they rode Windfole (Éowyn's horse) to the Battle of the Pelennor Fields^{[1][2]}. It was as Dernhelm that she first challenged the Witch-king of Angmar (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

²⁵ Rohirric is the language spoken by the citizens of Rohan. Tolkien invented this language.

²⁶ The Maia is the singular term for the Maiar- the powerful wizards of Middle-earth.

dominion over the entire continent. All of the species of Middle-earth united to battle Sauron, the 'Orcs, Trolls and evil mercenaries and creatures' (lotr Fandom, 2021).

Éowyn's participation in the War of Ring or the Battle of Pelennor Fields (a defense city of Minas Tirith) is key to the fate of Middle-earth. She secretly rides into battle disguised as a male soldier called Dernhelm, along with the Hobbit Merry (a member of the Fellowship). Tolkien interestingly depicts Éowyn as a fierce warrior, hungry for the taste of revenge and victory. This is evident when she successfully slaughters the Witch-King of Angmar. The Witch-king is 'Sauron's second-in-command... His true identity is unknown; once a mortal king of Men...he is part of the Nazgûl²⁷... and led Sauron's armies in the War of the Ring and stabbed Frodo Baggins' (lotr Fandom, 2021). Interestingly, it was Glorfindel²⁸, the mightiest warrior of the Elves who predicted the fall of the Witch-King orchestrated a woman, thousands of years prior to the War of the Ring²⁹. Tolkien describes Glorfindel as 'fearless...with eyes bright and keen, and his voice like music, on his brow sat wisdom, and in his hand was strength' (Tolkien, 2009, pg. 295). Glorfindel warns others to 'not pursue him (the Witch-king)! He will not return to this land. Far off yet is his doom, and not by the hand of man will he fall' (Tolkien,2009, pg.1377). During her battle against the Witch-king, Éowyn fulfills this prophecy by expressing 'Hinder me? Thou fool. No living man may hinder me!' (Tolkien, 2009, pg. 1101), thus valor and fearlessness are crucial characteristics of Éowyn. More so, what is even more impressive and astonishing about Éowyn' persona is that she does not harness inherent supernatural abilities, like other species, such as the Elves or Maiar. She purely relies on her skills as a shieldmaiden. It is important to note that Éowyn slays both the Witch-king and his dragon (known as a Sapient Fell Beast)³⁰. The dragon is thus a separate entity to the Witch-king.

²⁷ The Nazgûl also called "Ringwraiths" or Úlairi (in the Elvish language of Quenya), and the Black Riders or simply The Nine, were the dreaded ring-servants of the Dark Lord Sauron in Middle-earth throughout the Second and Third Ages, who in the later years of the Third Age dwelt in Minas Morgul and Dol Guldur. They are akin to demons (lotr Fandom, 2022).

²⁸ Glorfindel was born in Valinor and was one of the mightiest Elven warriors... Glorfindel took a more active role, leading the Elven forces in the Battle of Fornost. Upon the humiliation of Eärnur (the thirty-third King of Gondor) before the Witch-king, Glorfindel bade him not pursue, and prophesied that the wraith would not fall by the hand of man. Not much can be said about his deeds and role in the events and struggles of the Westlands before the War of the Ring... It is said that Glorfindel was originally planned to be part of the Fellowship of the Ring (Tolkien Gateway, 2022).

²⁹ This occurred during the Battle of Fornost. It the decisive battle between the forces of Angmar, under the Witch-king, and of Eärnur, the Crown Prince of Gondor... that ended the northern Kingdom of Angmar (lotr Fandom, 2022).

³⁰ The term "Fellbeast" refers to the flying creatures that the Nazgûl rode after being unhorsed at the Ford of Bruinen, in The Lord of the Rings (lotr Fandom, 2022). See list of Races of Middle-earth in the Introduction chapter. See Appedix B for more information.

After the War of the Ring, Éowyn married Faramir and had one son with him, Elboron. Faramir was ‘the last Ruling Steward of Gondor and the first Prince of Ithilien’ (Tolkien gateway, 2021). The role of the Ruling steward of Gondor was ‘the traditional title of chief counsellor of one of the kings of Gondor’ (Tolkien Gateway, 2021) and Ithilien is a region of Gondor (lotr Fandom, 2021).

1.3. Dissecting the Problem of Social Representation in LOTR

Interestingly, modern readers have come to reveal their dissatisfaction with the lack of female characters and racial diversity within LOTR. This is a problem for readers who wish to feel completely inclusive in Tolkien’s world. One may even go so far as to argue that Tolkien’s books are that of the traditional Western patriarchal ideal that opposes anything that is not white, biologically male and heterosexual. As a result, (and in reference to the Jackson movie adaption) the feminist fantasy author, Namina Forna writes that ‘as a black Lord of the Rings fan, I felt left out of the fantasy worlds...no one on screen looked like me. The darkest characters on screen, the Orcs³¹, were all male’ (Forna, 2021). One can even go so far as to argue that it is evident from the Orcs, that the colour black is often attributed to monsters and villains. Thus, it is the destructive power of Hollywood and literature that conditions society into incorrectly assuming that anything black or dark is evil and distasteful. Dimitra Fimi, a scholar of fantasy literature states that ‘in demonizing Orcs, the ugly, monstrous enemy of the elves, did J.R.R Tolkien betray a belief that “some races are worse than others”? That’s the debate that has been at the heart of claims in the British Press recently accusing the LOTR author of harboring racist views’ (Fimi, 2018). English Literature scholar Anderson Rearick emphasizes how ‘it is undeniable that darkness and the colour black are continually associated throughout Tolkien’s universe with unredeemable evil, specifically the Orcs and the Dark Lord Sauron’ (Rearick, 2004, pg.2). In relation to this idea, social psychology scholar, Daisy Grewal states that:

‘psychologists have known for a long time that people associate dark skin with negative personality traits... this “bad is black” effect may have its roots in our deep-seated human tendency to associate darkness with wickedness...we tend to portray villains as more likely to be active during nighttime and to don black clothing. Similarly, our heroes are often associated with daytime and lighter colors. These

³¹ The Orcs were beastly creatures who were apart of Sauron’s army.

mental associations between color and morality may negatively bias us against people with darker skin tones’ (Grewal, 2017).

Alarming, a study shows that ‘two in three black Americans don’t see themselves represented in movies and TV’ (Alexander, 2020), whilst the sociology academic Bernice Pescosolido et al argues that:

‘blacks have been ignored, stereotyped, or demeaned in cultural images. For example, in the early part of (the mid-and late-twentieth century) this century, popular cultural objects that degraded blacks (e.g., black caricatures on saltshakers) reflected their low social status, served as a mechanism of social control, and alleviated status among whites’ (Pescosolido et al, 1997).

What is even more concerning is that Pescosolido et al are referring to the period in which Tolkien had written and published LOTR. One may argue that this perpetuates a disparity between the use of ‘good’ white characters and ‘bad’ black characters and further pushes this toxic narrative like the countless non-ethnic writers of his time³². Tolkien may have fallen into the hands of racial inequality within literature and reserved heroism solely for the white community. This is just one of many examples of the presumption that Tolkien’s legendarium lacks diversity in all its form. Themes entailing the lack of ethnicities and sexualities in Middle-earth will unfortunately not be explored in-depth within this paper, but it certainly needs analysis in future scholarship, as the topics are significantly relevant today.

In regard to the main question of the thesis: ‘to what extent does the figure of Éowyn amalgamates the two traditional and contrasting feminine archetypes, as depicted by Eve and the Virgin Mary’, some literary critics consider the issue of the lack of female protagonists (if not any) as evidence of Tolkien’s personal misogyny. The Literature Review chapter shall extensively elaborate this point.

1.4. The Structural Overview of the Thesis

The thesis constructed during my B.A had also explored the main question. However, this primarily focused on the figure of Galadriel whose character is full of abundance, complexity,

³² C.S Lewis (1898-1963) author of The Chronicles of Narnia (1950-1956) and a close friend of Tolkien’s can fit into this category, along with numerous other writers.

and rich history. Therefore, it made sense to dedicate an entire paper to her, as my research had proven that no individual has ever explored this specific question before in reference to her.

I believe that Éowyn's character in relation to the main question deserves attention in my M.A thesis, as this too will also be the first of its kind. As emphasized in the Literature Review, the character of Éowyn consistently amalgamates the masculine and feminine ideals throughout LOTR. However, Tolkien insinuates that Galadriel later chooses to completely align herself with traditional Marian virtues and abandons the archetypal Eve that she once embraced in Tolkien's 'The Silmarillion'³³. However, Éowyn esteems both contrasting archetypes of Eve and Mary until the very end of LOTR and does not prioritize one archetype over the other. Therefore, the reason I shall be examining the fascinating character of Éowyn is her ambition to willfully express her androgynous-like characteristics within a medieval patriarchal setting. Thus, she is more relevant and relatable than Galadriel in modern times.

In order to successfully answer the main question in regard to Éowyn, three themes in total will be examined. Firstly, the structure consists of Éowyn as an imitation of the Virgin Mary through the Women of the Apocalypse. Secondly, Éowyn as the shieldmaiden aligns with Mary's handmaiden title. Thirdly, the oppositional argument shows how Éowyn resembles Eve as the fallen woman³⁴ archetype.

1.5. The Importance of the Thesis

This paper is significant for a number of reasons, as it most notably covers three important areas: Christian Spirituality, Literature and Feminism as well as Gender Studies, whilst incorporating aspects of Mariology. The character of Éowyn shall be thoroughly analyzed and compared to the contrasting and traditional biblical females figures of Eve and Mary. As highlighted before, this thesis shall be a continuation of my undergraduate paper, but with a different female character and a fresh perspective. The success and pre-publication of my B.A paper³⁵ demonstrates that there is a great demand for this type of analysis on LOTR and it is only reasonable that I continue to write about the other female characters that often lack a

³³ 'The Silmarillion (1977) is a book which is a collection of J.R.R. Tolkien's works, edited and published posthumously by his son Christopher Tolkien, with assistance from fantasy fiction writer Guy Gavriel Kay. It covers the history of the world of Arda' (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

³⁴ See the chapter 6 for more information.

³⁵ My B.A thesis is currently in the process of being published.

voice in academic essays. Coincidentally, it is now an important time to construct such an essay, as it coincides with Hollywood's reacquaintance with Tolkien's legendarium and is expected to be the highest grossing TV series in history.³⁶ Thus, analytical discourse surrounding the importance of women in LOTR is significantly necessary and relevant today. I am certain that this will create a ripple effect amongst younger audiences who will read the books with a fresh critical awareness and feminist outlook. This also ensures that equality for women is maintained and enhanced. In many ways, this paper seeks to modernize Tolkien's legendarium by establishing how he was ahead of his time and had an interesting insight into the spectrum of femininity before his contemporaries. As emphasized before, it is vital to note the uniqueness and rarity of this thesis question. Though various, but very few research papers have recognized the connection between Mary and some of the female characters in LOTR, no individual has ever attempted to compare Tolkien's women with the figure of Eve.

In fact, no individual has ever compared the LOTR women with both Mary and Eve simultaneously or even conceptualized this type of research or specific question on a grand scale. Thus, this thesis is the first and only of its kind. Extensive research including personal ideas and new discoveries never discussed before are presented in this thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The aim of this thesis is to provide a feminist interpretation of Tolkien's LOTR through the analysis of Éowyn. In doing so, the character of Éowyn shall be compared and contrasted with the biblical figures of Eve and Mary. Crucially, the purpose of this essay seeks to amalgamate the traditional polarized figures of Eve and Mary, through Éowyn. In other words, both biblical women embody the Freudian theory of the 'Madonna-Whore Dichotomy (MWD) which denotes polarized perceptions of women in general as either good, chaste, and pure Madonna's or as bad, promiscuous, and seductive whores... it inhibited heterosexual men's ability to view the tender and sensual dimensions of women's sexuality as united, rather than opposing' (Bareket et al, 2018, pg. 1). Thus, one may argue how Eve and Mary depict the two opposing archetypes of femininity, that are dominant within patriarchal cultural

³⁶ The movie streaming service, Amazon Prime has bought the rights to make an entire series of Tolkien's works. The series is a pre-lude to the destruction of the Ring. It is called The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power. It is set to be the highest TV series ever made and expected to make \$2 billion dollar (double the profit from the \$1 billion production).

representations of women. Therefore, this paper will argue that Éowyn is an important figure that challenges the Madonna-Whore Complex. It can be argued that the multifaceted characteristics of Éowyn are reminiscent to the third wave feminism³⁷ movement, which embraces individuality and diversity of gender narratives. Furthermore, I shall discuss the ways in which Éowyn is portrayed in secondary literature and how she is able to connect with the wider field of feminist literary studies. Therefore, in order to achieve these aims, this chapter shall be highlighting some of the common perspectives and concepts within this arena.

There has been a variety of feminist interventions in literary studies that address the long-debated issue of the lack of female representation within literature, as women are not portrayed in an equal manner to men. Amongst feminist critics there seems to be a driving force to expel what traditionally once was, and instead look for a new, modern, and inclusive interpretation of women untainted by the male gaze³⁸ or the patriarchy. In reference to the British sociologist and feminist author, Sylvia Walby, English scholar Aformeziem Brendal recognizes that ‘in literature the role of women is considered to be “second-class” (Brendal, 2015, pg.3). In fact, feminist literary critic Rongqiong Guo argues that the women in classic novels are so saturated and controlled with and by the male gaze and thought, that their femininity is not a realistic expression of who women actually are. Ultimately it is a toxic concoction and false narrative governed by the patriarchy. Guo states:

‘the patriarchal ideology also can be called masculinist or androcentric which is prevailing in most great classical literary writings that were mainly created by male for male up to now. In these works, male writers usually describe female characters, neglecting females their own characteristics, but using the male values and ways of thinking, emotion, and action. Hence, the female readers always act as an alien or outsider’ (Guo, 2018, pg. 454).

Besides this, it can be argued that Love (or Romance) is the stereotypical, core theme of the traditional narrative of women in literature. In support of this notion, feminist literary critic Kesley McKinney suggests that ‘while the male characters of literature...built countries, waged wars, and traveled while smoking plenty of illicit substances, the women were utterly

³⁷ ‘The third wave of feminism emerged in the mid-1990s. It was led by so-called Generation Xers who, born in the 1960s and ’70s in the developed world, came of age in a media-saturated and culturally and economically diverse milieu. Although they benefitted significantly from the legal rights and protections that had been obtained by first- and second-wave feminists, they also critiqued the positions and what they felt was unfinished work of second-wave feminism...Influenced by the postmodernist movement in the academy, third-wave feminists sought to question, reclaim, and redefine the ideas, words, and media that have transmitted ideas about womanhood, gender, beauty, sexuality, femininity, and masculinity, among other things’ (Brunell et al., 2021).

³⁸ In feminist theory, the term “male gaze” is depicting women (in the forms of literature, art and the world for example) through the misogynistic perspective of heterosexual men.

boring'. She continues by giving examples of classical literature that epitomizes this issue: 'Jane Eyre was too blinded by her love for Mr. Rochester, as were all of the Bennet sisters in Pride and Prejudice... these women wanted to get married and have kids. They wanted to whine for 300 pages about a man who didn't want to be with them. They wanted, it seemed, to be supporting actresses in their own stories. Their stories were equally about the men who shaped them as what they themselves wanted' (McKinney, 2013). It is interesting to note that the authorship of nineteenth century novels, such as the ones that McKinney has listed above, all belong to women. Thus, one may propose the question of: if women are now given (some-what) free agency to hold a pen to the paper and create their own fictional realities, why is that it must always involve a romantic relationship with a man as the central plot. Why can't women be completely independent by relying on themselves or each other, instead of waiting for a male savior to rescue them from their sufferings or insecurities? In response to these concerns, McKinney indicates that both classical authors were indeed products of their time and thus had to appeal to the 'patriarchal-centric' demographic and the Victorian conventions of femininity that women generally held through social conditioning. The themes of love and desirability were essential to the success of their novels. To justify this, the consumers of the twenty- first centuries best-selling erotic romance novel, 'Fifty Shades of Grey'³⁹, are mostly women. However, screenwriter Mark Hughes describes how 'Fifty Shades of Grey is nothing, but abusive gender roles disguised as faux-feminism' (Hughes, 2015). Though one may agree with Hughes view, it can be argued that eroticism combined with romanticism is a form of liberation and equality that enables women to explore their sexual fantasies as men always have. Therefore, this conforms with modern feminism, as opposed to the Victorian censorship on sexual discourse and the fallen woman archetype⁴⁰. The previously banned (minor) erotic-romance novel 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'⁴¹ demonstrates this limitation. Despite this, gender studies academic, Natalie Kon- yu argues that:

'it is sadly unsurprising that male writers win more prestigious literary awards than female writers, but what is interesting is that when women do win these awards, it is typically because they write about male characters, or masculine topics... it seems

³⁹ Fifty Shades of Grey (2011) is an erotic- romantic novel by the British author, E.L James (1963-present). The novel is part of the Fifty Shades of Grey series: Fifty Shades Darker, Fifty Shades Free were both published in 2012. It is well known for its explicit themes on bondage, sadism, submission, and dominance. They have successfully sold over 125 million copies worldwide, making it one of the best-selling books of all time after the Harry Potter Series by J.K Rowling (1965- present).

⁴⁰ See chapter 6 for more information.

⁴¹ Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928) is an erotic-romance novel by British author D.H Lawrence (1885-1930). Although the book was not conceived during the age of Victorian censorship, it still posed as a highly controversial book during its time. It was firstly published in Italy, but was banned by the UK for obscenity, though a heavily censored version was available.

that, as a culture, we are still predominantly concerned with the lives of men or in themes that we view as masculine or wordly. We still relegate women's work to the domestic, the interior, the personal' (Kon- yu, 2015).

Similarly, literary editor Alice Fishburn states that 'studies have shown that men continue to dominate the literary marketplace... the majority of literary prizes are still won by... men' (Fishburn, 2018) and feminist writer Jess McCabe indicates that 'only 74 women out of 343 men were represented as reviewers and authors in literary magazines' (McCabe, 2011).

Therefore, this further validates how the presence of women is underrepresented within various forms of literary fields. However, it is more startling how female authors tend to not overcome this lack of gender diversity and equality within their own writings.

In contrast to this problem, feminist author Cynthia Griffin Wolff's postulates that 'since the Renaissance in English literature (and in many major literary epochs before that time), women have figured prominently'. She even goes so far as to state that 'at some periods, literature flows so enticingly around the feminine character that it is men who seem to be excluded. If this is so why do we complain, why do we women still feel slighted?' (Griffin Wolff, 1972, pg. 205). However, the number of women still does not resolve the real problem of the toxic narrative of femininity exhibited in traditional literature and thus challenges Griffin Wolff belief. It can be argued that one strong, independent sexually liberated and celebrated woman is more impactful towards the narrative of women in literature, than a dozen women who live their lives under subservience to men.

2.1. Feminist Critics and Tolkien

There are an abundance of sources debating if Tolkien's literature and Tolkien himself are anti-feminist. As Pearce and Attwood demonstrate, a notable hostility amongst feminists is prominent towards Tolkien's works, even if the evidence of Tolkien's personal life may suggest otherwise. Tolkien scholar Joseph Pearce suggests that 'perhaps the most obvious reason (for feminists' distaste) is that Tolkien assigns his female characters decidedly feminine roles' (Pearce, 2016). Perceives Linn states that:

'there is a far darker side to this father of high fantasy...we come to the feminist critique: feminist there are precious few women in LOTR, and those who are present fulfill only the narrowest stereotypes...so many women are simply missing. Where are the wives and the sisters and the maids? Why did he not bother them?' (Linn, 2017).

Linn's analysis highlights that even minor roles rarely exist for women in Tolkien's novels. Even the linguist scholar, Robin A. Reid's acknowledges that there is a 'ongoing perception that Tolkien did not write about women... only about men...was sexist himself or at least exclusionary text that girls/women would never love' (Reid, 2018, pg.1). Furthermore, various fandom blogs such as Middle- Earth News also emphasize the issue of the lack of female representation in Tolkien's fantasy literature:

'in light of recent events, the question of women and their role in Middle-earth arises once again...The Hobbit, lacks female characters. Actually, there are very few female characters in Middle-earth in general. Many accused Tolkien (and his books) for that reason, the lack of female characters and their representation, to be paternalistic, misogynist, or chauvinist' (Middle-earth News, 2013).

Thus, this indicates how each species although biologically different, share similar misogynistic attitudes towards women and LOTR feminist fandom blogger, Tessa Andrews also agrees that:

'the lack of women in the Lord of the Rings is alarming...as a young girl, I can remember reading the books and watching the movies and wondering why there weren't more female characters. In the grand scheme of the trilogy, there are really only three women who are prominently featured: Arwen, Galadriel and Éowyn... the trilogy is a real bachelor party' (Andrews, 2020).

Also, gender and literature scholar, Leanna Madill remarks:

'I am concerned with the shaping of a readers gendered identity during his/her transaction with texts, such as The Lord of the Rings... Or perhaps, Middle-earth corresponds with the readers world values and beliefs so that gender roles do not appear problematic' (Madill, 2008).

Madill's commentary depicts how Tolkien's legendarium reflects the lack of female representation in the real world. Thus, readers are unfortunately already accustomed to this reality. It is also important to consider how Tolkien illustrates the characteristics of the four main women in LOTR (Arwen⁴², Éowyn and Galadriel and Goldberry⁴³). Tolkien scholar, Michael

⁴² 'Arwen Undómiel, often called Arwen Evenstar, was one of the half-elven, married to Aragorn II. She is one of the only few female characters in LOTR. She was the daughter of Elrond and Celebrían. She was considered to be the fairest of the Children of Ilúvatar in the Third Age, resembling Lúthien of the First Age who would never again appear in Eä. Her romance with Aragorn was reminiscent of that between the Man Beren and the Elf Lúthien. Like Lúthien, she rejected her Elven immortality to marry Aragorn and die with him' (Tolkien Gateway, 2022).

⁴³ 'Goldberry, the "River-daughter", was the wife of Tom Bombadil and is only mentioned briefly in the Fellowship of the Ring, but more so in the Adventures of Tom Bombadil. Although her origins are uncertain, it has been speculated that she is a river-spirit of the river Withywindle' (Tolkien Gateway, 2021). She is also one of the very few females in Tolkien's novels and is often a shadow character to her husband, Tom Bombadil.

Martinez states that ‘these are all strong women...with no flaws and no children...women are placed on a pedestal and portrayed in a very unrealistic way. These are statuesque women with no sense of humor, no children to watch, no flirty competitiveness, almost no frustration at being imprisoned in a male point of view’ (Martinez, 2013). Therefore, Martinez seems to suggest that Tolkien’s portrayal of women defies the reality of womanhood, as they represent a fantasy within a fantasy. Once again, the male gaze is defining femininity that does not exist in the real world. In fact, literary critic Marion Klotz argues that:

‘most of the women we meet in LOTR are characterized fairly similarly... the first woman of some importance, Goldberry, is presented to be very girlish. Constantly singing and dancing around her husband...the first time Arwen appears, she sits next to her father...she is only depicted as lovely and beautiful to look at...we do not get to know anything about her actual character...just like Arwen, Galadriel is described as a pure virgin-like woman...she seems very mysterious and it is hard to fully understand her character... Galadriel is a very pure and innocent character’ (Klotz, 2004).

Interestingly Klotz states that Éowyn is ‘presented unlike any other female in the book. She seems to be very strong-minded, self-confident, and restless’ (Klotz, 2004). Thus, it seems that the majority of the female characters are very much one dimensional and confined within their chauvinistic roles. Therefore, Tolkien’s fantasy is purely a reflective alignment of his own reality during the 1950’s era⁴⁴ (when LOTR was published). The 1950’s had the residue of medieval attitudes on the role of women, before the sexual revolution of the 1960’s. As a result, besides Éowyn, female readers may not be able to associate their own struggles as women with these characters. Though some critics believe that Tolkien’s portrayal of women is anti-feminist, I aim to demonstrate that Tolkien understood the complexity of women and was ahead of time. He was an inadvertent feminist. He also understood his environment and presented this in his books, yet he utilizes Éowyn to display the evolution of women in society (not by nature, but sociologically). Éowyn boldly projects and balances both traditional masculine and feminine traits, in comparison to the other women. Thus, Éowyn’s character upholds this relatability factor that is essential to female readers in the modern age. Her narrative is multi-dimensional, empowering, universal and timeless. The next chapter shall discuss the polarizing gender archetypes in more depth.

⁴⁴ It can be argued that the 1950’s was an era when the western propaganda of the “ideal housewife” was at its all time high. Thus, it is no doubt that this type of misogynistic promotion infiltrated the minds and homes of individuals existing during this time, including Tolkien himself. Arguably, his books possibly had to cater towards this feminine archetype, so women of this era could relate and pursue this ideal. This was before second wave feminism of the early 1960’s developed, in which the protest of reproductive rights ensured.

Chapter 3: Methodology

When considering the polarizing gender archetypes, it is important to understand the definition of archetypes before examining its gender expressions. The term archetype is traditionally understood as ‘a primordial image, character, or pattern of circumstances that recurs throughout literature and thought consistently enough to be considered a universal concept or situation’ (Britannica, 2011). Psychologist Kendra Cherry et al explain how archetypes ‘are universal, inborn models of people, behaviours, or personalities that play a role in influencing human behavior. They were introduced by Carl Jung⁴⁵, who suggested that these archetypes were archaic forms of innate human knowledge passed down from our ancestors’ (Cherry et al, 2020). In relation to this, psychology author Scott Jeffrey states that:

‘Plato may be the first philosopher to refer to archetypes. He called them Forms... for Plato, there were two realities: the world we live in and the non-physical realm where the Forms exist. The Forms, for Plato, are pre-existing ideals templates or blueprints. They include characteristics like roundness, softness, hardness, greenness, blackness, and so on. Forms is another term for archetype’ (Jeffrey, 2019).

⁴⁵ The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961) had four main archetypes and labelled them as: The Self, the Persona, the Shadow, and the Anima/Animus (McLeod, 2018).

There is an array of archetypes, such as the Lover, Hero, Magician and Outlaw. In the case LOTR, it can be argued that Éowyn and Faramir⁴⁶ are the archetypal lovers; Frodo Baggins and Éowyn can be considered to be heroes; Gandalf the Grey⁴⁷ is the literal definition of a magician and Galadriel holds this position too as an enchantress. Finally, Sauron is the obvious villain or outlaw, though Éowyn fits this archetype to a certain extent⁴⁸. Ultimately archetypes are often polarized. For example, the villain is the antithesis of the hero. Also, the lover, addicted lover, and impotent lover show how archetypes can triangulate (Jeffrey, 2019).

Furthermore, archetypes are frequently gendered. Though this may ‘provide the ideal for both male and female and provides an initial distinction that guides human behavior’ (Herlache, 2016), this also connotes gender stereotypes, which is entirely anti-feminist. Nonetheless, the Jungian analyst Jean Shinoda Bolen exemplifies feminine archetypes in Greek mythology in which ‘Athena, is goddess of wisdom; Artemis, goddess of the hunt; Persephone, goddess of the underworld and Aphrodite, goddess of love’ (Huseyin, 2018). Religion and classics academic Dr. Joan Relke argues that:

‘the anima...which is the similar counterpart in men, but is female, seems always to have a far more exalted projection, manifesting as goddesses, female demons, and powerful mythological women, such as Eve and Aphrodite... she is an active protagonist in dreams and fantasies, not a passive pointer, like the animus’ (Relke, 2007).

Relke highlights the Jungian theory of the ‘Anima/Animus archetype, which is a counterpart of gender identity, these images are traditionally considered as feminine for men and masculine for women (in Latin, Anima is the feminine while Animus is the masculine gender, both defining the “soul” (Melik-Akhazarova, 2015, pg. 2). In fact, Jungian academic Stephen Farah states that the:

‘psyche is such that it contains and embraces both the feminine and masculine. It is inherently an androgynous entity regardless of what the gender of the physical person is. Women take on a feminine role and persona, whilst the men take on a masculine role and persona. The psyche compensates for this by birthing a contra sexuality in the inner life of the person. Women have a contra sexuality which is masculine in nature and this is called the animus’ (Farah, 2015).

⁴⁶ See Chapter 1 for more information.

⁴⁷ Gandalf the Grey, later known as Gandalf the White, and originally named Olórin in Quenya and was part of the Maiar race of powerful Wizards (see chapter 1 for Races of Middle-earth). He helped form the Fellowship of the Ring to destroy the One Ring, and led the Free Peoples in the final campaign of the War of the Ring (lotr Fandom, 2022).

⁴⁸ See Chapter 6 for more information.

Interestingly, Jungian academic Anja van Kralingen believes that the ‘post Jungian theory is in line with Post Modernity and more ambivalent about gender’ (Van Kralingen, 2015). Thus, the Jungian theory seems to amalgamate the polarized archetypes of Animus/Anima, as the masculine and feminine are interchangeable concepts that all humans inherently possess. In other words, the classical feminine archetypes of the femme fatale⁴⁹ or the fallen woman⁵⁰ are reflections of traditional masculinity for example. However, it is evident that history has not esteemed a femme fatale nor a sexually promiscuous (fallen) woman, as the Freudian Madonna -Whore Dichotomy suggests. There is no such thing as a fallen man. To the contrary, both traditional and modern literature tends to celebrate the archetypal male seducer, womanizer, or cad, most notably Casanova, Don Juan and Christian Grey⁵¹. Unfortunately, the women are victims in their seductions or trickery and face criticism and ostracism from their societies. The male antagonist Alec D’Urbervilles⁵² from Thomas Hardy’s (1840-1928) novel, ‘Tess of D’Urbervilles’ (1891)⁵³ demonstrates this. Pedagogical studies academic, Joyce J. Endendijk et al recognizes the double standards concerning male and female sexuality as she argues how:

‘women and men often are held to different standards of appropriate behavior... (there are) (hetero)sexual double standards (SDS)...traditionally, men/boys are expected to be sexually active, dominant and the initiator, whereas women/girls are expected to be sexually reactive, submissive and passive. Moreover, traditionally men are granted more sexual freedom than women. As a consequence, men and women can be treated differently for the same sexual behaviours...SDS can be viewed as a male privilege that men want to keep in place’ (Endendijk et al, 2020, pg. 1).

Therefore, Endendijk shows how the consequences of female promiscuity are significantly higher than males even in modernity. Though the feminine archetype of the femme fatale has similar characteristics to the male seducer, he shall be unscathed from his actions whilst she

⁴⁹ The Femme Fatale is a woman who is very attractive in a mysterious way, usually leading men into danger or causing their destruction. They traditionally use sex and sexuality to achieve this (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

⁵⁰ See Chapter 6 for more information.

⁵¹ Casanova (1725-1798), Don Juan 17th Century fictionalised figure from Lord Byron (1788 -1824) poetry & Christian Grey, the fictionalised protagonist of Fifty Shades of Grey are all examples of notorious classical and modern male seducers. Even the name Casanova (a real historical figure) means seducer, playboy and fornicator.

⁵² Alec d’Urberville is main antagonist of Thomas Hardy’s, Tess of d’Urbervilles. Alec is a young, handsome libertine and is the heir to a large fortune. He supposedly seduces and rapes the protagonist and virgin Tess, which leads to her ruin and isolation in society.

⁵³ Tess of d’Urbervilles (1891) is a novel written by the British author Thomas Hardy (1840-1928). The story centers around a young, but impoverished virgin, Tess who upon learning of her aristocratic heritage traces her wealthy family. She is raped by her supposed family member, Alec d’Urbervilles. From that point she faces extreme struggles as a fallen woman in her society.

will be blamed for the fall of man, as the Genesis' story of Eve distinctly depicts. It is important to note, that although the term stereotype is synonymous to archetype, the latter is a symbol, universally understood and thus mirrored, whilst a stereotype is a belief based on preconceived perceptions. Thus, one could argue that an archetype precedes a stereotype. Overall, the use of psychological notions of archetypes will assist the understanding of gender expressions and stereotypes in Tolkien's LOTR.

3.1. *The Eve and Mary Archetypes*

The biblical figures of the Virgin Mary and Eve can be argued to be a manifestation of the Freudian Madonna-Whore Complex. Feminist literary scholar Sarah Kühl considers Eve and Mary as 'arguably, the first two female stereotypes in Western Christian cultures' (Kühl, 2016, pg. 171). In fact, 'Madonna' is an Italian term meaning "my lady." It has been used for Mary since late medieval times and helps to emphasize the relationship between Mary and those who honour her' (Moyer-Kubitz, 2010). Mary symbolizes the traditional archetype of the ideal woman: obedient, chaste, and submissive. Thus, Mary is the direct opposite of the fallen woman archetype. However, cultural historian Ally Kateusz argues that 'feminist scholars have rightfully argued that today the Virgin Mary often operates as an unhealthy feminine ideal of obedience and self- sacrifice' (Kateusz, pg.1. 2019). In addition, Mary is archetypal Mother. The Catechism⁵⁴ teaches that:

'Since the Virgin Mary's role in the mystery of Christ and the Spirit has been treated, it is fitting now to consider her place in the mystery of the Church. The Virgin Mary...is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and of the redeemer... She is clearly the mother of the members of Christ... Mary, Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church' (Paul II,1992, pg. 1).

Though considered as a heretical claim in the Catholic Church, Mary may also portray the archetypal Goddess, as she embodies powerful traits traditionally attributed to masculinity.

⁵⁴ The Catechism of the Catholic (1992) Church is a catechism by Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) for the Catholic Church. It contains the main Catholic beliefs.

Despite the brief Collyridianism⁵⁵ movement of the early Christian Church, whose adherents supposedly worshipped Mary, as a Goddess, theologian Dorothy Lee states that ‘Mary is a vibrant figure: strong-minded and courageous, a leader in the community of faith’ (Lee, 2019). Moreover, in reference to the early Christian Marian art, theologian academic Kateusz acknowledges that ‘these authors and artists did not portray Mary as submissive⁵⁶. They depicted her with an upright posture and direct gaze. They described her as a liturgical leader in the early Jesus movement- a movement in which women were apostles and preached, healed (and) washed... a woman, after all, can be both a mother and a leader’ (Kateusz, pg. 2, 2019). Mary may even be compared to Artemis, the Greek Goddess of hunt, as philosophy academic Carla Ionescu states that ‘Artemis’ reign is so fundamental to the cultural identity of her worshippers that even when facing the onslaught of early Christianity, she could not be deposed. Instead, she survived the conquering of this new religion under the guise of Mary, Mother of Jesus’ (Ionescu, 2016, pg. 2). Therefore, despite the church’s narrative of Mary as traditionally feminine, the archetypal examples show how she is both a misconceived and multifaceted figure, who presents both masculine and feminine characteristics. Thus, she demonstrates the Jungian animus.

In the scope of the Freudian Complex, Eve represents the archetypal Whore (fallen woman). American Literature scholar, Surapeepan Chatraporn explains how ‘fallen women were, in other words, women who gave into seduction, women who lived a life of sinful desire and women who betrayed their families’ (Chatraporn, 2008, pg.27), while the feminist author Katie Edwards states that ‘following centuries of representations as a maleficent femme fatale, we have come to know Eve as the temptress who lured Adam and humanity to their downfall and introduced sin into the world’ (Edwards, 2016) and religious studies scholar, Jean M. Higgins states that ‘the first female sinner becomes, after Satan fashion, the first temptress’ (Higgins,

⁵⁵Kollyridians or Collyridians were adorers of Mary in the fourth-century Arabia, as Epiphanius mentioned in his writing against heretics (see: *Haer.* 78, 23; 79). He coined the expression Collyridians which has the meaning of "cake-eater-sect." Leontius of Byzance had a different name for them. He called them "Philomarianites," meaning Mary-lovers (PG 87, 1364). The priestesses of this sect used to present Our Lady with cakes, or a special kind of bread (*kolluris*) intended as offerings as was the custom in pre-Christian times. This sect, mainly consisting of women or at least led by woman priests, propagated what amounts to a Goddess cult regarding Our Lady. Epiphanius had this warning on their behalf: "Although Mary is the most beautiful and holy and worthy of praise, we don't owe her adoration." (*Haer.* 79, 7, PG 42, 752) In a different passage Epiphanius uses even stronger words: "Adoration must cease. For Mary is no goddess nor has she received her body from heaven (University of Dayton, 2022).

⁵⁶ Classical Artists such as Jan van Eyck’s (1390-1441), ‘The Ghent Altarpiece’ 1426 portray the Virgin Mary as a powerful and educated woman.

1976, pg.639). It may be possible to regard Eve as the foundation or the mother of the archetypal fallen woman. One may also argue that Eve is the masculine archetypal rebel⁵⁷, however the fallen woman is a feminine manifestation of this archetype. However, unlike the male rebel, the fallen woman is condemned for exploring her sexuality. From the mythological Greek allegories such as Pandora's box⁵⁸ and the Goddess Psyche⁵⁹, curiosity and disobedience are common factors that lead women to their demise, as a patriarchal victim or prisoner. In observation, these myths seem to favour and portray men as Jung's archetypal 'Wise Man'.⁶⁰ They embody the voice of reason and logic and often warn these supposedly mindless and weak-willed temptresses of the consequences to their disobedience. In reference to John Milton's, Paradise Lost poem⁶¹, literary scholar Anne Bierman argues that:

'throughout the epic poem, Milton shows Eve's progression from an independent woman to a dependent woman to show that women are not born submissive. As Simone de Beauvoir asserts in "The Second Sex", one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. Therefore, the patriarchal culture surrounding Eve in Paradise Lost, in fact forces her into submission to the point where she internalizes it, making her become a woman' (Bierman, 2008).

Similarly to Mary, 'in the bible Eve undergoes a character transformation from her introduction in Genesis 2 to the transgression episode when she eats the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3'. At first 'God creates Eve from Adam's rib, Eve is a voiceless, choiceless creature, while Adam makes plenty of noise about what he thinks of his new "helper" and demonstrates his power by naming and claiming her' (Edwards, 2016). Therefore, Eve too is a misunderstood and multi-layered figure despite her traditional identity as the fallen woman. It can be argued that Eve was once the ideal Madonna archetype of the obedient woman, but Eve utilized her freewill to

⁵⁷ See Chapter 6 for more information.

⁵⁸ The story of Pandora's Box comes from the Greek poet, Hesiod's 'Works and Days'. Hesiod states that Pandora's curiosity led to her opening the box gifted to her by Zeus, though he instructed her not to. Sin and Vice entered the world because of a woman.

⁵⁹ Eros and his beautiful wife Psyche appeared in Greek art as early as the 4th century BC, but unfortunately only one written narrative of their story has survived... The Greeks warned against Psyche's curiosity, particularly when it took the form of disobedience. Defying first her husband, then her mother-in-law, was the cause of all of the girl's troubles (Greenberg, 2020).

⁶⁰ The Jungian academic, David J. Leigh states that 'the mother, the child, the wise old man, and, most important, the Self. The Self represents the integrated fully developed person, consisting of mature wisdom, generosity, and total consciousness. The self is often symbolized by geometric forms, such as the mandala or four-sided figures, or by great persons such as Buddha or Christ, or by united pairs, such as father/son, king/queen, or an androgenous person (Leigh, 2015, pg. 96-97).

⁶¹ John Milton (1608-1674) was an English poet. His epic poem 'Paradise Lost' was published in 1667. The poem is based upon civil war or rebellion. It's detailed narrative on the Genesis story of creation shows the fall of Satan as well as humanity.

gain knowledge from the fruit, in the hopes of becoming the Jungian archetypal Wise Man. Therefore, Eve expresses the Jungian animus as well as Mary.

Finally, Köhl agrees that ‘these two biblical women represent a kind of female duality, the two core qualities that have traditionally been assigned to women’ (Köhls, 2016, pg. 171-172). It can be argued that the Jungian animus/anima unites the masculine and feminine archetypes within Eve and Mary, whilst the Freudian Madonna-Whore Dichotomy counteracts this.

The following chapters of the essay shall present an extensive analytical discussion detailing how Éowyn epitomizes both sides of traditional femininity and thus amalgamates the two biblical women. I shall also be utilizing eclectic sources within theology, gender studies, literary studies, and history since the main question infuses different aspects of society. Furthermore, although the methodology has considered the possibility that Eve and Mary possess both the Jungian animus/anima, Éowyn shall be compared to both biblical women through their one-dimensional forms or traditional archetypes. In other words, Mary is the traditional feminine archetype, whilst Eve is the traditional masculine archetype. Although the methodology has argued that both biblical figures exhibit multi-dimensional gender expressions, the process of exploring their traditional roles is more effective in answering the main question. Despite their inherent complexities, Mary and Eve essentially succumb to their patriarchal roles. They downplay their other qualities in favour of their one-dimensional archetypes. Thus, this approach allows one to magnify into the significance and nuances of Éowyn’s character. Éowyn is a realistic representation of the authentic modern woman, in her ability to amalgamate and equalize the two contrasting and traditional feminine archetypes.

Chapter 4: Éowyn as the Woman of the Apocalypse

4.1. An Introduction to the Prophecy of Éowyn and Mary

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the ways in which Éowyn corresponds to the Marian figure of the Woman of the Apocalypse. The theme of prophecy seems to be a vital driving

force amongst Éowyn and Mary that essentially shapes their femininity. Prophecy is traditionally defined as ‘a statement that something will happen in the future, especially one made by somebody with religious or magic powers to fulfil a prophecy. In other words, to make it come true’ (Oxford Dictionary, 2021). It is important to compare both Éowyn’s and Mary’s prophecy in order to establish their relationship. Éowyn’s prophecy of the destruction of the Witch-King is foretold by Glorfindel⁶², as Tolkien writes ‘with a warning that would become prophetic in the future: Do not pursue him (the Witch-King)! He will not return to these lands. Far off yet is his doom, and not by the hand of a man shall he fall’. One may compare Glorfindel to the archetypal figures of prophecy, communication, and wisdom that the biblical patriarchs traditionally convey. For example, Glorfindel resembles Angel Gabriel, who delivers the message of the Immaculate Conception⁶³ to the Virgin Mary in the New Testament. Thus, Gabriel fulfills Old Testament prophecy as he emphasizes that ‘(Jesus) will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High’ (Luke 1:32). Moreover, Glorfindel embodies the prophet Simeon during the presentation of Christ in the temple. Simeon foreshadows how ‘this child (Jesus) is destined for falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your (Mary’s) own soul, too’ (Luke 2:34-35). In relation to this, theologian Jack Wellman explains that ‘through an angel and then through Simeon, God revealed who Jesus Christ is and slowly we can see God revealing more and more of himself and Jesus said, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9) so in Jesus Christ the Father has now been revealed’ (Wellman, 2018). Therefore, one may argue how the prophecies that entail the fate of Éowyn and Mary, are a means by which the female characters begin to self-actualise in their male dominated environments.

It is plausible to argue that as a devout Catholic, Tolkien may have based Éowyn’s prophecy on the Marian concept of the Woman of the Apocalypse in Revelations. Thus, Éowyn’s Marian connection is further established as it appears that both prophecies insinuate the second coming of Christ. The New Testament explains that Christ’s purpose during his second appearance is ‘to save sinners’ (1 Timothy 1:15) and defeat sin by not just ‘bring(ing) peace, but a sword’ (Matthew 10:34-35) ‘to render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil’ (Hebrews 2:14). It is but a lowly woman (Mary) whom was no glorified earthly queen with exalted status, is described as ‘small in its own eyes, but great in

⁶² See Glorfindel’s footnotes on Chapter 1.

⁶³ The Immaculate conception is a doctrine of the Catholic Church that states that Mary was conceived without original sin from the moment of her conception.

the eyes of God' succeeds in changing the course of history forever (Epland, 1982). The book of Revelations ('revelatio' in Latin) is a translation of the Greek word 'apokalypsis'. The book of Revelations, 'also called...the Apocalypse of John...is the last book of the New Testament... it is the only book of the New Testament classified as apocalyptic literature...indicating thereby its extensive use of visions, symbols, and allegory, especially in connection with future events' (Britannica, 2020).

According to Wellman revelation means to 'reveal what was before hidden. It's like opening a curtain or a door and seeing what is behind it and the biblical definition fits very nicely with this secular definition' (Wellman, 2018). Religious Revelation on the other hand relies upon the source of the Divine, for which Thomas Aquinas emphasized, 'it was necessary for the salvation of man that certain truths which exceed human reason should be made known to him by divine revelation... man's whole salvation, which is in God, depends upon the knowledge of this truth' (Aquinas, Q1. A1). Now that the context surrounding Éowyn and Mary's prophecy is explored, it is key to examine Mary's pivotal role in the Apocalypse, in order to understand how Éowyn reflects the archetypal Marian femininity.

4.2. *The Women and the Dragons*

The imagery of the woman and the dragon is explicit within LOTR and the bible. In fact, the bible seems to suggest that serpents are synonymous with dragons and LOTR describes them as Fell Beasts⁶⁴, the lower species of Middle earth. Thus, the Bible and LOTR presents serpents or dragons as the antagonists or the enemies of progress against human destinies. In connection, the book of Revelations prophesizes the hostile interaction between the dragon and the Woman of the Apocalypse as:

'when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child...And the dragon was angry against the woman: and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus' (Revelation 12:13-17).

More so, John the Apostle had witnessed a vision that correlates with Simeon's prophecy, in which 'a sword will pierce your own soul, too' (Luke 2:34-35), as the Catholic author Ginny Kubitz-Moyer recognizes that 'these words warn Mary that she will suffer along with her son

⁶⁴ See Races of Middle-earth in Chapter 1 and Appendix B for more information.

as he fulfills God's work...Simeon's words are a kind of prophecy for Mary, a little note to prepare herself that being the Mother of Christ will involve not just joy, but also pain' (Kubitz-Moyer, 2011). In relation to this notion, Pope John Paul II states that:

'while this announcement on the one hand confirms (her) faith in accomplishment of the divine promises of salvation, on the other hand it also reveals to her that she will have to live her obedience of faith in suffering, at the side of the suffering Savior, and that her motherhood will be mysterious and sorrowful' (Paul II, 1992).

It is important to note that there is a debate to whether the Woman of the Apocalypse is a reference to Mary or the Church in uniting the faithful to Christ. Despite this, there seems to be no opposition to the fact that the Woman of the Apocalypse is indeed a manifestation of the female form. In fact, the Catholic Church acknowledges that in the 'woman' is fundamentally the Church herself. Therefore, though the context surrounding the gender of the woman seems absolute, the theologian Joy A. Schroeder explains that 'her identity is multifaceted' (Schroeder, 1995, pg. 175) and thus remains ambiguous and is up for interpretation. Though Mary is an embodiment of numerous symbolisms, for the purpose of this essay, it is feasible to suggest that the woman represents the New Eve⁶⁵, the Virgin Mary. In correspondence to this claim, it can be argued that Éowyn is indeed an embodiment of Mary, the Woman of the Apocalypse as the theologian Thomas J. McIntyre suggests that:

'When the Witch-King says "Thou fool. No living man may hinder me!" Éowyn triumphantly responds, "No living man am I" and proceeds to decapitate the fell beast and, with some assistance from Merry⁶⁶, destroy the Witch-King as well. Here, Éowyn represents Our Lady as the Woman of the Apocalypse, prophesized in the Protoevangelium⁶⁷, who defeats the Serpent by crushing his head and who defends those who are fighting the Enemy against their foes' (McIntyre, 2019).

Film critic Craig Elvy commentary on Jackson's 2002 cinematic portrayal of LOTR: The Two Towers shows that:

⁶⁵ The Virgin Mary is regarded as the 'New Eve'. Because of the sin of Eve, sin and death entered the world and all of Eve's children inherited this. But Mary plays a key role in salvation. Because of Mary's obedience during her fiat, Jesus Christ entered the world as man to reverse the disobedience of Adam and Eve (Paasche, 2020, pg. 7).

⁶⁶ Meriadoc "Merry" Brandybuck was a Hobbit of the Shire and one of Frodo Baggins cousins and closest friends. He loved boats and ponies and had a great interest in the maps of Middle-earth. He was also one of the nine companions of the Fellowship of the Ring, and later became the eighth Master of Buckland. He assisted Éowyn in the destruction of the Witch-king during the battle of Pelennors (Lotr Fandom, 2022). See Chapter 5 for more information on Merry.

⁶⁷ The Protoevangelium, (also known as the first Gospel) was the message God gave the serpent in the Garden of Eden about how the seed (Christ) of the woman (Mary) will crush its head.

'Although the battlefield is deemed no place for a woman...Éowyn harbors a burning desire to protect her homeland against the oncoming forces of Sauron rather than taking shelter...Éowyn proves herself a more-than capable warrior and remains steadfast when faced with the Witch-king... and promptly slays him. Jacksons movie plays up Éowyn's femininity as the cause of her victory' (Elvy, 2020).

The theologian Chris Kempling agrees that the villainous characters in LOTR resemble the biblical archetypes of evil. Kempling states:

'Evil is represented by Sauron, his lieutenants Saruman and the Witch-king of Angmar, the Nazgûl and the legions orcs... the parallel between these characters and Satan and his demons in Christian theology are unmistakable. The evil trinity of Sauron, the Witch-king and Saruman are reminiscent of Satan/The dragon, The beast/Antichrist, and the vice beast in the book revelation. In both scenarios, world domination and destruction of any who would oppose their goals are the same' (Kempling, 2016).

In reference to Mary's defeat against the serpent, one may argue that the term 'crushing' connotes the traditional masculine attributes of violence and hostility, as opposed to the traditional feminine nature of being gentle and meek. In fact, feminist theologian Miyon Chung argues that:

'the woman in Rev. 12 is the archetype of heroine who does not receive deserved attention. She gives birth to the messianic child in the desert, but the child is "immediately snatched" away from her by God: "The Woman Clothed with the Sun is a goddess subdued, tamed, and under control' (Chung, 2007, pg.119).

Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that despite the violent imagery that 'crushing' depicts, Mary still maintains her traditional submissive femininity and can only exercise violence under the command of male figures. Also, feminist theologian, Mary Grey states that 'Mariology follows Christology: Christ's whole salvific reality will be Mary's, by participation and derivation. This is part of the justification of the Immaculate conception tradition- it also prohibits us from knowing "Who is Mary for herself?" (Grey, 1989, pg. 335). Though Chung and Grey's observations align with Pope John Paul II view that obedience and submission are key characteristics of Mary, both feminists seem to convey that this weakens and devalues her femininity, as the patriarchy has positioned her to fulfill this role. However, Pope John Paul II perceives these traits to be a strength. In correspondence to Pope John Paul's commentary on Mary's obedience in the salvific reality, theologian Robert Barron states 'Mary is a warrior opposed by the dragon and...she's more powerful than the dragon...we

fight with the Rosary. The “Hail Mary”⁶⁸ calls upon the Warrior Queen, the commander of angels’. Barron states that ‘how is She so powerful? She is the New Ark of The Covenant’⁶⁹. She is filled with grace... because she is never under his (enemy) power through Original Sin’ (Songe, 2019). Thus, it can be argued that the negative connotations surrounding Mary’s submission, obedience, and passivity that feminists such as Chung and Grey express, misunderstand the inherent value of these characteristics in the success of the salvific reality. Besides traditional perceptions of strength like violence or conflict, submission and obedience are a type of strength too. They are unique to the traditional feminine archetype and are worthy of empowerment. Thus, the traditional feminine definition of strength is equal to that of the traditional masculine interpretation of the term. Essentially, they are the same, but different. All in all, Éowyn and Mary play an indispensable role of the fate and salvation of both Middle-earth and the real world. The next chapter shall explore the ways in which Éowyn as the Shieldmaiden reflects Mary’s role as the Handmaiden.

Chapter 5: Éowyn, the Shieldmaiden as Mary, the Handmaiden

5.1. Introduction to the Shieldmaiden and Handmaiden Concept

Despite the proposition that Éowyn is a direct reflection of the archetypal figure of Mary, The Woman of the Apocalypse, it may also be convincing to assert that Mary’s role as the handmaiden bares striking similarities to Éowyn’s shieldmaiden title. However, it is important to firstly distinguish both terms of handmaiden and shieldmaiden before analysing their significance to the main question. The general definition of handmaiden derives from the word ‘handmaid’ meaning a female servant (Cambridge, 2021). Moreover, in the Christian and biblical context, it is widely believed that a handmaiden is a Marian concept, but one finds that it is also a central narrative of the Old Testament. For example, Genesis 30:3 states that ‘Rachel responded (to Jacob), “Here’s my handmaid Bilhah. Go have sex with her. She can bear children on my knees so I can have children through her’ (Genesis 30:3). The idea of the handmaiden is later displayed during the Annunciation, as Mary stated,

⁶⁸ The Hail Mary or Ave Maria is a Christian prayer for the intercession to the Virgin Mary and is traditionally prayed during the Rosary. It mentions two important events in her earlier life: The Annunciation of her pregnancy and the Visitation to her pregnant cousin Elizabeth. See Chapter 5 for more information.

⁶⁹ Another name for Mary is the New Ark of the Covenant, which is synonymous to the New Eve. Like the Old Ark of the Covenant, Mary’s womb houses Christ. Thus, Mary’s womb is the shrine of God Holy Word.

“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38). The notion of handmaiden seems to possess the same definition in both the secular and biblical contexts, yet their manifestation appears to be relatively different from one another. One is simply a female servant. Whilst the other permits the controversial, anti-feminist position of non-consensual surrogacy, (as the story of Bilhah conveys) or even the possibility of a spiritual rape, as although Mary did consent through her Magnificat, one could argue that she was naturally inclined or programmed to accept the will of God. This is because she was conceived without original sin for the sole purpose of bearing Christ. A sense of patriarchal control is displayed through both examples.

On the other hand, according to Old Norse⁷⁰ literature Scholar, Francesca Zappatore ‘in the Old Norse literature, the term ‘shieldmaiden’ (Skjaldmær in Icelandic) tends to be used with reference to a Viking woman warrior, who decided to take up arms in battles and whose temper is equal to the most ardent and brave men’ (Zappatore, pg.1, 2014). It is vital to note that ‘Tolkien was particularly fascinated by the Germanic world... works like the Old English Beowulf⁷¹... have deeply influenced his creativity... many mythological traditions that fascinated and inspired J.R.R. Tolkien: the Norse mythology’ (Massey, 2007). More so, it is widely known that ‘the academic route which brought Tolkien to the professor role in Oxford was marked by important achievements as a linguist and philologist, with great knowledge of many Germanic languages’ (Higgins, 2015). Thus, one may suggest that Éowyn is not only a fictional representation of the Christian ideal of the Virgin Mary, but also that of the archetypal Germanic and Nordic mythological woman. Overall, this chapter shall analyse the ways in which Tolkien’s shieldmaiden embodies an active role of projecting the Marian archetype of the handmaiden, in relation to the New Eve concept.

5.2. The Significance of Virgin Mary’s Fiat and the Activation of the New Eve

⁷⁰ The term ‘Old Norse’ has been used in various ways. For some it is a broad concept covering the language of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, as well as Iceland and the other Scandinavian colonies, throughout the Viking Age (c. 750–1050) and the early and high Middle Ages (c. 1050–1350). At the other extreme it has been taken to mean only the Old Norwegian of the early and high Middle Ages. In the present context it is used principally to signify the language of Norway in the period c. 750–1350 (after which Norwegian changes considerably) and of Iceland from the settlement (c. 870) to the Reformation (c. 1550 — a date that sets a cultural rather than a linguistic boundary) (Barnes, 2008, pg. 13).

⁷¹ Beowulf is an Old English epic poem. It is based on traditional Germanic heroism. It is one of the most important poems of Old English literature and for this reason is one of the most often translated works. The author of Beowulf is unknown. This poem had significantly influenced Tolkien’s literary works.

Before discussing the intricate and fascinating relationship between the Marian handmaiden and Tolkien's shieldmaiden, it is key to re-encounter the Genesis story of the fall, set in the paradisaical Garden of Eden. The scene in which Eve is tempted by the serpent to eat from the 'tree of knowledge'⁷² shall be briefly examined. The aim of this is to further comprehend the significance of the Annunciation story as well as Mary's Fiat (which translates to 'let it be done'⁷³ and is pivotal for the activation of the New Eve) to identify her impact on Satan's downfall. In other words, both stories in the Old Testament and the New Testament are interconnected. Thus, one may claim how Éowyn's battle against the Witch-king is crucial in portraying Mary's triumph over evil during her Fiat. In addition, it can be argued that Éowyn's own triumph over evil is a dramatic, expressive, and animated illustration of the biblical phenomenon. In simpler terms: it brings the story of Mary's role as the co-redemptrix to life, by showing the spiritual battle fought when Mary said 'yes' in her Fiat. In reference to this, one may argue that Mary immediately became the New Eve. Lastly, this leans into the Woman of the Apocalypse prophesy⁷⁴ as it is argued that the obedience to God's will or the Fiat of Mary instantly 'crushed the head of the serpent'. Genesis 3-9 states that:

'Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so, they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden' (Genesis 3-9).

Indeed, it is usually taught in theology that 'the story of the Garden of Eden is a theological use of mythological themes to explain human progression from a state of innocence and bliss

⁷² The understanding of the tree of knowledge derives from Gen. 2:9: 'And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'. According to FC Eiselen, 'The generally accepted view is that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was so-called because it possessed the property of imparting a capacity for moral distinctions' (Eiselen, 1910, pg. 101).

⁷⁴ See previous chapter for more information.

to the present human condition of knowledge of sin, misery, and death' (Britannica, 2020). However, it may be befitting to comment on how a single woman was the sole instigator of the fall of humankind. It was through her disobedience to God and acceptance of the serpent's seduction that original sin occurred. Nonetheless, much later, one woman opposed this curse through her obedience to God's command during the Annunciation, as theologian Kenneth Howell's consolidation of the New Eve concept explains that:

'Because of Eve's disobedience to God and Adam's cooperation with her, they lost sanctifying grace for themselves and their offspring. Like Eve, Mary was created full of grace. But unlike Eve, Mary remained obedient to God, just as Christ, unlike Adam, remained obedient to God. In cooperation with God, Mary became Mother of the Redeemer and, in cooperation with Christ, she became Mother of the redeemed as well... Evil entered through Eve while she was still a virgin; so too salvation entered through Mary while she was still a virgin. Each woman willingly participated in the act they performed. Neither was an unconscious instrument. Eve listened to the serpent and conceived death. Mary listened to the angel Gabriel and conceived life' (Howell, 2003).

In expansion to Howell's commentary on the New Eve, it is interesting to comprehend that Mary's Fiat, instantly overturned Eve's disobedience in the Old Testament and thus re-newed God's original plan for a perfected creation that Eve had sabotaged. Marian theologian Brian Reynolds supports this statement as he highlights how 'Mary's Fiat unleashes a re-creation of the whole of God's original creation, and she herself in some way contains all of this new creation within herself, not only because she bore the creator in her womb, but because she herself is the synthesis of nature perfected and redeemed, through her absolute conformity to the divine blueprint' (Reynolds et al, 2012, pg.2-3). Therefore, the significance of Mary's Fiat demonstrates one of the first defeats against Satan, before her son 'Christ (the New Adam)⁷⁵ destroyed Satan's work in the same way evil originally entered the world'. In support of this notion, the twelfth-century Catholic priest 'Bruno of Asti... credits Mary with the defeat of this Satanic giant: The one was defeated by the devil; the other put him in chains and defeated him... in this way, he who entered into the kingdom (of the world) was crushed by another woman' (Reynolds et al, 2012, pg. 3). Moreover, it seems that Catholic doctrine

⁷⁵ Paul inferred that Jesus Christ was the new or the last Adam. Not surprisingly, in his Gospel Luke employs this typology. Jesus was born from a woman (Mary, the New Eve). Jesus' mission on earth was to reverse Adam's sin in the salvific reality (Worldview Publications Authors, 2007, pg. 1).

upholds Mary's role as the Co-Redemptrix⁷⁶ (or Theotokos)⁷⁷ and in being the 'handmaid of the Lord' is vital for the salvation of all believers. The theologian Marek Kluz presents how:

'Mary is a reflection of all virtues, therefore, when seeking examples to attain the perfection of life, the Christian should become more and more like Mary... Mary is the one who totally surrenders to God. She responded by faith to the call to become the Mother of His Son. By contemplating the example of Mary as the Lord's Servant, an individual learns to obey God through the road of faith and finds the values which lead him through the paths of the Christian moral life' (Kluz, 2018, pg.8).

Thus, Mary is the perfect vessel (and by the grace of God is immune to sin and vice) needed to prepare Christians for the second coming of Christ. The purpose of this section is to produce a general overview into the significance of Mary's role as the Co-Redemptrix that she accepts during her fiat as being the 'handmaid of the Lord'. Overall, in order to understand Éowyn and her role in the salvation of Middle-earth against the Witch-king, it is of essence to firstly understand the life of Mary whom Éowyn is aligned to. In short, to comprehend the background of Mary is to comprehend the bigger picture of Éowyn. The next section shall now examine the shieldmaiden and handmaiden case by exploring their nature, similarities, and differences through their compelling relationship.

5.3. A Comparative Analysis of the Relationship Between Éowyn, the Shieldmaiden and Mary, the Handmaiden

To appropriately fulfil the position of analysing the shieldmaiden and handmaiden phenomenon, it is imperative to divide these up in two main areas to completely fathom their relationship: The Linguistic and Catholic nature. The intent of the two segments is to enlighten the reader of the possibility towards the indirect abundancy of Marian traits within Éowyn as the shieldmaiden. In support of this connection, Christian fantasy critic, Lawrence Yuen states that 'Éowyn is also depicted as humble and young, and I personally love how her

⁷⁶ Flynn M. Fernandes states that Mary is the 'Co-Redemptrix because she cooperates in Christ's salvific work of redemption... As Co-Redemptrix, Mary is to be understood as co-operating with Christ in his priestly, prophetic, and kingly mission. She did not bring about redemption by herself but participated in her Son's suffering as she stood at the foot of his Cross, and in this way acquired the graces of redemption merited by Christ. Her role as Co-Redemptrix in no way diminishes Christ; rather her cooperation enhances his mission'. (Fernandes, 2015, pg. 2-3).

⁷⁷ *Theotokos* derives from the Greek terms: *Theos* / 'God'; and *tiktein* / 'to give birth'. Mary is the *Theotokos*, the one who gave birth to God. This single word sums up the meaning of Luke's phrase: 'Mother of the Lord' (Lk 1:43) and represents a counterpoint to John's teaching that the 'Word was made flesh' (Jn 1:14). Usually, the term is translated into English as 'Mother of God' (University of Dayton, 2022).

title as ‘shieldmaiden’ rings with her Biblical title of ‘handmaiden’ (Yuen, 2019). As the author of this thesis, it is delightful to share these plentiful discoveries extracted from my personal logic, thought and reflection, together with and supported by newfound research from other academics.

5.3.1 The Linguistic Nature of the Marian Handmaiden and Tolkien’s Shieldmaiden

The introduction to this chapter had addressed that Tolkien had ‘philological familiarity with Norse myths...which caused Tolkien to look to them for mythic inspiration’ (Higgins, 2015, pg.16) and English Literature Scholar Sherrylyn Branchaw agrees that ‘Tolkien’s scholarly passions both literary and linguistic, informed the construction of his mythology is well-known’ (Branchaw, 2015, pg. 7). Although this paper shall not focus on the philological background of Tolkien and his invention of a multitude of mythical languages (such as the Elvish dialect, Quenya),⁷⁸ one may argue that it proves useful in understanding the significance of shieldmaiden in LOTR and its value when assessing its synonymity to handmaiden. It is also possible to suggest that Tolkien did not spontaneously utilise the term shieldmaiden without a meaningful purpose, as evident with his attentiveness to language and linguistics throughout his writing style. In summary: every word that Tolkien applies in his literature is well thought, meaningful and not accidental. In partial reference to the American fantasy author Ursula K. Le Guin, Tolkien academic fandom author Racheal Fulton-Brown agree that:

‘fantasy...tries to hint at an order and clarity underlying existence - in fantasy, we need not compromise. Every word spoken is meaningful, though the meaning may be subtle... Tolkien’s writing has been criticized for the seeming absoluteness of good and evil... Yet each word has been agonized over, each aspect of Middle Earth thought out, and each character’s morals perfected. There is no compromise... The style of Tolkien’s writing is not just an addition but is rather something central to the text’ (Fulton-Brown, 2020).

⁷⁸ Quenya is one of the many fictionalized Elvish languages. Other languages similar to this are the notable Sindarin and Khuzdul. They were languages invented by the philologist J.R.R Tolkien.

Now that it is established how the etymology or nature of everyday vocabulary is key in the works of Tolkien, one is finally able to transition and navigate fluidly through the relationship between the two terms. This is achieved by dissecting them and then encountering their less obvious meanings. It should be noted that the introduction to this chapter had attempted to describe and define both handmaiden and shieldmaiden in general form and depth, thus it proves impractical to do so again momentarily in this section.

Primarily, it is an obvious factor that they both bare the similar noun of ‘maiden’ at the end. Medieval studies scholar Kim M. Phillips describes maidenhood as ‘the image of the young woman as an idealised paragon of feminine virtue... a young unmarried woman’ (Phillips, 1997, pg. 1). Indeed, the Virgin Mary and Éowyn can be classified within this category; both are unmarried, youthful and virgins during the pivotal events of the great battle of the Ring and the Annunciation. However, one may specify that Mary’s perpetual virginity outweighs that of Éowyn whom later marries the ruling prince, Faramir and naturally bares a child. In connection, it is important to be aware that alongside his expertise in the field of philology, Tolkien was also ‘one of the most famous medieval scholars...and Tolkien based LOTR on his knowledge of medieval literature’ (Flight, 2018). Interestingly, medieval literature and Tolkien scholar Michael Drout states that ‘Tolkien examined the language of the Katherine Group (a collection of early Middle English texts that includes the lives of Catholic Saints Katherine, Margaret, and Juliana), a text about virginity called Holy Maidenhood (or Hali Meiðhad) in his 1929 essay ‘Ancrene Wisse and Hali Meiðhad’⁷⁹(Drout, 2007, pg.116). More so, it is evident that the concept of maidenhood or virginity was an important feminine trait during the medieval era and enabled women to be identifiable in terms of age or social status. One simply ought to look at the content within Hali Meiðhad. In reference to this text, medieval literature academic, Dr. Deborah B. Schwartz comments that:

‘The virgin who is being addressed is told that desire for marriage or sexual union with a mortal man is an evil impulse; she must resist the "carnal thoughts" which would cause her to give up the eternal rewards of Virginity for the illusory and temporary pleasures of the flesh... Virginity is likened to a "high tower"... thus loss of virginity can only be seen as a "fall" to a "lower" status’ (Schwartz, 2006).

⁷⁹ A.S Lazikani states that ‘Hali Meiðhad...is an epistle of meidenhad meidene froue (meaning epistle on virginity for maiden’s comfort. As an epistle for virgins, Hali Meiðhad facilitates the readers “embodied stimulation” of anguished and non-virginal woman, whereby spectatorship becomes “vicarious reexperiencing of pain, a mimetic inhabiting of the suffering body’ (Lazikani, 2016, pg. 16).

Thus, this may indicate that Tolkien's use of 'maiden' within the compound term shieldmaiden, is tactical in furthering the connection of Éowyn to Mary's own (perpetual) virginity.

Now that we have attempted to clarify the speculative context behind the term maiden, it is relevant to therefore dissect the first noun (hands and shield) of both compound words. It is reasonable to postulate that both the hand and shield share a host of commonalities. Firstly, the hand is an essential part of a human's body, as medical doctor, Douglas D. Smith states that:

'Our hands do so much... They are a vitally important part of who we are and how we see ourselves... Our hands can perform extremely gentle and precise actions such as writing a letter, painting a picture, threading a needle or playing a violin. Our hands also enable us to perform heavy labour, such as digging with a shovel, swinging an axe, using a jackhammer to drill through concrete, or pounding a railroad spike with a sledgehammer' (Smith, 2006, pg.1).

More so, in reference to the Council of Elrond⁸⁰ in the Fellowship of the Ring, whereby the debate of whom is the appropriate individual to destroy the Ring is decided, Tolkien also applies hand imagery and thus enforces its importance. Tolkien states that:

'this quest may be attempted by the weak with as much hope as the strong. Yet such is oft the course of deeds that move the wheels of the world: small hands do them because they must, while the eyes of the great are elsewhere' (Tolkien, 2009, pg. 351).

Tolkien implies that even those whom society deems to be inferior have the innate ability to implement good and radical changes in the world. Thus, this denotes a form of parallelism towards the feminist movement. The philosophic feminist, Amelia Valcárcel corresponds to this claim in which 'feminism has emerged as the most important and profound correction to primitive democratism' (Valcárcel, pg. 8, 2002) and thus demonstrates the significant impact of the feminist movement. Similarly, like Éowyn her hands in battle are symbolic to freedom and conveys the imagery of a slave being unshackled from their chains and bondages. Hands liberate and empower her from the oppressive and constrained nature of the Witch-King, the patriarchal powers, and her role in society, as she is forced to⁸¹ with little freedom nor

⁸⁰ The Council of Elrond was a secret meeting held by Elrond in Rivendell on October 25, 3018 of the Third Age, in order to decide what should be done with the One Ring. Those present at this council represented the three free races of Middle-earth: Men, Elves, and Dwarves (LotrFandom, 2022).

⁸¹ Throughout the Middle Ages, the place of women in society was often dictated by biblical texts. The writings of the apostle Paul, in particular, emphasised men's authority over women, forbidding women from teaching, and instructing them to remain silent. However, the Virgin Mary was a contrast to this negative image: as the mother of Christ, she was the channel through which Christians might be saved. She was sometimes described

voice. In compliance with this idea, Glorfindel's prophecy of Éowyn mentions that 'not by the hand of man will he (the Witch-king) fall'. Therefore, hand depictions can also be argued as a way of taking back power from the enemy and thereby self-actualising by ⁸²potential regardless of their identity.

It can be said that the Mary enacts this in her Fiat. Mary seems to reach her full God given potential as a human through accepting Gods plan for her role as Theotokos and Co-Redemptrix. Also, Mary's 'yes' to God can be perceived as the ultimate threat and weaponry against the enemy. Like Éowyn, the theology scholar and author, Fr. Jerry Pokorsky refers to Mary as the 'dragon slayer' and highlights that 'the familiar statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with her foot forcing the innards out of the serpent, is grotesquely satisfying. We delight in the final victory over the powers of darkness' (Pokorsky, 2020). It's interesting to note that Pokorsky points to foot imagery as a means of weaponry against the antagonist. Thus, it may be necessary to add that the hand, foot, and head are often shown in partnership and union. For example, Mary crushes the head of the serpent, and this could connote hierarchy and status since the serpent's head is beneath Mary's foot, showing that the enemy is inferior to her. More so, Éowyn as an echoing figure of Mary utilises her hands which is in the upper region of the body to annihilate the Witch-King and thus further conveys superiority as 'the bodies of both characters determine the space' amongst themselves (Vermeulen, 2017, pg. 812). In fact, one could argue that this embodies a form of 'interpersonal space' in 'connecting different characters' (Vermeulen, 2017, pg. 801). When referring to biblical Hebrew poetry, the Jewish studies scholar, Karolien Vermeulen lists 'body parts as a (poetic and literary) device' that is 'different from list or metaphor' as she goes onto to state that 'these can be used in the text in their literal sense...but also in a metaphorical, euphemistic, or lexicalized (or idiomatic) sense' (Vermeulen, 2017, pg.803). She concludes that 'the hands match the heads, and the heads match the feet' (Vermeulen, 2017, pg. 813). In accordance with Vermeulens theory, there seems to be a crucial relationship and parallelism between Éowyn's hand and the Witch-King head, as well as Mary's own foot and Satan's Head. Therefore, it can be argued that the hand and foot are

as the 'second Eve', as she was seen to have made up for Eve's sins. Throughout the Middle Ages, Mary was seen as the most powerful of all saints, as well as a strong (if paradoxical) model of chastity and motherhood (Bovey, 2015).

⁸² This could also indicate tackling a dragon in an individual's personal life. As humans we have to overcome countless obstacles and seek to take our power back. It could be something as small as studying hard to pass a class that one is weak in or something as significant as standing up against misogyny in society. These issues are the dragons in life. See Chapter 6 for more information.

representations of power, possession, and strength. Furthermore, this could denote a hierarchy among the three body parts, with the head dominating the hand and foot.

The head as sensitive and delicate as it, is home to the brain and mind which signifies the loss of logic or reasoning, (ulterior) motives, schemes, and vice of the enemy once conquered. Essentially regarded as the most powerful machine of the body, but simultaneously the weakest- it is the most suitable bodily target to combat an opponent. All in all, although the hand, foot and head's functionality are biologically different, they all seem to work together to achieve a greater good: a battle between good and evil.

Besides this, Mary's self-proclamation as the 'handmaid of the Lord' shows how she willingly offered herself completely to house Christ in her womb, nurture and raise him. By literal definition a handmaid is a female servant. A servant's function is to accommodate the master by utilizing the hands for service, as the theologian Mary Fairchild states 'she was a willing servant, trusting in God and obeying his call' (Fairchild, 2017). For Mary to define herself as a handmaid produces the idea of enslavement and oppression. However, theologian Linda Montgomery responds to this by stating how 'Mary lost her life as she found her life, by being the obedient servant of her lord and her God, Jesus Christ' (Montgomery, 1999, pg. 14). Thus, this may be considered to be a contradiction, as Mary exercises her freewill, by willingly accepting the position of servitude to God. Therefore, Mary demonstrates her personal definition of feminine empowerment and liberation and from this the Marian archetype of femininity emerges.

On the other hand, the shield portrays a tool utilised for bodily protection against an enemy. The formal definition of a shield is 'a flat, usually broad, piece of metal, wood...carried in the hand or worn on the forearm to ward off blows or missiles' (Collins Dictionary, 2021). Interestingly this may allude to the ongoing war against Mary and Satan from the moment she fulfilled her Fiat. It seems plausible to argue that Mary's entire being is in fact a manifestation of a shield. In support of this proposition, philosopher Cara Furman agrees that 'for those who felt that human authority could not or would not protect them, Mary emerged as a protector (in the Middle Ages)' (Furman, 2003, pg.24). Thus, apart from her main roles such as the Perpetual Virgin, Mother of God and Co-Redemptrix, Mary is often recognised as the protectress of humanity⁸³. Furman continues to state that 'by the latter part of the Middle

⁸³ The Litany (a type of prayer or invocation) of the Virgin Mary emphasises the protector aspect of Mary: 'Grant, we beseech you, almighty God, that we, your faithful, who rejoice in the name and under the protection of the most holy Virgin Mary, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from all evils here on earth and be

Ages, stories tell of Mary inhabiting the body of a midwife, mother and even a knight. In these cases, Mary literally fulfils human positions' (Furman, 2011, pg. 25). Furman even applies the example of the tales of Robin Hood to demonstrate the importance of this Marian characteristic. Furman states:

'In Robin Hood and the Monk, only Marys stood out as an entirely helpful, loyal, and just force. The mid-sixteenth century, A Gesture of Robyn Hode emphasized trust in Mary. In this tale, it is said of Robin that 'thre messis woulde he here./ The one in worship of the father/ And another of the Holy Gost,/ The thride of Oure dere Lady,/ That he loved all ther moste. Emphasis on all three recalls the Trinity but Mary replaces her son as the third member. Robin also "loved" Mary "moste", elevating her status above the Father and the Holy Ghost... This is a feature of medieval English Catholicism' (Furman, 2011, pg. 28).

Moreover, it is acknowledged that at the very outset of Christopher Columbus' grand adventure he recorded his devotedness to Mary by giving her name to his flagship, the Santa Maria...each day at nightfall the Admiral (Columbus) gathered his crew to sing the Salve Regina⁸⁴ to salute their Protectress' (University of Dayton, 2021). More so, the legendary 'gifted military leader' (Meister,1991, pg.32), King Arthur's famous shield, the Pridwen⁸⁵ was adorned with an image of the Virgin Mary to highlight her role as the protector in various human battles. As these sources indicate, it appears as though the Middle Ages significantly captured the essence of the Marian protectress in comparison to any other time in history. It is even more convincing to suggest that Tolkien purposefully utilised Éowyn's title as the shieldmaiden in reverence to Mary whom (as medieval literature denotes), literally functions as a shield.

As already indicated within this chapter, Tolkien's mythological world fictionally mirrors the medieval era. Éowyn as the shieldmaiden represents Mary's nature as a protectress during a time that kept women in subordination to men. Interestingly, Furman makes the claim that 'unlike many medieval chivalric stories in which Mary is re-invoked at the resolution... Mary established the importance of a female presence...as a powerful woman herself' (Furman, 2011, pg. 16-25). Thus, it can be understood that Mary is akin to a chivalrous medieval knight. Her role is to protect young fair maidens (Christians) against their own fallen nature

made worthy to reach eternal glory in the life to come. Through Christ our Lord. AMEN'. (University of Dayton, 2022)

⁸⁴ The Latin word Salve Regina translated in English mean 'Hail Queen'.

⁸⁵ According to the English clergyman Geoffrey of Monmouth in his 12th century *Historia regum Britanniae*, Arthur's shield bore an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. But strangely, Geoffrey names the shield as Prydwen (or Pridwen) meaning 'fair face' (Fandom Authors, 2017).

and temptations against their virginhood. In this case, Mary protects all humanity: there are no gender preferences. If this relationship between Mary and Éowyn was intentional, it seems as though Tolkien's understanding of women is that they are inherently and already free. The roles of the shieldmaiden and handmaiden demonstrate Mary's true and authentic self as the ideal woman from a religious perspective. Overall, one may argue that the protectress aspect of Mary portrays the overlooked relationship between the hand and shield. Firstly, in order to fulfil the functionality of a shield, one must use their hands to grip the shield. Thus, they both derive from the same body region and need each other to defend either one body or a multitude of individuals against the enemy. In this case Éowyn as the shieldmaiden employs her hands in battle to execute the Witch-King with her sword and shield, whilst Mary, the handmaiden as a symbolic figure of a shield is constantly 'at hand' or 'at the service' of God and his children to destroy Satan.

5.3.2. *Handmaiden and Hand of Man as an Anagram*

After significant observations of Tolkien's writings, it may also be plausible to suggest that Tolkien applies more word play in LOTR through an anagrammatic format⁸⁶. Firstly, one may theorize how Glorfindel's prophecy in which 'not by the hand of man will he fall', is a direct inference to the compound term 'handmaiden'. In other words, even though 'hand of man' can be perceived to be an inadvertent reference to the biblical concept of 'handmaiden', it can otherwise be understood to be a pre-meditated (partial) anagram⁸⁷ to further connect Éowyn to the figure of Mary. As noted previously, Tolkien's 'preoccupation with linguistic detail also found its way into his stories themselves' (Bador, 2021). Damien Bador, a specialist in Tolkien's invented languages continues to state that 'the importance of language is easily discernible in Tolkien's obsession with finding the perfect turn of phrase, even if it

⁸⁶ An anagram is a word or phrase made by using the letters of another word or phrase in a different order (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

⁸⁷ I call this discovery a "partial anagram" because an anagram by definition is a word/phrase that uses the same letters of another word/phrase but in a different order. However, in "hand of man" and "handmaiden" there's extra letters that are also different, so it does not entirely fit into this definition. Nonetheless it is close enough and Tolkien was very experimentative in his inventions of language and word play, so this makes my theory more convincing.

meant reworking certain sentences countless times' (Bador, 2021). Therefore, it seems convincing to form this hypothesis based around Glorfindel's prophecy and the 'handmaiden', as Tolkien's language experimentation seemed purposefully abundant in his literature 'to ensure proper understanding of a text, particularly in the case of ancient texts' (such as the bible) (Bador, 2021).

To examine this personal proposition further, one may notice the common "genderisation"⁸⁸ within the phrases 'hand of man' and 'handmaiden'. The latter is described as a (young) female and at first glance the other is a biological man. In fact, it is interesting to note that there have been various theorizations emphasising the significance of the term 'man' in Tolkien's works. For example, theologian Fleming Rutledge states that:

'I have not been able to figure out any rhyme or reason with regard to Tolkien's use of capitals... Men or men?... Tolkien himself was not consistent in most cases. Man and Men are almost always capitalized, however, as a way of distinguishing them from Elves and also to indicate the human race as an entity designated for special status' (Rutledge, 2004, pg. 17).

Thus, it seems that by utilizing capitalization as a literary device for specific words such as 'man', Tolkien is keen to highlight the importance and uniqueness of this term and to render its effectiveness onto the narrative. For example, another LOTR scene demonstrates how 'Tolkien's practice of often capitalising of these words... Pity and Mercy... (is the) first clue as to their importance... Notice the pattern of capitalization of the word 'pity' in this passage. Although, as a philologist, Tolkien must have enjoyed the pun on 'what a pity Bilbo⁸⁹ did not stab him' (Ducey, 2015, pg.288-292). More so, the theology scholar Mary K. Ducey continues to state that 'so, again, the quality Tolkien so highly prizes, whether it is called 'pity' or 'mercy', or the capitalized versions of these words, seems to be less about emotion and more about action' (Ducey, 2015, pg. 300). Besides this, as Rutledge emphasised previously, the capital letter 'M' in 'Man' signifies the entire race or species of humankind in LOTR, whereas when referring to a single male human the lowercase 'm' is substituted.

In reference to this line of argument, it is reasonable to note that although Éowyn does not fit the criteria of Glorfindel's (assumptive) indication that the chosen one will be a biological 'man', she does indeed derive from the species of 'Men'. More so, the ambiguity of

⁸⁸ The term "genderisation" can be considered as the assignment of gender identity or roles based on what society and culture permits.

⁸⁹ Bilbo Baggins is the uncle of Frodo Baggins and the prior Ring bearer. He is mostly depicted in 1937 novel the Hobbit (the prequel to the Lord of the Rings).

Glorfindel's prophecy is further established during the last battle against the Witch-King, as Tolkien writes '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, 2009, pg.1102). Tolkien shows that Éowyn was not alone in her conquest to kill the Witch-King. It was Merry, a Hobbit and a member of the fellowship that aids her in the mission. One may propose that the vague term 'man' within the prophecy accommodates both Éowyn, a woman and Merry, a hobbit. To validate this statement, during the prologue within the Fellowship of the Ring, Tolkien mentions that 'it is plain indeed that in spite of later estrangement Hobbits are relatives of ours: far nearer to us than Elves or even than Dwarves' (Tolkien, 2009, pg.2). In further support of this, Matthew Yglesias states that:

'if human-elf hybrids are possible, and dwarves and hobbits are taxonomically more closely related to humans than elves are, then it seems plausible that human-hobbit, human-dwarf, and hobbit-dwarf hybrids would also be possible. By that standard, perhaps, hobbits are humans—just short ones' (Yglesias, 2013).

Furthermore, one may argue that Éowyn as a woman and Merry as a Hobbit traditionally convey weakness and vulnerability in Tolkien's legendarium (as well as the real world). Tolkien shows that the perceived value of Hobbits and women are similar. They do not hold as much power as traditional fictional warriors or biological men and are thus seemingly less of a threat and are passive members of society. Moreover, Tolkien utilised both characters during the final battle to dignify, empower and elevate them onto the same pedestal as the biological men within Middle earth. Interestingly, Tolkien acknowledges that the Hobbits are, 'a little people, but of great worth are the Shire-folk⁹⁰' (Tolkien, 2009, pg.1021) and thus, the message is clear: They are indeed both worthy of greatness despite being a woman or a Hobbit. One may even go so far as to consider that the names 'Merry' and 'Mary' though different in spelling, share the same pronunciation. Therefore, the literary technique of the homophone is visible between both names. Interestingly Merry's full name 'Meriadoc' shares the same meaning with Mary. The name Mary comes from the verb "mara" meaning to be rebellious. In fact, the noun "meri" or "meria" means rebellion (Abarim Publication, 2010). Indeed, Merry and Eowyn both rebel against their patriarchal environments to fight in the final battle. Furthermore, this shows the significance of names and their prophetic nature that can shape one's destiny. This observation further solidifies Merry and Eowyn as Marian figures and shall be extensively discussed in the next chapter.

⁹⁰ The Shire-folk refers to those (namely the Hobbit species) who dwell in the Shire. The Shire is a peaceful pastoral place. It resembled Tolkien's love for the English countryside and nature.

Nonetheless, this interpretation may further prove my observation that ‘hand of man’ is synonymous to ‘handmaiden’ through an anagrammatic form to a certain extent. As emphasised previously within the chapter, though this is a partial anagram by definition, it is impossible to overlook this possibility. Both terms possess striking similarities, especially since Tolkien had an enthusiasm towards language play. In other words, ‘hand of man’ is another indirect expression of the New Testament handmaiden, the Virgin Mary. Firstly, both terms possess the word ‘hand’ which in the spiritual sense may resemble power and authority to combat the enemy in spiritual warfare, as Exodus 15:6 states ‘your right hand, O Lord, is majestic in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy’. And even ‘Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed... thus his hands were steady until the sun set’ (Exodus 17:11-12). On the contrary the spiritual symbolism of hands may also allude to a healing or peace gesture as Mark 7:32 remarks ‘they brought to Him (Jesus) one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to lay His hand on him’ (Mark 7:32) and ‘therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing’ (1 Timothy 2:8). In the case of Éowyn and Mary, it seems that that the role of their hands both seek war and peace simultaneously. It is thus reasonable to postulate that to ensure that peace is achieved, conflict and war must firstly be experienced, as the political economist, David Barash et al asserts that:

‘the war-peace dilemma are complex, interconnected... the various dimensions of war and peace, including the possibility of achieving a more just and sustainable world—a way of living that can nurture life itself and of which all people can be proud... most would agree that some form of peace—whatever it means—is desirable, there are often vigorous, even violent, disagreements over how to obtain it’ (Barash et al., 2016, pg.4).

Moreover, this notion of pursuing war for the goal of peace further demonstrates the purpose of the figures of Éowyn and Mary and continues to validate the anagrammatic theory of ‘handmaiden’ and ‘hand of man’. Thus, one may agree that Éowyn’s role as a shieldmaiden fulfils Glorfindel’s prophecy, if one was to interpret ‘man’ as not being a biological male, but female. More so, the prophecy seems to indicate an individual who is from a warrior background, and Éowyn as a shieldmaiden fulfils this. Similarly, Barron states that ‘if we do not approach the world as a battlefield between love and violence, we will become spiritually blind. But the Virgin Mary, as a warrior, helps us see this reality while assuring us that her Son has already conquered’ (Barron, 2010). Thus, it can be argued that both Mary and Éowyn are warriors serving a higher source for a greater purpose. Mary serves God to bring about

peace, unity, and salvation for all mankind and Éowyn serves her nation for the same purpose. Therefore, Éowyn too can be said to fulfil the definition of the biblical handmaiden as she is essentially a handmaiden of her people. Thus, this further establishes that ‘hand of man’ and ‘handmaiden’ are interchangeable concepts that lead to the same intent or meaning. Finally, we shall now consolidate and specifically discuss the significance and the relationship between the genderization of ‘hand of man’ and ‘handmaiden’. In contrast to the previous evidence, Tolkien Gateway Fandom interprets how the lowercase of ‘man’ includes both genders, not just biological men as:

‘MacDuff disconcerted Macbeth by revealing he was not "of woman born", Lady Éowyn found the loophole in the 1,000-year-old prophecy by Glorfindel, fulfilling that the Witch-king would not be slain by a man. However, the Witch-king actually recited the prophecy incorrectly: he said that "no living man may hinder me," though the prophecy actually said that "not by the hand of *man* will he fall." Glorfindel's prophesy, unlike his own version, implies that the Witch-king will not fall to a man. In Tolkien's writing, man and woman applies simply to the gender of any Middle-earth race. Only when he capitalised Man did it denote the race of Men. The Witch-king may not have realised that the prophecy meant only a male, thus, his moment of doubt and hesitation when he faced Éowyn’ (Tolkien Gateway, 2021).

In comparison, it has been noted before that the gender of ‘handmaiden’ explicitly shows a (youthful) female figure. Thus, the gender is not ambiguous or riddled like Glorfindel’s prophecy, as the Nazgûl mistakenly demonstrates when he expresses ‘no living man may hinder me’. One can only assume that the presence of a woman (let alone a hobbit) blindsided the Witch-King, for it was an unforeseen and unique phenomenon. With that being said, in relation to Mary, philologist Dorota Filipczak states that ‘Éowyn’s unique position as a mortal woman who achieves the impossible and thus fulfils the prophecy paves the way for a comparison with the Virgin Mary, whose Magnificat contains elements of “a holy-war song” which were suppressed by traditional interpretations’ (Filipczak, 2017, pg. 405). Therefore, it can be argued that both Éowyn and Mary as representations of ‘handmaiden’ and ‘hand of man’ convey a significant plot twist due to the unpredictability of their gender. In addition, in pivotal events within literature, men are expected to be the traditional archetypes of heroism, fulfilling the Savior Syndrome⁹¹. In fact, Filipczak emphasises that ‘it is a paradox shared by the Bible and The Lord of the Rings that when men are at a loss, it is a woman who steps in and takes the initiative by confronting and

⁹¹ The “Savior Syndrome” is said to be a psychological condition that makes the individual feel the need to constantly save others by fixing their problems.

defeating the enemy whose power greatly exceeds her own' (Filipczak, 2017, pg. 406). In further support of this notion and in reference to Filipczak's previous claims regarding the involvement of Mary's Magnificat in the 'holy-war songs', Reverend Selwyn Tillett states:

'We have a duty to stand in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed and the marginalised in our midst and in our world, whenever we sing the Magnificat. In a very real sense, the Magnificat is the We shall overcome of the Scriptural world. It's the promise that ultimate justice will enter the world in the form of this child Mary carries; that the arrival of Jesus will give birth to hope and salvation. Mary, this humble, Jewish girl says yes to God, and the world is transformed and turned upside down' (Tillett, 2022).

Overall, the anagrammatical similarities of the handmaiden and 'hand of man' may be evidence that establishes how Éowyn is an embodiment of the Marian feminine archetype.

5.3.3. The Sword and the Rosary

Besides the rich linguistical nature that inhabits the terms shieldmaiden and handmaiden, in order to further affirm the main question, it can be argued that the mysteries of the Catholic Rosary⁹² and the rosary itself are literal manifestations of Éowyn's sword. In reference to LOTR, one may question if Tolkien intended for the sword of Éowyn to exhibit the Catholic symbolism of the rosary's inherent divine power. It is important to further reiterate Tolkien's passionate devotion unto Mary this, for the purpose of esteeming Éowyn's own Marian position. In fact, Tolkien personally addresses that 'our Lady, upon which all my own small perception of beauty both in majesty and simplicity is founded' (Tolkien, 1981, pg.134). The historian and Tolkien scholar Bradley Birzer continues to reinforce this idea as:

'Tolkien also held a profound devotion for the Theotokos, the mother of God or the Blessed Virgin Mary. Having lost his own mother, Tolkien especially felt a closeness to Mary... considering his strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary discussed below, he most likely said the rosary frequently. He kept one by his bed, even during his nights spent on watch for Nazi bombings of Oxford during World War II' (Birzer, 2017).

⁹² The Holy Rosary meaning "crown of roses", traditionally comes in the form of a beaded necklace (fifty-nine in total) connected to a crucifix. It consists of six 'Our Father' prayers and fifty-three 'Hail Mary' prayers. Catholics meditate to the mysteries of the rosary (Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous) that entail her life events on earth. The Rosary is traditionally under the supervision of Mary; thus, the person who prays and mediates on the beads asks for the Virgin's intercession before her son. Catholics pray to her for the love she feels for humanity, demonstrated by "her maternal goodwill towards us" which for Catholics is proven by her apparitions and the miracles that occur under her intercession (Gomez-Rossi, 2019, pg. 36).

More so, English language scholar Farid Mohammadi states how ‘Tolkien found his Spiritual Path and was blessed by his devotion and strong faith towards this blessed Lady. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that the Virgin Mary was the most important figure in Tolkien’s life’ (Mohammadi, 2013, pg. 201). Thus, Tolkien’s relationship with Mary enhances the possibility that Éowyn’s sword can be comparable to the Catholic rosary. To further explain this comparison, Father Donald Calloway states that:

‘the rosary was forged in an age of chivalry.’⁹³It is a spiritual weapon, a heavenly sword, fashioned by the hands of a Divine Craftsman. All swords take time and skill to make, but this heavenly sword required the greatest of efforts — centuries — to produce. It is a weapon unlike any other. It has the power to slay dragons (demons), converts sinners, and conquer hearts. The blade of this sword was forged in the living Word of God, shaped by the hammer of divine inspiration, and entrusted to the Queen of Heaven and her chosen servants’ (Calloway, 2016).

In further support of this notion, Professor of History and Ethics, Alfonso Gómez-Rossi explains ‘though the physical rosary is associated with the meditation on the events of Mary’s life and their connection to the earthly life of Christ, her son, Catholics also consider it a spiritual weapon to implore God’s intercession in worldly affairs, in favour of the mystical body of the Catholic Church’ (Gómez-Rossi, 2019, pg. 33). Therefore, both Gómez-Rossi and Calloway assert that the primary role of the rosary is not solely for meditational purposes but is akin to that of a threatening physical weapon, due to its immeasurable strength against the enemies within the supernatural realm.

In addition, it is reasonable to argue that the rosary upon first glance can be perceived to be a non-threatening form of weaponry in the material sense, though the ‘beads are a tangible symbol of union and prayer’ (University of Dayton, 2021). It is common knowledge that traditional swords tend to be crafted from strong metals such as copper and are regarded as deadly ammunition, because of their sharp blades and significant weight. However, it can also be agreed that a rosary is anything but dense in substance, knife-like or particularly fashioned from the finest metals or craftsmanship. Thus, though traditional rosary is modest and harmless in aesthetic, the Catholic Church perceives its inherent nature to be otherwise. In relation to this, one can argue that the perception of the rosary’s lack of strength or external insignificance is reflective of the misjudgement and prejudice against Éowyn as a woman. In

⁹³ The Virgin Mary had presented the Rosary to St. Dominic. In the year 1214, the Church received the Rosary by Dominic and applied it to the Catholic faith. It was first used to convert sinners especially the Albigensians (12th-13th century French heretics).

LOTR, the Nazgûl whom bares close likeness to demons' taunts Éowyn by expressing 'hinder me? thou fool. No living man may hinder me! It seemed that Dernhelm⁹⁴ laughed, and the clear voice was like the ring of steel'. Then Éowyn boldly replied 'But no living man am I! You are looking upon a woman. Éowyn am I, Éomund's⁹⁵ daughter...I will smite you, if you touch him'. In reference to this, theology scholar Laura Norris comments how Éowyn's:

'actions point to Mary as represented in Scripture. Like the Mary of the Gospels, Éowyn is gentle and young. Like the handmaiden of the Lord, the shieldmaiden's destiny held something truly great...Éowyn then removes her helmet, allowing her "bright hair, released from its bonds, gleamed with pale gold" to tumble upon her shoulders... Tolkien depicts her as fierce and brave while still gentle and feminine: "Her eyes grey as the sea were hard and fell, and yet tears were against her eyes;" simultaneously "slender but as a steel-blade, fair yet terrible... No living man could or would kill the Witch-King, as the prophecy foretold. It was living woman, the shieldmaiden of Rohan, who brought down the Lord of the Nazgûl... Likewise, the great battle between good and evil in Scripture points to the pivotal role of a woman' (Norris, 2014).

Therefore, in accordance with Norris' observation, one may be further convinced of how the position of women directly reflects the rosary. Indeed, both entities verify the expression: dynamite comes in small packages and thus it is less expected for the 'second sex'⁹⁶ to carry out such traditional masculine roles. It has been proven a handful of times in history by quintessential female warriors that women are very much capable of fulfilling these strenuous positions. Figures such as Boudica, Jael⁹⁷ and Joan of Arc (and others whom history has forgotten) have successfully led large armies of men against their powerful antagonists (despite the often-undesirable outcomes). As Norris highlighted, Tolkien describes Éowyn in traditional feminine aesthetics in words such as 'fair' and 'bright' and though these may be perceived to be concepts of value and esteem, they may in fact perpetuate a toxic stereotypic that is internally limiting for women. In other words, like the rosary, women are more than their aesthetics. In matter of fact, Tolkien seems to redeem himself by indicating a sense of freedom for a woman like Éowyn, when she releases her 'bright hair' from 'its bonds' and thus is ready for warfare. The term 'bond' implies restriction, physical and psychological bondage, and imprisonment. It is as though her shieldmaiden persona is activated. He also adds some form of balance towards the characteristics of women, as he describes Éowyn as 'slender' yet as

⁹⁴ See Chapter 1 for more information.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 1 for more information.

⁹⁶ The Second Sex (1949) was a book written by the French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986). The term means a sex that is in subordination in a role to the other or the secondary sex.

⁹⁷ The biblical Jael was the Hebrew woman who delivered Israel from the clutches of King Jabin of Canaan's army. Her complete story is in the Book of Judges.

‘steel as a blade’. Therefore, one may argue that the idea of the rosary is inherently balanced too. It is small but powerful; non-threatening but deadly; soft but sharp; frugal but infinitely priceless and so rich in value, that the human mind alone cannot even begin to comprehend. Also, it can be argued that from a linguistic stance, the concept of this very balance or comparable contradictions listed above can be interpreted of possessing juxtaposed and oxymoronic undertones. All in all, this balance or juxtaposition of the rosary in the form of the identity of women and Éowyn’s sword, reinforces the idea of the material realm as opposed to the spiritual world.

It may be argued that all objects inanimate or otherwise, (such as a rosary or women) can be juxtaposed. With that being said, the role of the rosary unites the contradictions that are the material and supernatural world. The immaterial world which defies logic and can be amalgamated with the things of the physical realm; is closer than one realises and is an absolute reality. All in all, there may be an ineffable connectedness to the divine that humans can experience and is made possible through the mediatory nature of the rosary.

Furthermore, one may examine that another similarity between the rosary and Éowyn’s sword lies within their salvific essence. Firstly, it is Éowyn’s sword that caused the ‘Witch-King’s death, so Frodo and the others were freed from his ruthless pursuit and could destroy the Ring. The death of the Witch-King allowed the Fellowship and their allies to win the Battle of Pelennor Fields⁹⁸, which then enabled them to distract Sauron and draw the Orcs out of Mordor, thus allowing Frodo and Sam to travel through Mordor undetected’ (Norris, 2014). Equivalently, the modern method of the rosary comes in the form of the:

‘Fiat Rosary, which begins with a prayer to the Holy Spirit to introduce the person praying in union with Mary into the heart of the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries of Christ. In the Fiat Rosary, there are nine mysteries--three from each of the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries... The Rosary is a compendium of the entire Gospel centered on the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation. It is directed toward the events of Christ’s life as seen by Mary’ (University of Dayton, 2021).

In addition, Norris states that ‘Mary’s “yes” to God enacted the events necessary for the triumph of the cross. Mary’s seed, Jesus, crushed Satan’s head’ (Norris, 2014). In connection to this, Mohammadi highlights a further striking commonality in which the Catholic feast day of

⁹⁸ The Battle of the Pelennor fields is the formal title for the War of the Ring battle during the Return of the King novel. It was inspired by Tolkien’s own experience as a soldier during World War One.

the Annunciation (part of the rosaries joyful mystery of Mary's fiat) and the date of the destruction of the ring in LOTR are all on the 25th of March. Mohammadi states that:

'indeed, this date is one of the most important spiritual days in the Christian Canonical Calendar. It is the glorification of the "Annunciation", Christians celebrate the Incarnation of Christ, the "World" becoming "Flesh", in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. It is also traditionally believed to be the date of Christ's Crucifixion. Moreover, Annunciation Day was the start of the New Year in most European countries during the Middle- Ages as well. In one of the appendices to the Lord of the Rings, Tolkien mentioned that "March 25th is the date of the downfall of the Barad-dûr (or the Dark Tower)", moreover he states that, "In commemoration of the fall of Sauron and the deeds of the Ring-bearers, the New Year began on March 25". Indeed, the day of the destruction of the Ring, in Tolkien's mythos is worthy of deep attention' (Mohammadi, 2017, pg. 205).

Mohammadi's notable observations may be viewed as ground-breaking, when attempting to evaluate the rosary's relationship with Éowyn's sword. Also, this may even provide a solid and convincing foundation for Éowyn to amalgamate with the figure of Mary. Moreover, Mohammadi further comments on the Medieval and Old English literature scholar Tom Shippey's analysis on this unique phenomenon as:

'Tom Shippey says "In Anglo-Saxon belief, and European popular tradition, both before and after that, 25 March is the date of the Crucifixion and that of the Annunciation (that is, nine months before Christmas); it is also the last day of Creation. By mentioning this special date, Tolkien was presenting his "eucatastrophe" as a fore-runner or "type" of greater one of Christian myth". Moreover, Shippey believes that Tolkien leads his readers "to the edge of Christian reference", at which Revelation seems very close, and allegory does all but break through naturally enough, a moment of eucatastrophe to use Tolkien's term for sudden moments of fairy-tale salvation' (Mohammadi, 2017, pg. 205).

It is difficult to overlook Shippey's remarks that indicate how Tolkien purposefully made the day of the destruction of Ring to be in alignment with the feast day of Mary's Fiat. Thus, this activated Jesus' earthly existence for the redemption of mankind and the restoration of God's perfect creation, as Satan and his Kingdom of darkness ceases to exist like Sauron or the Witch-king. More so, the mediative aspect of the rosary allows Catholics to reflect upon this "eucatastrophic" mysteries of the biblical gospel. In fact, Tolkien 'coined the word "eucatastrophe": the sudden happy turn in a story which pierces you with a joy that brings tears... Christian joy which produces tears because it is qualitatively so like sorrow, because it comes from those places where Joy and Sorrow are at one, reconciled, as selfishness and altruism are lost in Love' (Tolkien, 1981, pg. 100). Therefore, one may agree that LOTR 'connection with the Gospels is always present'. Furthermore, the philosophy scholar, John Davenport ar-

gues that Tolkien utilised the term ‘eucatastrophe to emphasise that sudden “turning” or unexpected deliverance at the end of a true tale of Faërie⁹⁹ must be experienced not as an achievement of triumphant revenge, but rather as a divine gift’ (Davenport, 2003, pg. 210). From Tolkien’s reasoning of the term, one may comprehend how the bible may be foundational or act as a primary influence upon the narrative of the traditional and successful fantasy stories. It seems that the salvation or redemption trope is typical of this genre. Languages and culture scholar, Rodrigo Ramos supports this notion as he states that ‘Tolkien substantiates that the Gospels contain a fairy-story, or a story of a larger type which brings together the essence of fairy-stories’ (Ramos, 2018, pg. 311). Essentially, it can be argued that the rosary reminds Catholics of Mary (and Jesus’) defeat against Satan. Mary’s Fiat, the death of Christ and the final battle in Revelations were the main events forming the enemy’s destruction. Therefore, reciting the rosary is literally a Catholics weapon to fight the enemy all over again, through its meditative essence. In reality, it can be concluded that Catholics too are shieldmaidens in the transcendental warfare, as Éowyn and Mary display.

Lastly, it can be argued that the evidence above successfully demonstrates how the narrative of the biblical redemption is not only granted to women (as Éowyn and Mary portray) but is also shared with both genders. In other words, both genders must take up their swords in the manifestation of the rosary, to fight evil. It is a battle that does not discriminate and is far beyond gender. In correspondence to this idea, Norris argues that:

‘Like Éowyn, Mary did not accomplish the final victory; yet like Éowyn, she fulfilled a prophecy as her actions played a significant role in the defeat of evil, a role no man could play. Genesis 3:15 indicates how victory over sin and evil must be accomplished through the work of both woman and man (the woman and her seed); Éowyn’s prophesied victory over the Witch-King demonstrates the work of both a woman and men to conquer the evil forces of the Ring’ (Norris, 2014).

Therefore, it can be argued that grace bestowed upon a lowly handmaiden enabled her to become a powerful intercessor against the enemy for Catholics. It is through a single non-threatening, yet deadly weapon- the rosary. In other words, it is possible that the LOTR final battle is a metaphorical, allegorical, or figurative display of the strength of the rosary and the mysteries of the bible.

The main purpose of these chapters so far is to analyse one facet of Éowyn’s character: the archetypal figure of the obedient virgin, Mary. Éowyn reflects the Marian positions of the Woman of

⁹⁹ In the folklore of the hobbits of Middle-earth, "Faerie" was the land of the Elves across the Sea (Iotr Fandom, 2022). In other words, it means “land of the fairies and enchantment”.

the Apocalypse and the Handmaiden. Though both of these roles have an element of subordination unto their male counterparts, the chapters have also indicated that this same element is unique strength for both women in the salvific reality and are thus misunderstood. The introduction section of the Marian trope aimed to display the significance of her femininity (as opposed to Eve's masculinity). However, the evidence also suggests that Mary is much more layered figure. Therefore, it can be said that Mary presents underlining forms of traditional masculinity, although she embraces her femininity to a higher degree. To answer the main question, the experiences and characteristics of Eve and Mary are interchangeable and are significantly similar, as the next chapter will demonstrate. They represent the reality and complexities of all women. For this reason, it seems that the character of Éowyn successfully amalgamates the two traditional and contrasting female figures of Eve and Mary. The following chapter will compare Éowyn to the figure of Eve. This will be accomplished by examining one main area: their rebellious nature.

Chapter 6: Éowyn as the Original Eve

6.1. Introduction to the Eve Archetype

As illustrated in the previous chapters, Éowyn's comparison to the traditional Marian archetype (New Eve) was extensively analysed in order to answer the main question. To truly fulfil both sides of the argument it is now both vital and necessary to assess the relationship between Éowyn and the original Eve of the Old Testament. Furthermore, in order to successfully answer the main question, the following section shall be dissected into one main argument. The discussion shall cover the rebellious nature of Éowyn and Eve.

The methodology chapter emphasises how Tolkien's female characters all resemble the Virgin Mary in similar yet different fashions and even Tolkien admits this for Galadriel especially. However, there is a lack of evidence that Tolkien views the women of LOTR as possessing qualities of Eve. It is through my personal observations that the women of LOTR tend to embody an inherent traditional masculinity, that successfully merges with the modern expressions of the feminine. In fact, feminist Tolkienist, Melanie Rawls states that 'according to Tolkien, feminine and masculine possess different characteristics which are meant to complement and augment one another. Attributes of the gender are not necessarily confined to the sex of the same gender, i.e., feminine attributes are not confined to females nor masculine attributes to males' (Rawls, 1984, pg. 5). As expressed in the methodology, what seems to enable the vast interest and fascination with Tolkien's female characters is their ability to be layered, complex and multi-dimensional. From Rawls observations, Tolkien's portrayal of women in LOTR demonstrates that this gender mergence is not a unique phenomenon to women. It naturally applies to both genders and only adds to their allure, importance, and strength. Therefore, Éowyn also displays a hunger to emulate the masculine which is inherently part of her identity as a woman. For this reason, I believe that Eve is the appropriate figure or archetype of a woman's desire to embrace and sharpen her inherent masculinity.

Essentially, the Genesis story of creation and the fall is a tale as old as time. It highlights the consequences if women consume the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. This can be argued to

be a metaphor of forsaking the archaic feminine ideals, such as (forced) ignorance and subserviency in the pursuit of traditional masculine traits such as knowledge and dominance. Thus, this provides more freedom for women. A detailed explanation of this idea shall be explored further into this chapter. Overall, the following section shall compare the original Eve to Tolkien's Éowyn on the basis that Éowyn's true character mainly embodies traditional masculinity, as opposed to the archetypal Marian femininity to a certain extent. Moreover, this section will also decipher whether this expression of traditional masculinity that Eve displays can be amalgamated with her antithesis: the traditional feminine archetype of Mary.

6.2. The Female Rebel as an Archetype Introduction

Rebellion is traditionally understood as a 'violent action organized by a group of people who are trying to change the political system in their country' (Cambridge, 2021). The term indeed tends to receive negative responses due to its anarchical nuances. A rebel is frequently perceived as 'someone who fights against the government in their country, especially a soldier' (Cambridge, 2021) on a macro scale or is a threat to their local communities or household in the micro. In reference to the context surrounding Eve and Éowyn, it may be reasonable to question whether their rebellion can ever be justified and if it can ever be a positive force for change? These questions shall be discussed in the next section of this chapter. Though traditionally connected with masculinity, the nature of rebellion can often be associated with various female figures throughout history, mythology, movies, and literature. Women such as the Greek mythos', Helen of Troy¹⁰⁰ and Pandora's Box; as well as popular culture figures like Victor Hugo's 'Esmeralda'¹⁰¹, or Giuseppe Tornatore's movie 'Malena'¹⁰² may be regarded as the archetypal rebels for women. On the other hand, it seems more convincing to argue that traditionally, rebellion is more so an attribute of the masculine, rather than feminine. In support of this notion, Chinese literature academic, Pamela Hunt states that rebellion is a 'mode of masculinity' (Hunt, 2020) as the media, movies and advertisements illustrate. She also associates re-

¹⁰⁰ Helen of Troy is a Greek mythology that is based on Helen of Argos who is best known for causing Ancient Greece's worst war. This was due to her beauty that had launched one thousand ships.

¹⁰¹ Esmeralda is the female character from the French author, Victor Hugo's (1802-1885) 'Hunch Back of Notre Dame' (1831). Her beauty causes both the hate and affections from the antagonist Frollo's lust. She and her people are heavily punished due to this, though she is completely innocent.

¹⁰² Malena (2000) is an Italian movie directed by Giuseppe Tornatore (1956). The movie is centered around a lonely and shy widow Malena whose beauty causes the envy from women and the lust of men in her small village. She suffers greatly because of this.

bellion with being ‘mobile’. This literally means ‘moving or walking around freely’ (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021), which connotes that an aspect of masculine rebellion is a sense of freedom and autonomy for oneself. She also highlights how ‘mobile masculinity’ or ‘mobile men are developed out of global and local cultural archetypes; and these depictions cut across... the overlaid messages of adventure and rebellion’ (Hunt, 2020). Furthermore, in reference to John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, the philosopher Marius Dumitrescu also agrees that ‘for Milton, revolt is an archetype’ and in fact, ‘Milton’s main hero, the fallen angel Lucifer, becomes an archetypal symbol for the spirit of revolt’ (Dumitrescu, 2019, pg. 8). Therefore, Lucifer’s (who Milton portrays as a spiritual shapeshifter) identity exists in the masculine form and continues to demonstrate that masculinity is parallel to rebellion.

In relation to this, history significantly glorifies revolutions induced by men. An abundance of examples such as the Greek War of Independence (1821), the Cuban Revolution (1953) and the Second Serbian Uprising (1815) all validate this unsurprising notion. Dumitrescu also alludes to this as ‘the conversations between the fallen angels and Satan, which in their open and democratic character, resemble those that Cromwell had in Parliament when he had initiated the spirit of rebellion against the King... thus the allegory of the fall of angels by the rebellion against God was, in fact, a justification for Cromwell’s revolt against Charles I’ (Dumitrescu, 2019, pg. 8). It can be understood that the act of rebellion is so stark, present, and overwhelmingly abundant within the nature of the patriarchy (as evident throughout history), that it is often justified, praised, and honoured. However, it almost removes the idea that female rebellion can ever be a positive force within society nor justified. Unfortunately, upon extensive research, it was difficult to find rebellions consisting of multiple women that occurred throughout history, which mirrors the same number, force, effects, and magnitude of male revolutions. Arguably, events such as the Suffragette movement of the early 20th Century¹⁰³ and the early 1960’s 2nd wave feminism¹⁰⁴ are examples of significant Western female(s) rebellion, but even this exposes the obvious disproportion of the lack of rebellions instigated by women compared to men. Simultaneously, it appears as though women need to prove themselves more than their male counterparts. Examples of this are true for Éowyn,

¹⁰³ The Suffragette movement (1903-1918) fought for equal rights for women in the form of Votes for women, as they were not allowed to vote by law. The movement begun by Emmeline Pankhurst (1853-1928). Women were finally allowed to vote in 1918.

¹⁰⁴ The second wave feminism occurred in the Western world and begun in the early 1960’s, lasting for two decades. This time women fought for their reproductive rights. It was dubbed the sexual revolution.

Joan of Arc, Rosa Parks and Boudica, though ironically the presence of men is very much included in their rebellions and is the main factor that determines the outcome.¹⁰⁵ One may argue that this establishes the anti-feminist and archaic idea that without men, women are essentially weak to govern the matters that are traditionally sought after by men.

Nonetheless, the influence of the rebellious woman may be a slow process, whereas armies of physically strong men with an array of weaponry, money and power could conquer an entire continent as soon as their feet touch the soil¹⁰⁶. The following section shall attempt to show Eve and Éowyn as suitable figures of the archetypal rebel. This tends to translate as the conventional masculine rebel, yet it is unique in its outcome. In addition, I shall explore how their portrayals of rebellion are similar or contrasting. All in all, these varieties of rebellious expressions all contribute towards the traditional idea of what it means to be a man in society. However, feminism since its conception has changed this narrative and emphasises how rebellion is crucial for what it means to be a woman.

Chapter 6.3. The Fallen Woman as the Female Form of the Archetypal Rebel

The archaic concept of the fallen woman was inspired by the story of Eve. The Victorians significantly capitalized on this, whereby ‘the prevailing wisdom has been that the fallen woman was categorized and disciplined by a hegemonic middle-class (bourgeois) ideology that preferred a social structure shaped by separate spheres and that limited women’s sexual choices’ (Stockstill, 2015, pg. 8). It is often understood that ‘the fallen woman does not appear again and again because Victorians were obsessed with tight morality codes... Victorians were greatly concerned about how each person relates to and is shaped by the world in which he or she lives’ (Stockstill, 2015, pg. 9). Moreover, the Victorians ‘whilst praised for their moral piety, innocence and work ethic’ (Clements, 1998, pg. 12) were simultaneously obsessed with the matters of sex and sexuality. Feminist Katherine Cornell et al agrees that ‘the Victorians were far from repressed, but they were obsessed with policing sexual rebels and outsiders’

¹⁰⁵ All the women mentioned could not pursue their mission of equality through other women. They had to go through men. For example, the law permitting inequality amongst the black race had to be banned by white heterosexual men in the case of Rosa Parks. Joan of Arc fought in a war with men only. She was the only female. Éowyn too shares a similar experience with Joan of Arc.

¹⁰⁶ This is in reference to the European pursuit of colonialism, such as the “Scramble for Africa” most notably.

(Cornell, 2021). In support of this, philosopher Michel Foucault's 'Repressive Hypothesis'¹⁰⁷ claims that:

'one had to speak of (sex) as of a thing to be not simply condemned or tolerated but managed, inserted into systems of utility, regulated for the greater good of all, made to function according to an optimum. Sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing one administered' (Foucault, 2002, 1.24).

In other words, Foucault signifies that the Victorian era exercised a significant degree of censorship, control, and regulations on the discourse of sexuality. In addition, English scholar, Ellen Stockstill posits that 'since identity formation frequently occurs through a process of defining "us" and "them," how did the fallen woman's categorization as outsider (fallen, punished, and marginalized) contribute to the development of insider identity (pure, triumphant, and dominant)?' (Stockstill, 2015, pg. 9). Therefore, one may argue that in actuality, the archetype of the fallen women is merely used as a scapegoat in order to esteem and enhance the patriarchal goals, ambitions, and image. The fallen woman can be considered as a victim rather than the perpetrator. In summary, gender and sexuality scholar Nina Clements refers to Victorian conservatism as a "myth" as 'the most lasting stereotype of the Victorian is... a prude and hypocrite...it is believed prudery and hypocrisy were interrelated and, at times, interchangeable' (Clements, 1998, pg. 12). Now that we have briefly examined the origins and context concerning the fallen woman, I shall now analyse how Éowyn and Eve correlate to each other and towards the fallen woman trope.

It is reasonable to postulate that the concept of the fallen women is but a sub- archetype under the umbrella of the archetypal rebel. In my view, the difference between both archetypes is based upon their masculine and feminine nature. The trope of the fallen woman is solely targeted at women. It possesses derogatory and pejorative connotations that men are immune from, whilst the rebel archetype (although traditionally masculine) may be universal to both genders. More so, the rebel is neutral or ambiguous in terms of whether it promotes a good or bad outcome (Robin Hood for example), but the fallen woman is always seen as bad, due to her portrayal throughout history as the seedy temptress who brings men to their ruin.

¹⁰⁷ The Repressive Hypothesis devised by the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) is section II in volume I: Will to Knowledge within his book: The History of Sexuality (1976). The entire four volumes of the book analyses the emergence of the discourse of sexuality and views this a relatively new western phenomenon.

Furthermore, one could argue that Éowyn as the emulation of Eve liberates and empowers the idea of the fallen woman, as opposed to traditional beliefs that ostracise women of that calibre. Chapter Twelve of Tolkien's 'Return of the King' shows how:

'in the aftermath of the battle (of the Ring), Éomer finds her (Éowyn) on the battlefield, unconscious and apparently dead, and grieves, but she recovers in the Houses of Healing¹⁰⁸ and catches sight of Faramir for the first time; as the Army of the West marches out of Minas Tirith¹⁰⁹' (LothFandom, 2021).

This scene is significant, as it is one of the few portrayals that truly exhibit the depth and commitment of Éowyn's desire to rebel, even though she is fatally wounded after the Witch-king's destruction. It is upon the first encounter with Faramir whom confesses that 'I myself am in the Warden's keeping...or have I yet taken up my authority in the City' (Tolkien, 2009, pg.1257). In other LOTR editions, Faramir specifically emphasises his desire to 'rebel against' the Warden's rules. This immediately triggers Éowyn's suppressed desire for the continuation of rebellion, as she believes her mission is incomplete. Nonetheless Faramir subtly diffuses the idea of rebellion by highlighting 'but had I done so, I still would listen to his counsel and should not cross his will in matters of his craft'. In typical Éowyn fashion she boldly replies:

'I looked for death in battle. But I have not died and battle still goes on...I do not desire healing,' she said. 'I wish to ride to war like my brother Éomer, or better like Théoden the king, for he died and has both honour and peace' (Tolkien,2009, pg. 1257).

This dialogue suggests that Faramir, as both a warrior and a man is expected to naturally embody the archetypal rebel. Thus, it may be surprising that he downplays this idea of rebellion. Therefore, one may comprehend that he does this because he is in the presence of a (noble) woman and any indication of rebellion may essentially influence the already blood thirsty maiden. Like the Victorian fallen woman, this could ultimately lead to her literal "(down) fall" and respectability in society. In support of this, movie critic Amanda Steele agrees that

¹⁰⁸ The Houses of Healing is the eighth chapter of the first book in The Return of the King... The Houses of Healing was an infirmary in Minas Tirith. The Houses were surrounded by lawns and trees, set near to the Citadel-gate and the southward wall in the sixth circle of Minas Tirith. The chief healer was the Warden of the Houses of Healing (Tolkien Gateway, 2020).

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 1 for more information.

‘Éowyn feels bolder in her choices and actions, while Faramir is a bit more measured’ (Steele, 2021). Thus, it can be argued that Éowyn’s character seamlessly corresponds to the rebel archetype, as her bravery and courage is frequently associated with classical masculinity - foreign for a woman of her time and blue-blooded heritage¹¹⁰.

More so, Éowyn portrays how the fallen woman trope is a projection of the patriarchal norms unto women. This is because the fallen woman shares similar traits that society would traditionally deem acceptable for men, but not for women. For example, Éowyn initially yearns to distance herself from her traditional feminine gender roles and as the ‘shieldmaiden of the Rohirrim’,¹¹¹ Éowyn is a figure who bears the weight of destiny as much as anyone in Tolkien’s universe’ (Dennis, 2017). Her destiny is also suggested in her name: ‘Éowyn’s name roughly translates as "horse lover" or "horse joy." The etymology being: *eah*, "war-horse" and *wynn*, "joy"(Dennis, 2017).

This description implicitly introduces the matter of censorship towards women’s knowledge of their sexuality. This is exemplified through the idea of horse riding. For medieval and Victorian women, this involved the astride technique¹¹² as opposed to (traditional masculine) straddling. It was intended to preserve modesty and prevent sexual pleasure of a respectable woman that was induced by the galloping of a horse. Historian Una Mcilvenna explains that ‘the use of horse-riding as a sexual metaphor had a long history in libellous attacks on courtly women’ (Mcilvenna, 2018). Thus, even Éowyn’s name and personal desire to ride into battle like a man contradicts her role in society as a noble woman. She is expected to seek sexual purity, as an expression of true womanhood, which was considered a natural attribute of women who were of the upper classes. Therefore, this old-fashioned ideal in which women were discouraged from riding a horse in a certain manner, is significantly problematic. It perpetuates the idea that sexual pleasure is not a concern for women. This may justify Foucault’s theory of the ‘Repressive Hypothesis’ whereby the Victorian governments only recognised sexuality for the purpose of reproduction and thus breeds a culture of censorship on the private life individuals. Thus, by Victorian standards, Éowyn may be classified as a fallen woman due to her unconventional ambitions and rebellion.

¹¹⁰ Blue blooded is a term referring to those with aristocratic or noble blood. The term comes from the fact that during the medieval era the nobility cherished the fairness of their skin and avoided the sun light. Therefore, it is said that one would be able to see their blue veins through the pale skin. This was a significant sign of status.

¹¹¹ See Chapter 1 for more information.

¹¹² The equestrian technique of the “astride” was achieved by keeping both legs to one side of the horse. This technique was especially designed noble women to preserve their virginity and modesty.

Similarly, it can be argued that Eve (the quintessential fallen woman) experiences divine punishment, due to the exploration of her sexuality. The concept of sexual freedom alone can be argued to be a traditional masculine ideal. In reference to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the English scholar, David Urban states that 'Eve's senses are overwhelmed by the luscious appearance and smell of the apple and the sound of Satan's voice, "her senses direct her, rather than her rationality' (Urban, 2017, pg. 101) and feminist literary critic, Sandra Gilbert adds that 'here Satan creeps again into Eden and resolves to disguise himself as a serpent. But what a serpent! Gloriously phallic, the diabolic creature appears not "prone on the ground" (Gilbert, 2018). It is interesting to note how Urban and Gilbert indicate the phallic imagery of the serpent and how his sensual embodiment was a participant in the fall of man. To expand this concept, English scholar Wendall Hixon believes that 'the serpent represents a very forceful and sexual symbol—one that represents both male and female sexuality' (Hixon, 2020, pg. 77). Also, medical academic Robert Wilson states that 'the serpent very early became the symbol of the phallus, the venerated emblem of life and regenerative power (Wilson, 1922, pg. 302). In addition, the biologist E.L Grant Watson emphasises how 'the serpent...is so closely associated with sex... the serpent often appears as the coiled daimon of sexual desire... the daimon of sexuality approacheth the soul as a serpent' (Grant Watson, 1958, pg.146). The term phallus is defined as 'an image or a model of the penis, especially one representing the power of men to make women pregnant, or a penis' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021). Therefore, it can be argued that 'the serpent in the Garden of Eden represented the voice of temptation' (Day, 2015). Moreover, one may agree with Wilson and Gilbert that the serpent's physical structure is a subtle representation of a literal male sexual organ. This imagery permeates eroticism, seduction, and sensuality towards the opposite sex. This is proven as Urban stated how Eve's 'senses direct(ed) her' instead of her 'rationality'. From this, one may acknowledge how the relationship between the senses and sensuality is vital. For without the basic senses (the ability to touch, hear, smell, taste and see), the pleasurable experience of sensuality will cease to exist. However, the philosopher C.J van Vliet's 1955 essay on 'the Conquest of the Serpent' corresponds to Urban's belief that Eve's sense-driven ambitions expelled rationality. Written a few years before the second wave of the feminist movement, this old source is vital in emphasising the destructive nature of sensuality that the serpent supposedly portrays. Van Vliet states that:

'in the universal language of symbolism a serpent or dragon represents the human lower nature — and particularly, often exclusively, the sexual tendencies...Thus do the legends symbolically express the eternal truth: that only those who overcome their

lower nature, and free themselves from the drives of sex, can reach the matchless felicity of conscious at-one-ment with their higher Self...Many of the unbecoming characteristics of the lower nature — such as cruelty, greed, anger, hatred, pride, dishonesty, deceit, crude selfishness...But sensuality — the strongest, most widespread and most reprehensible of all — is nearly everywhere apathetically sanctioned instead of being counteracted, and stimulated instead of subjugated. It is the most deceptive, so that its injuriousness is usually belittled instead of fully realized. It is the most malignant, because it blocks the performance of the delicate organs in the head, without which human evolution cannot proceed. While all propensities of the lower nature form more or less difficult-to-surmount obstructions to progress — the Serpent Sex, slithering in every direction over the road of evolution, constitutes the most perilous, hardest-to-overcome obstacle. Once that Serpent has been routed, all barriers can more easily be removed. In the world today there are not many who are aware of the perniciously impeditive power of the Serpent: and fewer still are anxious to break its domination. To explain the danger of the uncontested sway of the sex symbolizing monster — and to offer a few hints for the use of anyone who is ready and willing to grapple with the insatiable creature — that is the main purpose of this intentionally single-minded treatise' (Van Vliet, 1955, pg.8-10).

Interestingly, Van Vliet mentions how sensuality is the highest characteristic of the lower nature or consciousness within legends. Because of this, it is the 'hardest-to-overcome-obstacle' (Van Vliet, 1955, pg.8-10). Ultimately the alluring core of sensuality weakens rationality, as demonstrated by Eve. One may add that this evokes the highly misogynistic idea that women are often governed by their senses and in turn rationality is minimised. Thus, the embracement of female sexuality may be considered as a form of rebellion and opposes what society regards as rational and acceptable for woman as a whole. This means that females figure such as Eve and Éowyn are traditionally deterred from partaking in sensuality- because they are identified as the lower sex and are thus more susceptible to the characteristics of lower consciousness. However, one may question the hypocrisy of this statement, as the serpent who resembles a masculine spirit or phallic embodiment achieves the masculine ideal of expressing sensuality through sexuality without objection. Thus, one would assume that men are living on a lower consciousness than women, if not more. Despite this, the narrative of Genesis lacks evidence to support this claim and results to essentially blame a naïve woman for the fall, though it was instigated by a cunning male serpent. Van Vliet even argues that 'the legend's triumphant hero is the human being who accomplishes the conquest of the serpent and thereby gains access to golden treasure, or to a magic spring, or to a royal princess — all of which, as symbols in mystic lore, stand for the most valuable possession which a person can acquire: the spiritual consciousness of one's higher nature' (Van Vliet, 1955, pg. 8).

Though Van Vliet highlights the accessibility of 'higher nature' for humanity as depicted in various legends, it can be argued that the majority of these humans versus dragons' heroic

stories, acknowledge dragon slaying masculinity as the highest virtue. For example, ‘dragons are everywhere in Christian art and literature, especially in the lives of the saints, where these holy men... are portrayed as triumphant victors over inherently evil creatures’ (Kosloski, 2018). Christian saints such as St Michael the Archangel, the patron saint of England St. George and St. Phillip the apostle are but a few of the numerous examples of male dragon slayers. One may argue that the pursuit of a higher consciousness ‘are reminders of how Jesus Christ defeated Satan and how all Christians can share in that ultimate victory of good over evil’ (Kosloski, 2018).

Nonetheless, fantasy author Charles Sledge agrees that ‘dragon slaying (is) the highest calling of Man’, however like Tolkien’s linguistical duality, Sledge’s “Man” may not equate to only males alone but to all genders (though he does not explicitly mention women). In fact, he does acknowledge that:

‘dragon slaying and stories about dragon slayers are not young masculine wish fulfilment or whatever term is popular nowadays by those without souls. No, it’s something far greater and more powerful. Many realize this, some consciously like Tolkien and Lewis...essentially dragons represent some great, often unconquerable (or seemingly unconquerable), evil’ (Sledge, 2020).

Therefore, higher consciousness is truly achieved through acts of self-sacrifice by slaying dragons in honour of mankind in the metaphorical sense. Éowyn’s ‘selflessness, (by) sacrificing herself to protect her allies’ in battle (Guardians of Middle-earth Wiki, 2021) leads to a positive outcome and fulfils her need for a higher consciousness. Therefore, the fallen women trope may not entirely apply to Éowyn. On the other hand, Eve’s intent to eat the fruit instigates the fall of humanity and implies selfishness in her actions. In correspondence this, Urban emphasises how ‘Eve’s self-serving insincerity in eating the fruit has been noted by various critics’ (Urban, 2017, pg. 12). Also, Thorley claims that Milton’s Paradise Lost, views Eve through a ‘anti-feministic lens’ and that ‘a negative light is cast on her when she first sees her reflection in the water; she stares at it in awe for an extended period of time, coming off as vain and narcissistic’ (Thorley, 2013, pg. 2). Thus, Eve aligns with the notion of “a rebel without a cause”¹¹³.

¹¹³ The notion of “a rebel without a cause” refers to a person who rebels or goes against society without having a particular purpose or goal to achieve.

On the contrary, the fallen woman archetype may still be relevant towards Éowyn as she is deceitful and disobedient in her quest to kill the Witch-King. She ultimately defies the men around her and what society expects of her as a noble woman. She disguises herself as Dernhelm, rides into battle like a man and embraces violence. Nevertheless, besides the negative and anti-feminist connotations of Eve, it may be possible to suggest that through her rebellion, her intentions behind eating the fruit were not of malice, greed nor of self-serving matters. Thorley supports this notion as ‘feminist readings see her as simply being inquisitive and curious about knowledge, made more intriguing when Satan tells her that God wants to keep them from gaining a higher knowledge for some reason’ (Thorley, 2013, pg. 3). Thus, Van Vliet’s theory of higher and lower nature or consciousness could justify and overturn the old-fashioned perception of Eve’s rebellion. The philosopher Ishwar Puri implies that the pursuit of a higher knowledge and a higher consciousness are interconnected concepts and are interchangeable. Puri states, ‘the realization of the necessity for a higher level of knowledge—knowledge which surpasses the levels of knowledge attainable...has become more and more apparent to the modern man’ (Puri, 1983, pg.1). Moreover, he continues to argue that ‘the key to higher consciousness is the ability to concentrate your attention upon your own-self at this point’ (Puri, 1983, pg. 24). Therefore, Puri suggests that the fortune of obtaining a higher consciousness must first be a self-serving journey. However, this self-servitude is purposeful. It is for the greater good of all mankind. Thus, Eve’s quest for knowledge or to ‘be like God’ (Genesis 3:5) is simply misunderstood. This is proven as she hands the fruit to Adam, because she desires that both of them gain access to higher knowledge- a selfless act it can be argued. The next section will explain in extensive detail on women’s search for knowledge and a higher self; how society prevents this and its destructive nature towards men (and women).

6.4. The Feminine Quest for Knowledge and its Consequences

As opposed to the Victorian ideal of the Marian archetype, the fallen woman is on a quest for knowledge. In particular, it is sexual knowledge that differentiates both archetypes. In other words, one is avoidant of such self-discovery, the other thrives on this as it assures her sexual freedom. Nonetheless, in reference to the legend of the King Arthur, the English scholar Rebecca Hill utilises the female character Vivien, the Lady of the Lake to emphasise the grave consequences of this feminine search for sexuality. Hill states that:

'In addition to the mythical and literary connotations surrounding Vivien's figure... (it is) the biblical allusions and imagery that tie her unmistakably to Mary Magdalene. This allusion speaks to the Victorian stereotyping that divided women into the bipolar categories of virgin and harlot, Mary, and Mary Magdalene. It was common for fallen women to be referred to as Magdalene's. Even shelters set up to help fallen women were called Magdalene Houses. The similarity between the names Mary and Mary Magdalene suggest that every virgin has the potential to become a whore once she has sexual knowledge' (Hill, 2011, pg. 8).

Hill's observations allude to the Freudian Madonna-Whore Dichotomy and may pose the question of: why does the feminine ambition for knowledge threaten the patriarchy? The philosopher Francis Bacon argued that 'knowledge is power' (Cortez- Ramirez, 2014, pg. 25). In fact, Bacon argues that 'man acquired power over nature by obeying it, and he could obey it only after he had learned to understand it' (Ramirez, 2014, pg. 26). Interestingly, Bacon shows that knowledge must be acquired under the virtue of obedience. Though it was a traditional aspect of Bacon's era to gender those who seek to obtain knowledge as 'he', this is problematic. This evokes a sense of misogyny and inequality amongst the sexes, since it portrays how women are unable to gain knowledge, because they lack obedience and rationality to truly understand it. Thus, this indicates that knowledge is a primary masculine ideal. Thorley's analysis of Milton's Paradise Lost argues that:

'one of the most obvious and serious flaws in Eve's character...is that she is traditionally seen as the tempter of Adam, having been tempted by Satan to eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The conclusion drawn from the non-feminist view, and even what can be considered a misogynist view, is that she was a "weak woman" unable to stay out of trouble when she is out of Adam's sight' (Thorley, 2013, pg. 3).

Interestingly, in reference to Paradise Lost, Urban implies that obedience is a vital component when acquiring knowledge. He also suggests that one ought to not underestimate or devalue Eve's rationality. Urban states 'the speech in which Eve justifies her choice to disobey God's clear command; a speech that demonstrates that her disobedience is a calculated decision, not a mistake made through an emotional and arguably sincere response to Satan's rhetoric'. (Urban, 2017, pg. 11-12). He even goes so far as to argue that 'Eve's own lengthy speech to the Tree, (was) a speech that strikingly resembles Satan's in its content'. In correspondence to this, the theologian Rueven Kimelman questions 'why the serpent talks specifically to woman... and why Genesis underscores the commonality between man and woman' (Kimelman, 1996, pg. 2). Moreover, the theology scholar Katie Edwards believes that:

'the archetypal image of the sexual temptress who proffers fruit to a bewildered-looking male and the pseudo-sinister sexual allure of the woman/snake conflation are

used in contemporary culture as evidence of women's potent sexual allure. The popular ideology of postfeminist advertising suggests that the ability to attract the opposite sex allows women to obtain power' (Edwards, 2008, pg. 12).

When considering Urbans, Kimelman's and Edwards observations and to answer the question above, one may conclude that the inherent mentality of a woman is akin to that of a serpent: cunning, rebellious, and devious. This is explicitly demonstrated when Eve seduces Adam to eat from the tree of knowledge as she mirrors her own seduction from the serpent. Therefore, it can be argued that biblical tradition has manipulated Western society into perceiving feminine knowledge as a threat and form of weaponry against the fall of an obediently rational man. As a result, art historian Christopher Witcombe states how:

'St. Bernard of Clairvaux could claim in his sermons, without contradiction, that Eve was "the original cause of all evil, whose disgrace has come down to all other women". This perception of Eve has endured with remarkable tenacity and persists today as a major stumbling-block in attempts by women to correct gender-based inequalities between the sexes. Consciously or unconsciously, it continues to serve as the ultimate weapon against women who wish to challenge male hegemony' (Witcombe, 2000).

On the other hand, it can be argued that Eve's desire for knowledge is a mere quest for freedom and equality in an environment filled with masculine energy and ambitions. Urban mentions that:

'for Eve's sincere intentions, averring that she eats the apple in order to be better company for Adam, who very recently had been "so enthralled" by conversation with the angel Raphael. Eve knows that the fruit would expand "her own mental powers" and give her the opportunity "to be a better and more companionable wife than she had so far been, to replace Raphael himself' (Urban, 2017, pg. 101).

Thus, Urbans analysis may evoke a sense of empathy towards Eve's plight. Urban demonstrates that Éowyn and women throughout past and present, pursue knowledge for selfless concerns. It can be interpreted as a means of gaining intellectual freedom; to enhance their desirability and worth as woman and to connect with men within the patriarchal confinements, to earn respect. The Renaissance Courtesans¹¹⁴ validate this notion. In addition, it is often believed that "knowledge is freedom and ignorance is slavery"¹¹⁵, thus Eve's rebellion against God proves that she is intelligent enough to not partake in ignorance that the men

¹¹⁴ Renaissance Courtesans, as they were formally known, were essentially high-class escorts or prostitutes. They entertained and had sexual relations with rich and powerful men of their countries. Courtesans were able to receive an education and allowed into male dominated spaces, where ordinary women could not freely go. The most notable courtesan was the 16th Century was the Venetian poet, Veronica Franco.

¹¹⁵ The American Jazz Musician, Miles Davis (1926-1991) famously coined this phrase of 'Knowledge is freedom, ignorance is slavery' in his self-titled autobiography (Drew, 2020, pg. 9).

within her surroundings actively encourage. In support of this, Urban defends Eve and agrees that she is an ‘independent-minded student,’ and ‘if God is good, then he will love her for eating the apple’. Lastly, Urban expresses how the feminist critic ‘Karen Edwards calls Eve a “new philosopher” who demonstrates “the instincts of a Boylean¹¹⁶ witness” and whose “attitude perfectly combines experimental scepticism and open-mindedness” (Urban, 2017, pg. 101).

One may postulate how unlike Mary (the New Eve), Eve embraces this relationship with the serpent because they are both ostracized for their curiosity and desire for intellectual ambition. Firstly, like the fallen woman, the serpent too is referred to as a fallen angel because his thirst to ‘be like God’ caused a rebellion against the Most-High, and Lucifer was cast out of heaven. In fact, Tolkien depicts Éowyn and Merry in this sense. Éowyn and Merry are undervalued as a Hobbit and a woman in Middle-earth. They both crave acceptance. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that the Witch-king is not the true enemy. The medieval patriarchal system that is significantly entrenched in Tolkien’s legendarium is the real antagonist that oppresses both Éowyn and Merry. Interestingly, this suggests that Tolkien was not fully in control of his own writing and also opens up to the possibility that Tolkien’s own characters rebel against him. In accordance with Sledge, Éowyn essentially conquers the dragon of the patriarchy. By choosing to go into battle, it is an act of rebellion against the status quo to ensure freedom of the oppressed. Therefore, Merry and Éowyn are ultimately both fallen creatures and reflect Eve and the serpent to a certain extent.

Overall, to answer the questions presented in the introduction of this chapter, Éowyn and Eve’s ambitions align with the traditional notion of rebellion, as a feature of masculinity. Also, Éowyn and Eve’s rebellion can be interpreted as a higher or lower characteristic, as well as a self-serving or selfless pursuit. It is ultimately how the reader defines these things. Nonetheless it is convincing to argue that the purpose of Éowyn and Eve’s rebellion was for the greater good of their environment and to elevate themselves into a higher consciousness that was readily accessible to men. Traditionally knowledge was always recognised as a primary quality of masculinity, that ensured the patriarchy maintained their oppressive powers.

¹¹⁶ Boylean is a concept that relates to Robert Boyle (1627-1691). He was an Irish philosopher, chemist, physicist, and inventor, also devoted to Christian theology and Robert Boyle is considered to be the first modern chemist, one of the founders of this discipline. In that sense, he is one of those responsible for the fact that knowledge long considered (with suspicion) as alchemical or magical, became understandable in scientific terms (Gale, 2022).

The book of Genesis along with an abundance of other anti-feminist portrayals of women, withhold this will to knowledge that women rightfully deserve. Knowledge is also freedom, as it results in truth of understanding reality in a rational sense and enables self-actualisation. Rebellion is thus a necessary means to gain access to freedom. In order for women to be taken seriously they essentially have to embody traditional male characteristics and 'be like God' (the quintessential all-power masculine form), as Éowyn's portrayal as Derhelm suggests. For example, the former British prime minister 'Margaret Thatcher... went through voice training to actually speak in a lower-pitched voice' since it is believed that in politics 'men with lower-pitched voices may have some sort of advantage' as lower voices exude 'strength, confidence, authority' (Montgomery, 2011, pg. 2). In regard to the fallen woman as a feminine rebel archetype, the Victorians formed this derogatory concept as a way of controlling woman from gaining freedom, equality, and access to knowledge. Consequently, women were slaves to ignorance and therefore below men by default. Therefore, it can also be said that the fallen woman trope is a manipulative patriarchal tactic. This conditions society into believing that by nature, women are of a lower consciousness. Thus, they are riddled with vice and sin as opposed to their male counterparts who are exceeding and thriving within the higher consciousness.

Eve and Éowyn are significantly similar because they hunger to acquire a higher consciousness by any means necessary and their disobedience (rebellion) in essence makes them fallen women. In a way it can be argued that Éowyn and Eve manage to self-actualise in both pursuits (by slaying the Witch-king and eating the fruit). The only difference is, Eve is punished by God for this desire, whilst Éowyn accomplishes this and is not chastised even after her mission. Thus, Éowyn is the woman Eve wanted to become, but could not. In response to the main question of the essay, despite the obvious contrasts between the traditional archetypes of Eve and Mary, Éowyn successfully amalgamates both female figures. In my opinion Éowyn's desire of gaining a higher consciousness, self-actualisation, knowledge and freedom are all goals that reside within Eve and Mary. It can be argued that Mary and Eve express this in different ways, but they yearn for the same outcome. Firstly, Mary obeys Gods commandment during her fiat, upon this she reaches a higher consciousness- she is now the Theotokos, the New Eve and New Ark of the Covenant. Whilst Eve, through disobeying God's command by eating from the Tree of Knowledge, still gains a higher consciousness in the aftermath, that the rest of humankind experienced too.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The thesis attempted to highlight the Christian nature of LOTR and how Middle-earth and the realms beyond are a reflection of God's splendorous and incomprehensible mind as a creator. In essence Tolkien mirrors the divine creator in his world as the author. The primary aim of this thesis was to establish whether the female character of Éowyn in LOTR is able to successfully amalgamate the two traditional and contrasting feminine archetypes of Eve and Mary. Overall, the research suggests that Éowyn does achieve this for various reasons. In fact, through Éowyn, Tolkien shows that the battle between good and evil can be fought by both women and men. It is from my opinion, that through Éowyn's portrayal, Tolkien was an inadvertent feminist and had a deep understanding of the female mind. Tolkien subtly displays how rebellion is a necessary means to achieves one's ambition. In this case it emits the message that women must achieve equality and liberation. Moreover, Éowyn's amalgamation of Eve and Mary shows that femininity is widely spread across a spectrum. It is not a polarizing or binary phenomenon as the Freudian Madonna-Whore complex portrays, but rather corresponds to the Jungian Anima and Animus theory. This thesis attempts to validate the latter dichotomy. Éowyn unites the Eve and Mary archetypes. Therefore, Éowyn's embodiment of Eve and Mary represents the essence and ideals of modern feminism: women can be both the archetypal masculine and feminine and have the autonomy to make that choice. Thus, this thesis invalidates and counteracts the idea that women have to conform to the archaic, one-dimensional expectations of the male gaze. In reality women (and men) are fluid beings and go through a constant process of transformation. The thesis presents how the character of Éowyn exemplifies the inherent complexities of women and thus redefines the stereotypical and traditional feminine gender roles.

Each chapter attempts to address the main aim of the thesis. In summary, the Introduction highlighted the issue of the lack of social representation in Tolkien's literature, especially that of race and gender. The introduction to the character of Éowyn was also described, as well as the aims and intentions of the thesis. The Literature Review exhibited vital literary sources and theories surrounding the feminine archetypes, such as the Freudian Madonna-Whore Complex and the problem of the portrayal of women through the male gaze within classical literature. This chapter also discussed feminist perceptions of Tolkien's female characters. The Methodology introduced the origin of archetypes. The archetypes of Eve and Mary were

viewed in the lens of the Jungian Anima/Animus to demonstrate how their supposedly polarizing characteristics may in reality lead to the same manifestation. Chapter Four analysed the way in which Éowyn represents the Marian ideal of the Woman of the Apocalypse, as both women are prophesied by men to destroy the dragon. Though this may be perceived as a masculine characteristic at first, Éowyn and Mary's wilful subordination to their prophecies is a strength unique to women and should not be devalued. Chapter Five compared the roles of Éowyn as the shieldmaiden to Mary as the handmaiden. The linguistic nature of both terms was extensively examined, along with the Catholic doctrine on the power of the Rosary as representing a sword. Chapter Six discussed the relationship between Éowyn and Eve in the form of the fallen woman archetype. The chapter also shows how both women seek to become equals to the patriarchy. Thus, in order to fulfil this, their key ambition was to gain the forbidden knowledge of their sexualities, as Foucault's Repressive Hypothesis depicts.

To my current knowledge, no-one has attempted this type of research before. Research shows that only a few essays discuss the relationship between Éowyn and the Marian archetype, but only to a certain extent. This thesis attempts to develop some of these ideas, such as the Woman of the Apocalypse. However, the entire analysis of Chapter Five: Éowyn, the shieldmaiden as Mary the handmaiden was conceived from my own personal observations and research. In other words, although briefly mentioned by Lawrence Yuen for example, no-one has discovered the significance of the shieldmaiden and handmaiden relationship. A detailed comparison of these terms is only available within this thesis and no other source. Furthermore, although (very few) scholars recognise Éowyn's similarities to Mary, there is indeed a significant lack (or rather none at all) of acknowledgement towards the Éowyn and Eve amalgamation. Once again, this essay attempts to fill this large gap in research. More so, the fallen woman concept of Éowyn is foreign in all the sources I have observed. In its entirety, the main question of the thesis 'to what extent does the figure of Éowyn amalgamate the two traditional and contrasting figures of Eve and Mary' is the first of its kind. No source has ever attempted to amalgamate both Eve and Mary through Éowyn. Therefore, the uniqueness of this paper has made a significant contribution towards the study of Mariology and Spirituality within literature.

Nonetheless, there have been a number of limitations within this paper. For example, the uniqueness of this thesis has made it significantly difficult to find appropriate sources that support my own discoveries and observations. Also, initially I set out to analyse how Galadriel, Arwen and Éowyn relate to the main question. However, due to the word count

limitations I had to exclude Galadriel and Arwen. Even whilst doing so, I had to eliminate other points of discussion towards Éowyn's character that were crucial in evidence, due to the word count limitations. All in all, I feel as though I did not do as much as I set out to achieve. For future improvements, this essay would undoubtedly be more appropriate to explore within a PhD dissertation. This is based on the reasons concerning how the word count will be much larger, as I may be able to examine all three women and more within these confinements. The main areas that would need further research are the biblical allegories of LOTR; the problems with the term handmaiden in the modern feminist arena; and Tolkien's portrayal of Éowyn as a retelling of the evolution of Eve and the New Eve.

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Appendix B

Glossary

Middle Earth Races	Definition
Ainur	Holy beings that encompassed the Maiar and the Valar. First creation of Ilúvatar.
Valar	The powers of Arda, who shaped and ruled the world.
Maiar	Spirits that came from Arda to help the Valar shape the world.
Children of Ilúvatar	
Elves	Otherwise known as the Eldar. They were the first and eldest of the Children of Ilúvatar and the fairest.
Men (Hobbits)	Were one of many races living in Arda and are the humans of middle earth. The second of the Children of Ilúvatar.
Other Races	
Dwarves	Referred to as the ‘Stunted People and the ‘Masters of stone’.
Ents	A very old Tree race in Middle Earth.
Orcs	The monstrous and weak main foot soldiers of the Dark Lord’s armies.
Trolls	They terrorized trespassers and roamed Trolls-shaws.
Sapient Beasts	
Dragons	Said to be ancient, intelligent and powerful creatures consumed by evil.
Eagles	Beings of Arda who helped eradicate evil powers such as Sauron.

Spiders	Referred to as 'Children of Ungoliant' and lived in dark places. Dangerous and malevolent creatures.
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More Terminology	Definition
Arda	Meaning 'Earth'. The place in which all species of Middle- Earth inhabit.
Aman	The continent that lay west of Middle-Earth
Middle Earth	The habitable parts of Arda
(Eru) Ilúvatar	The one supreme God of Arda. Gave most autonomy of creation to Ainur.
Nenya	One of the three Elven Rings possessed by Galadriel.
Ñoldor	The second clan of Elves.
Silmarillion	The primary source for the history of Middle- earth and the first age.